



U.S. Department of the Treasury

KFC Dispatch

Fall 2010

Kansas City Regional Financial and Operations Center

Another Successful CAB!

On February 23 – 24, 2010, the Kansas City Financial Center (KFC) hosted its Customer Advisory Board (CAB) meeting in Kansas City at Harrah's Hotel. Eighty-seven participants representing twenty-one Federal Program Agencies (FPA) attended the meeting.

CAB Chair Debbie Byrd, DHHS – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention brought the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to Kansas City. Gary Beets, Regional Director, followed with his own welcoming remarks and introduced a video to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of KFC.

Topics and speakers who presented at the CAB meeting included:

Collections and Cash Management Modernization (CCMM) - Greg Till addressed upcoming changes to the systems FMS will utilize for revenue collection and subsequent changes in how transactions are reported to agencies.

PRINCE/KERN - Randy Brown provided a high level overview of the new check printing and enclosing software being used by FMS, including intelligent inserting equipment.

Internet Payment Platform (IPP) - Paul Lionikis, FRB Boston, provided an overview of IPP and highlighted several of the benefits it provides to agencies.

Governmentwide Accounting (GWA) - Mike Norman and Keith Jarboe provided an overview of the GWA Modernization vision, shared several major accomplishments and addressed current initiatives.

Payment Application Modernization (PAM) – Lori Meyer provided an informative overview of the PAM project, she also discussed upcoming releases and explained several differences between PAM and the Legacy system.

International Treasury Services (ITS.gov) & International ACH Transaction (IAT) – Walker Woods presented an overview of the ITS.gov payment system and shared the many benefits it provides to agencies. He also provided a brief update on IAT.

General Services Administration (GSA) Agency Initiative – Kristen Kraft, GSA, provided a presentation on their new Billing and Accounts Receivable (BAAR) System and addressed how the changes will benefit the GSA customer.

THANK YOU!

Janice Bowers, Sarah Jaremko, Kathy Spittler, and Sarah Recob for all their hard work putting together the 75 year KFC Anniversary video!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

CAB Highlights	1 - 2
Upcoming February CAB	3
GWA Training	3
Ponderin' Thoughts	4 - 5
EFT Initiative	6
PAM Update	7
CTX Update	8
CS Survey	8



The afternoon of day two provided an opportunity for CAB members to discuss priorities and initiatives at their respective agency. Following an open forum for questions and discussion, another successful meeting was brought to a close.

The meeting marked the end of a four-year tenure as CAB Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for Debbie Byrd of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Debbie provided great leadership at each of the CAB meetings and helped contribute to its continued success. We are excited to announce that Kathi Moore, Social Security Administration, will serve as the new CAB Vice-Chair and Gloria Owens, Environmental Protection Agency, will serve as the CAB Chair.

We look forward to seeing everyone soon! Stay tuned for more information on a February 2011 CAB date.



Visitors were taken on a tour of the facility where branch supervisors and managers discussed the functions of that area.



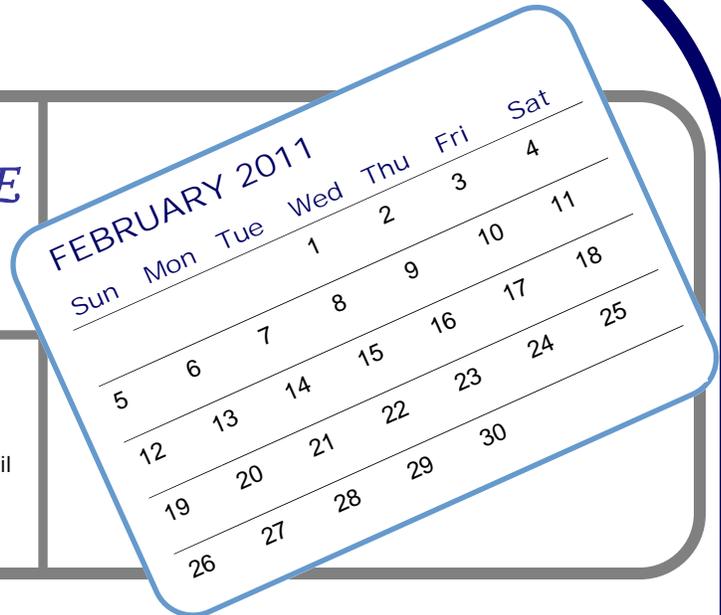


SAVE THE DATE

2011 Kansas City CAB

Meeting details coming soon...

If you have questions or agenda suggestions, please email
KFCCAB@fms.treas.gov!



Partial 224 Changes Coming Soon...

Calling all Partial FMS 224 (P224) Users! Within the next year, GWA will be making changes to Partial FMS 224 application as well as the Reclassification module used by GWA Full Reporters. There will be a new look, a new name— Classification Transactions and Accountability (CTA) — and enhancements. Please visit <http://www.fms.treas.gov/gwa/training.html> for a CTA On-Line Tutorial to get acquainted with the upcoming changes.

Reconciliation or Monthly Reporting related questions or concerns

GWA Customer Assistance Help Desk

(202) 874 - 8270

User Enrollment or other GWA application specific questions or concerns

Treasury Service Center

(877) 440 - 9476

CTA system related questions or concerns

Eugenia Ferrette – Team Lead

(202) 874 - 8209

Eugenia.Ferrette@fms.treas.gov

Sheila Higgs – Back-up Team Lead

(202) 874 - 8196

Sheila.Higgs@fms.treas.gov

GOVERNMENTWIDE
 ACCOUNTING & REPORTING
gwa
 Modernization

"Code of the West"

It May Be Old But It Still Works

When I was asked if I wanted to submit an article for this issue of the "Dispatch" it prompted me to think of a wide range of activities, projects, initiatives, and events that may be of interest and also hopefully impart some morsel of infinite wisdom. What caught my attention was the date of July 24, 2010, upon which has been designated the National Day of the American Cowboy. Now, you are asking yourself what possible connection can there be between cowboys and anything? Well, if you'll bear with me I'll explain.

As the story goes, there once was a cattleman by the name of Willis McCutcheon in Lavaca County, Texas. It was February, 1874, and he had a herd of cattle that needed to be driven to market at Ellsworth, Kansas. McCutcheon hired a young man by the name of West to move his herd telling him that he would receive half of whatever the cows bring over the price per head after expenses. West said, "That would do".

On the drive to Kansas a blizzard struck and some 78 horses from the trail crew's remuda (herd) were killed. Not to be distracted from his promise to bring the herd to market, West traded some of the cows for six horses and a mule. A month later he delivered the remaining cattle to the stockyards in Ellsworth where he sold them off through the summer and fall.

West returned to Texas in December of the same year (1874). McCutcheon, after deducting the value of the lost horses, paid West, as originally agreed, the profit sum of --75 cents. The cowboy West simply smiled and pocketed the change without a complaint. After all, that was the result of the deal he and McCutcheon had agreed to and sealed with their word and a handshake.

There are many, many examples of similar stories from the old west and they all share a common theme that became representative of a cowboy way of life and a set of values or beliefs to live by. These values and beliefs have come to be known as the "Code of the West". They were never written down in law, regulation, or some policy handbook—it was just understood and that's the way you went about your business and interacted with people. While there are many variations of the so-called "Code", there are ten overarching principles that are generally recognized to make up the Code of the West:

- 1) **Live each day with courage;** courage in this context doesn't necessarily mean performing a courageous act each day, but simply facing and fulfilling one's obligations and commitments (e.g., family, work, etc)
- 2) **Take pride in your work;** whatever you do, do it better than what is expected
- 3) **Always finish what you start;** starting anything is the easy part; finishing what you start is a sign of commitment and persistence
- 4) **Do what has to be done;** some chores are easy while others can be very unpleasant; the point is facing—not shirking—and doing the right thing
- 5) **Be tough, but fair;** an honest day's work for an honest day's wages



- 6) **When you make a promise, keep it;** goes to the heart of one's integrity; if you say you are going to do something, follow through and do it
- 7) **Ride for the brand;** in today's world, means that if you work for an organization you abide by and support their rules, mission, and vision; also known as "loyalty"
- 8) **Talk less and say more;** it's not the quantity of words but the quality of the words
- 9) **Remember that some things aren't for sale;** refers to integrity and honesty—a person's "word" or promise; if you do something to harm or tarnish your integrity it's next to impossible to get it back; best not to lose it in the first place
- 10) **Know where to draw the line;** can carry multiple meanings but generally refers to living within a set of values and principles

So does such a set of principles and values have a place in today's society, country, and world? Let's hope so! "The Code" may stem from an era that's 150 years old but the values and principles that make it up are as applicable and useful today as they were then. They are a set of values that can be useful in both our personal lives as well as our careers. Why, I would even go so far as to say organizations could benefit through the use and adherence of a set of values such as "The Code". And so it is at the Kansas City Financial Center (KFC).

Here at the KFC spread, everything from the manner in which our employees conduct themselves to the service we provide to our customers is in keeping with the principles contained in "The Code". For example, when employees work overtime to complete a task they are doing so because they understand that it falls under the principle of "do what needs to be done". Likewise, when we inform our customers that we will do something we follow through and do it; which is in keeping with the principle "when you make a promise, keep it". Practicing "The Code" permits the KFC to build a firm foundation for its business and customer relationships with federal program agencies.

While the ways of the old west may have come and gone, there remains a "spirit", in the form of "The Code", that lives on today, and if harnessed properly can serve as a guiding landmark to personal and business success!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Seymour B. ...". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Regional Director

Treasury's All-EFT Initiative

On June 17, 2010, the Treasury Department issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) for a multi-year initiative to streamline payment processing by issuing all federal benefit and non-tax payments electronically. By moving away from paper checks – a payment method that is both costly and resource-intensive – the proposal is projected to save the Agency \$300 million over the first five years, and \$120 million each year thereafter. Recognizing the widespread use and accessibility of electronic banking today, Treasury is proposing that Federal Benefit and Program Agencies transition all payment activity to electronic delivery over the next several years to reduce federal spending and improve payment security.

Electronic payments are a convenient, safe, and cost-effective way for people to receive federal payments. And, when people get payments electronically, they don't need to visit their bank to make a deposit or to access their money. This can be especially important for benefit recipients who are elderly, disabled, or lack access to transportation. Additionally, check fraud and identity theft are a growing concern for everyone, including those who receive federal benefits. Furthermore, the data shows that nine out of ten reported payment issues were associated with paper checks and not direct deposits.

During the sixty-day NPRM comment period the public was encouraged to submit commentary on elements of the proposed rule. There are several key points in the All-EFT Initiative:

- Beginning March 1, 2011, individuals who apply for Federal benefits would be required to receive their benefit payments electronically.
- Recipients already receiving benefit payments by check could continue to do so until March 1, 2013.
- Beginning March 1, 2013, all recipients of Federal benefits would receive their payments electronically via direct deposit, either to their bank account or to a **Direct Express**[®] pre-paid debit card.

For the millions of Americans who don't have a bank account, Treasury provides the **Direct Express**[®] pre-paid debit card program. Each month the benefit payment is credited to the **Direct Express**[®] card which can then be used by the recipient to make withdrawals at an ATM, or pay for goods and services – just like using a regular debit card. There is no cost to sign up and there are no monthly fees. Most **Direct Express**[®] debit card transactions are free though there can be minor fees for a limited number of optional transactions. Since its launch in 2008, more than one million Americans have already chosen the **Direct Express**[®] card for their federal benefits, and user satisfaction is very high.

Pending approval of this effort, the U.S. Treasury is committed to a major public outreach initiative to ensure that all impacted Americans – people heading to retirement as well as current check recipients – are well informed and prepared for these changes. If the proposed rule change is finalized, Treasury will implement an educational campaign to reach all of the affected groups, including senior citizens, people with disabilities, veterans, and all other benefit recipients. Agencies issuing federal benefits, including organizations like the Social Security Administration, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Office of Personnel Management, and the Railroad Retirement Board, will participate in the public education effort to ensure that the message is focused and reaches the required audience. More than 1,800 community groups and financial institutions are already partnering with Treasury's **Go Direct**[®] campaign to encourage beneficiaries to enroll in direct deposit. These groups will be instrumental in this outreach effort to share information with their customers and members.

This far-reaching initiative will ensure a more efficient and cost-effective government. The proposal will improve payment security and eliminate the fraud risk associated with paper checks. By converting all payments to electronic delivery, Treasury will minimize the Agency's environmental impact and carbon footprint by reducing both paper consumption and the emissions generated by the transportation and delivery of check payments. Treasury is committed to improvements that increase efficiency, reduce Federal spending, and modernize how the government does business. With this initiative we can accomplish all three goals. This can truly be a win-win opportunity for Government and the American Taxpayer.

PAM: What's Coming

For those agencies unfamiliar with the Payment Application Modernization (PAM), this initiative is designed to standardize and modernize several existing mainframe-based software applications. These applications are utilized by the Regional Financial Centers (RFCs) to distribute more than one billion federal payments each year.

To maximize efficiencies the new PAM payment application will standardize several aspects of the payment process and related services. Some of these changes will occur as agencies convert to the PAM standard format while others will be applied to existing legacy payment files as early as November 2010. Specifically, the following payment activities are being standardized:

Payment Input Format

Since much of the data provided in payment files is largely uniform in nature, i.e. payee, date, amount, address, or routing and transit number, etc, the process lends itself to the use of a standard input format. Each agency will use the standard format to submit both check and electronic funds transfer (EFT/ACH) payments to their servicing Treasury RFC. The standard format will also accommodate TAS/BETC reporting to Governmentwide Accounting (GWA). The current version of the PAM standard format can be found at <http://fms.treas.gov/pam/formats.html>.

Planned Availability Date: As early as November 2010 but no later than October 1, 2014.

Status Notification of Payment Files

The PAM application will replace the current pre-edit report by providing the agency with a standard notification indicating the status of their payment file(s) as: received, accepted, accepted with errors, or rejected. This notice can be delivered to the agency via email, Connect Direct, or both.

Hold Processing

The PAM application will accommodate a standard hold process. A "hold" is a prearranged service used by certain agencies to instruct a RFC to stop a specific payment(s) from being issued.

Treasury Check Face

Over the years, Treasury has essentially customized the information on the face of a Treasury check for each type of payment (i.e., SSA/SSI/OPM/RRB/VA/IRS/etc). This has resulted in 30 different check faces. The PAM application will provide a standard check face presentation that can accommodate all agency needs.

The PAM initiative ushers in a new way of federal payment processing and incorporates a number of new reporting requirements that will impact agencies. This includes such requirements as Treasury Account Symbol (TAS) and Business Event Transaction Code (BETC), Common Government Accounting Codes (CGAC), and transparency reporting as defined by USASpending.gov.

The PAM team continues to provide training to address specific details, including those that will impact federal agencies. Please visit the website (<http://fms.treas.gov/pam/index.html>) for the latest news and information on WebEx training sessions and conference participation.



CTX Transition

The Kansas City Financial Center (KFC) recently assumed the primary Corporate Trade Exchange (CTX) processing responsibility for customers of the Austin Financial Center (AFC). These types of Automated Clearing House (ACH) file formats are of great benefit to agency customers because of their ability to carry large amounts of information in the form of addendum records. A feature that allows for several individual payments, along with an invoice, to be issued in just one payment file, rather than the need to create a separate ACH file for each payment; thereby, significantly decreasing workload and the possibility of data-entry error.

On March 8th, KFC successfully processed the first ten CTX files to be transitioned from AFC. By April, the move was complete and Kansas City had incorporated all Austin CTX files ranging anywhere from eight to fifty-six per day. KFC managed this increased workload and maintained efficiency with both the new CTX payments and the existing payments files.

KFC would like to assure both new (AFC) and already established KFC customers that you will continue to receive the high level of customer satisfaction they have come to rely on and expect from the Kansas City Financial Center. Our number one goal is to provide you with excellent customer service, while ensuring your payments are made on time, every time!

Should your agency need assistance, please contact the KFC Help Desk at (816) 414-2100.

THANK YOU!

The Kansas City Regional Financial and Operations Center would like to thank our customer agencies for their feedback on the first Annual Financial Management Service (FMS) Customer Satisfaction Survey. This was the only survey that FMS requested agency representatives to complete this year. The survey addressed the services, publications and programs associated with the following areas: Payment Management, Debt Management Services, Federal Finance, Governmentwide Accounting, Information Resources and Management.

We value your feedback and appreciate your participation!

**Department of the Treasury
Financial Management Service
Kansas City Regional Financial & Operations Center
Customer Assistance Support Staff
www.fms.treas.gov/kfc
KFC-CAS@fms.treas.gov**