

Compensation FOCUS

for the compensation community



Summer 2001

No. 45

Generic Pro Forma on Launch Pad

Compensation Sector staff are so enthusiastic about the new generic pro forma that they are conducting an extensive information campaign to get the word out. The generic pro forma, which was the subject of an article entitled "Regional Pay System Improved" in the Spring 2001 issue of *Compensation FOCUS* (No. 44), is designed to streamline several tasks Compensation Advisors now perform.

Using this tool, a Compensation Advisor will be able to create several transactions that are similar in nature in much less time than before, without repeating keystrokes. And it does not introduce any changes to the current pay and benefits process.

The generic pro forma will be implemented in stages. In phase I, the generic pro forma process will generate the list of accounts that requires similar transaction. For example, these lists will be generated based on all employees in a particular classification and employee type. Once the list of accounts has been created, the Compensation Advisor will choose the type of pay action required and create it for the first account. The second account from the list will be presented with the same information as the first account. The Compensation Advisor will have the option of creating the transaction, changing some of the informa-

tion prior to creating the transaction or simply bypassing the account.

Phase II will allow the generic pro forma to be used for the multiple transactions required when an employee is Taken On Strength, while phase III will permit a user to retrieve a previous transaction from the Transaction Data Base for reuse and recreate the transaction with current information.

Using the generic pro forma will reduce input time and decrease the repetitive nature of the work and likelihood of error. It will also facilitate the implementation of initiatives requiring significant data entry, such as UCS.

Prior to the launch of phase I in early fall, Compensation Sector staff are taking several steps to publicize the generic pro forma, including holding information sessions for compensation managers across the country, issuing compensation directives and producing job aids. A compensation directive will be issued on the Compensation Web Site three weeks prior to the implementation of each phase; prior to the implementation of phase I, a job aid will be issued simultaneously with the directive. Presentations on the generic pro forma will also be given to Compensation Advisors by their regional pay offices.

Phases II and III will be implemented later in the year.

Transaction DataBase: It's all about getting the answers quickly

Whether you are a new or experienced On-line pay user, the On-line Inquiry system's Transaction Data Base (TDB) can make your work easier and more manageable. Frequent users of the facility say that most times they can answer account specific questions by reviewing the information available in the TDB in conjunction with their records and other files available in the On-line Inquiry system.

The TDB provides displays of transactions as they were created, and the stage of processing at which each transaction currently stands. In the TDB, you can see transactions pertaining to an employee's account that have been created by the employing department or agency, the Regional Pay System (RPS), or the Pay Office.

The TDB is your source to ensure that salary and deduction changes and adjustments are processed, payments issued, leave without pay recovered and cheques cancelled, etc. It also can assist you in controlling and monitoring the input of multiple transactions that require input in separate RPS updates.

Regional pay offices continue to receive several requests for information that is readily available on the TDB. Getting basic information by using the TDB on a regular basis would expedite account inquiries, since there would be less need to contact the pay offices for this type of assistance. Fewer calls for help will benefit the entire compensation community because the Application and Program Support Officers/Advisory Officers will be more available to assist with complex pay and pension matters.

For some hints on how to use the TDB, see the excerpt from *Compensation FOCUS* issue No. 19 (Sept-Oct, 1994) on page 2 of this issue.

News Flash!

Compensation FOCUS will now be available for viewing on the Compensation Sector web site commencing with Issue No. 45. Under the "Publications" portion of the site, the heading "Compensation FOCUS" will be added. From this heading, clients will be taken to the list of published issues that will be broken down by year.

Clients will be provided the option to discontinue receiving a hardcopy of *Compensation FOCUS*, by providing notification and pertinent address information through E-mail.



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Training Courses Now on Web

The eight modules on pay, pension plans and insurance plans of the interactive Orientation course for Compensation Advisors have been mounted on the web site just as a new recruitment program gears up within the compensation community. The

course is a prerequisite for the Beginners' On-Line Pay course.

These interactive online courses, which make training more accessible for the compensation community, are part of the business line's integrated learning strategy.



Working Tools

This section is devoted to sharing ideas and information that make work easier.

Hints on How to use the TDB

(This is only one of several ways to enter the TDB)

At sign on

- 1) From the Pay Benefit Menu, press the "Inquiry" function key.
 - 2) When the Inquiry Menu appears, type "TDB" and press "enter". This will bring you to the Transaction Data Base Menu.
 - 3) There are two options available in the Transaction Data Base Menu:
 - a) If you know the transaction sequence number, you can type it and then press "enter". This will make the Actual Transaction Screen appear. The status of that transaction in the Regional Pay System will appear at the bottom of the screen. For additional information, type "APPE" and press "enter"; the Transaction Data Control Screen will appear. (For further information on the various stages of a transaction see Chapter 18-4-1 of the PPIM.)
 - b) If you don't know the transaction sequence number, type your department acronym + pay list + the appropriate identification (i.e. PRI - Personal Record Identifier) and press "enter". A list of all the transactions available for the account for the last two years, starting with the CURRENT portion of the TDB which contained the transactions that have been created in the last 60 days followed by the ARCHIVE portion of the TDB will appear for the remaining transactions. Then, select one or more transaction sequence numbers and press "enter".
- To exit from the Transaction Data Base press the "Inquiry" function key.

If you are working on a transaction

- Press the "Inquiry" function key and the Inquiry Menu Screen will appear.
 - Type "TDB" and press "enter" and the Transaction Data Base Menu will appear.
 - Proceed as above using either method "3a" or "3b".
- Once you have finished, press the "Inquiry" function key to return to the transaction you were working on.

If you are working on a transaction or on another pay list

- First, make sure you have a sequence number for your current transaction by saving or creating it.
- There are two options at this point:
 - a) press the "Ident" key to get to your pay sign on, change the pay list and then press "enter", or
 - b) change the pay list from the Index menu.
 - Press the "Inquiry" key.
 - Proceed as in steps 2 and 3 above.
 - Once you have finished your inquiry, you can retrieve the saved transaction you were working on by pressing the "Inquiry" function key and the "Ident" function key, which will return you to the Sign On Menu
 - From there, you can return to your original pay list and, if necessary, enter into the error correction area (note: this will only work if the transaction you have created has been saved). You can then select the transaction sequence number.

Note: You can view screens for transactions that were initiated by you or by your paying office. Also your department's systems support group should be able to help you identify which keys correspond to the Inquiry and Ident keys on your particular terminal.

If you have any shortcuts, tips or tricks you would like to share with other readers, contact our editor, Diane Gauthier, at (819) 956-6374, or diane.gauthier@pwgsc.gc.ca, or send them to Compensation FOCUS, 10A1 Place du Portage, Phase III, Hull, Quebec, K1A 0S5 (fax: (819) 956-6484)

What's new on the web site?

National Course Offering Directory and Course Registration

The National Capital Region has started announcing when a course is full. Now clients will know immediately whether there is room in a specific course. The benefit for clients is that they will save the time that was previously wasted in arranging another date.

Course Registration Forms

To simplify the process, the National Capital Region has added drop-down menus so that the client can easily choose the dates desired. When a course is full, the course date is removed from the drop-down menu.

Broadcast Messages

As of June 12, 2001, copies of broadcast messages have been posted on the Compensation Sector web site. These will be divided into the following categories:

- Collective Agreements
- Financial Officer
- Insurance
- Pay
- Pension
- Projects
- Statutory Deductions
- Systems Problems



New messages will be advertised in the "What's New" section. An icon at the bottom of the "Welcome" page provides a direct link to the Broadcast page.

Compensation FOCUS

is published to provide timely work-related news to employees involved in compensation services at Public Works and Government Services Canada and its client departments.

We welcome letters, opinions and story ideas.

Send your contributions to

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is written and produced by Krista Dunlop and Associates Inc.

Reminder – Civilian Personnel Records

Since April 1, 2001, the civilian personnel records, previously held in the National Capital Records, are being serviced by the Manitoba Region Records Centre.

Effective April 2001, all requests for files should be directed to the Supervisor, Reference Processing. You can proceed as follows:

By mail: to the address given below

By phone: (204) 983-4495

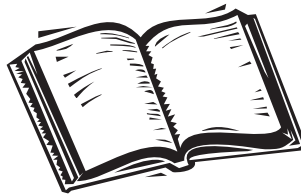
By fax: (204) 983-4649

By e-mail: supciv@archives.ca

Please Note: Due to security requirements please refrain from sending protected information by e-mail.

All records must be shipped pre-paid to the following address:

National Archives of Canada
Federal Records Centre
Manitoba Region
1700 Inkster Blvd.
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R2X 2T1



Data Integrity and Financial Framework: What's Happening

The Data Integrity and Financial Framework initiative, which has now become two projects, is proceeding well. Launched following the 1999 legislative changes to the Public Service Superannuation Act, the two projects were established to ensure not only accurate contributions to the newly created Pension Investment Board, but also pension data quality.

Data Integrity

The Data Integrity project is designed to ensure complete and accurate information for pension administrative purposes. Since the data under review has been generated both before and after April 1, 2000, when the provisions of Pension Reform Bills C-71 and C-78 came into force, it naturally falls into pre-pension reform or historical data, and post-pension reform data. Either way, the project's objective is to ensure the accuracy and completeness in the Contributor system of salary, service and contributions.

Clean-up of post-pension reform data is well underway, with the Data Integrity Product Team running quarterly data integrity tests to verify the relationship between salary, service and contributions, which are the key pension elements. Any accounts that don't pass these tests are automatically identified for analysis by the Project Team and will be corrected by the Superannuation Directorate. In addition, the tests help uncover system problems that are being addressed by Compensation Sector.

The clean-up of the pre-pension reform data, which assesses the quality of pension data dating from before March 31, 2000, is currently in a pilot phase. Michel David, who has been spearheading both the framework and integrity projects, describes this part of the project as "feeling the pulse of the data." He and his staff use sampling techniques to judge the necessity of correcting data. Analysis will be completed in early fall, at which time the team will develop a work plan for data correction as required.

The Data Integrity project represents a major step toward providing employees with web access to their personal data.

Financial Framework

With the Financial Framework project, PWGSC's aim is to improve existing systems so that crown corporations may provide the Compensation Sector with the service, salaries and contribution data for their employees. Once PWGSC has the data, it will assess data integrity. This will also allow PWGSC to provide additional services to the Corporations such as the Employee Benefit Statements.

This project includes the design of accounts receivable tracking systems for all employers (Treasury Board and Corporations), that will make it possible to track and monitor the repayment of elective service payments and the recovery of Leave Without Pay deficiencies.

Update on the Pension Calculator

The Pension Calculator, which allows employees to estimate their pensions at retirement via the web, was implemented in all departments and agencies during the months of March and April. Departments and agencies were split into groups of 50,000 employees and provided access over a five-week period through a letter asking the Director General of Human Resources to inform them of the availability and address of the calculator site.

The early statistics are extremely favourable. During March, the Pension Calculator web site received 45,000 hits, with 11,500 calculations being performed. In April these numbers climbed to 90,000 hits and over 30,000 pension calculations requested. Employee comments, which have been very positive, have focused on the desire for more functionality, CPP/QPP reductions, and personal pension questions.

Currently, the Pension Calculator requires employees to enter their personal data. Future releases of the calculator will include the eagerly awaited automated Employee Pension Benefits Statement, the ability to perform part-time pension estimates, and Gross to Net calculations.

The Pension Calculator can be accessed through Internet or GENet connections, and is available on the PWGSC, GOS, and Compensation Publiservice web sites at the following addresses:

<http://publiservice.pwgsc.gc.ca/compensation>
<http://www.pwgsc.gc.ca/compensation>





This regular column in Compensation FOCUS is provided by the national Association of Compensation Managers to share its views on current compensation issues.

Coaching is Key to Apprenticeship Program

Using Health Canada's Advisory Training Program as a base, the ACM has developed a framework for its new Compensation Trainee Apprenticeship Program, soon to fill the compensation function's short-term training needs.

The framework calls for a coaching methodology to provide specific expertise and focus, and to stimulate achievement. The requirements for coaches include technical expertise, knowledge, in-depth experience, credibility, communication skills, and training skills.

Under this methodology, a trainee is given clearly defined and measurable objectives at the beginning of the program, then receives instructions and develops skills by working with an experienced and knowledgeable specialist. Coaches must show empathy and patience, and be conscious of the fact that learning is an individual process. They must also create a learning environment that meets trainee needs by adjusting training style, adapting to changing situations, and setting goals and strategies. In addition, they are required to determine weaknesses and have the ability to correct them, develop strategies for problem solving, and break down complex issues into their various components. Overall, coaches must be dedicated to improving performance by providing continuous feedback.

Some organizations may wish to assign the role of coach to a Compensation Supervisor. This is a decision that will be made by individual organizations, based on their own requirements.

The Role of the Organization in Coaching

The coaching methodology is being developed to recruit, retain and develop talented individuals. However, to be successful, the organizations sponsoring trainees must implement support mechanisms for the coaches and the trainees.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Training for the coaches;
- Support of management, compensation, and benefits team;
- Support for the coaches, i.e. creation of an inter-department coaches' forum to exchange ideas, and strategies;
- Support from the PWGSC Compensation Operations; and
- Support from Departmental Training Centres.

PWGSC's Support to the Community's Short-Term Training Strategy

PWGSC Compensation Operations has committed to provide support to the community, particularly in the area of training new recruits.

The generic pedagogical outline for the Compensation Advisor Training Program is

broken down into 4 blocks over a 20-month duration. Departments will address some of the training needs internally. However, all PWGSC offerings will be followed within the 20-month duration.

Pedagogical outline compensation advisor training program

| Title of module | Length of time | PWGSC courses to be taken during those periods of time |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|--|
| Introduction | 1 month | Orientation Course for Compensation Advisors - self-paced, web-enabled (4 hours) |
| Module 1- Leave and overtime | 3 months | NIL |
| Module 2 - Pay and insurance | 10 months | |
| Basic pay | 5 months | Beginners' On-line Pay Course - classroom (5 days) |
| Advanced pay | 2 months | Advanced Pay Course - classroom (4.5 days) |
| Insurances | 3 months | Insurance Overview - self-paced (.5 day) Public Service Health Care Plan - classroom (3 days) Disability Insurance Plan - classroom (2.5 days) Public Service Management Insurance Plan - classroom (4 days) Public Service Dental Care Plan - classroom (1 day) |
| Module 3 - Pension | 6 months | Benedit Overview - self-paced module (3 hours) Pension Overview - self-paced module (.5 day) Commencing PSSA Contributions - classroom (1.5 days) Commencing Supplementary Death Benefit (SDB) - classroom (.5 day) "Contributor Inquiry" and "Pension Support System (PSS)" Applications - classroom (1 day) Increasing Pensionable Service - classroom (2.5 days) LWOP and Deficiency Calculations - classroom (2 days) Contributor Benefits - classroom (3.5 days) Cessation of Employment while Receiving Disability Benefits - classroom (1.5 days) Survivor Benefits - classroom (1.5 days) Pension Benefits Division - classroom (3 days) Personal Documentation Overview self-paced module (.5 day) |

The training components of the PWGSC Regional Pay Offices are aware of the recruitment efforts and are committed to supporting client departments. However, this must be a collaborative effort that starts with communication as soon as recruitment plans are in place. The earlier that PWGSC regional offices are made aware of the annual training needs for new recruits and current

employees, and of any planned deviation from the generic training program approach proposed by the ACM, the better they can respond to individual needs. The resulting training arrangements will take into consideration available qualified human resources and properly set up facilities as well as travel requirements, where applicable.