

IDIS "LIVE"

News You Can Use . . . for the Integrated Disbursement and Information System

Office of Community Planning and Development
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Exclusively "Live" . . .

Welcome. . . . to the premiere issue of IDIS "LIVE" -- an official newsletter of the newly formed IDIS Users' Group. The Users' Group was recently established to serve as a formal network of information-sharing among users of CPD's Integrated Disbursement and Information System. Through the Users' Group, we hope to foster an open dialogue and help each user to learn from the experiences of others, making IDIS truly beneficial to all.

Membership in the IDIS Users' Group is exclusive to CPD grantees that are operational, i.e. "live," on IDIS. This newsletter will be issued monthly to all live grantees, and will contain information regarding the latest enhancements to the system along with news of upcoming events. It will also

provide answers to frequently-asked questions and will notify you of upcoming Users' Group meetings. We hope to make your experiences on IDIS as problem-free as possible.

The IDIS "LIVE" newsletter is *your* newsletter. We print what you want to see in it. Therefore, we encourage you to send us your comments, questions, and concerns. If you have a helpful hint to share with other users, send it in; if you have a question that you've not been successful in getting an answer to, send that in, too. This is *your* tool for sharing IDIS tips, asking questions, and sharing difficulties experienced with the system.

Our goal is to make the system work for each of you. Let us know how we're doing!

Close Encounters of the IDIS Kind . . .

When making changes to dollar amounts that have been previously entered on IDIS screens, **always be sure to completely delete the previous amount before typing in a new amount.** By paying careful attention here, you are likely to avoid a major mishap like the one that happened to one CPD grantee....

After undergoing a relatively painless transition to IDIS, it came time for one grantee to use the IDIS voucher request screen (C04MD10) to draw funds. However, an error occurred during that process that subsequently drove everyone crazy in trying to resolve it.

It seems that the IDIS user attempted to make a

however, the user failed to completely erase the original amount of \$7,141. When the user typed in the new amount, \$8,141, what was actually entered was a combination of the two amounts: \$7,141,814!

Secondly, the same revision error was made on the "authorized amount" field on the C04MA08 program selection screen under the activity. A third error occurred when the person authorizing the drawdown approved the erroneous request on the C04MD12 screen.

Once the error was finally deciphered, everyone involved enjoyed a good laugh. And, wouldn't you know, the \$7 million error has since led to a new

correction to an amount that was previously requested. In doing so,

nickname for this IDIS user: He is now referred to as "the 7 million dollar man"!

Q & A

You've Got Questions?
We've Got Answers . . .

We know you've got questions about IDIS . . . and, the Users' Group is here to answer them -- all of them! This "Q & A" column is planned as a regular feature of the IDIS "LIVE" newsletter. Your technical questions, such as "How do I . . . ?" will be answered here by CPD technical staff.

If we haven't addressed your question yet, write to us via regular mail, cc:Mail, or on the Internet. See page 4 for contact information.

■ ***How do I view the projects and activities data?***

It's easy. From the IDIS main menu, select option "C", and the C04MA59 screen will appear. From the C04MA59 screen, Press the "F1" key. You will then see a list of your proposed projects and converted data. To select a project to view, place an "x" in front of the desired project, and then press the "Enter" key. From here, you will see a list of activities to select from.

To scroll down the list, use the Shift + F8 keys; to scroll back up, use the Shift + F7 keys. If these combinations do not work, it probably means your keyboard may be configured differently. If so, simply use Shift + F6 to go forward and Shift + F5 to scroll back.

■ ***Can a Field Office Representative view a grantee's data?***

He or she certainly can. Just select option "C" from the IDIS main menu, and the C04MA59 screen should then appear. On this screen, use the arrow keys to point to the first character of the UOG CODE data field and press the "F1" key. You will see a list of your grantees (UOG CODE, UOG Number and grantee Name). You will also see a listing of proposed projects and converted data.

To scroll down the list, use the Shift + F8 keys. To select a grantee, place an "x" in front of the desired grantee, and then press the "Enter" key. From there you will see a list of projects for that grantee. Place an "x" in front of the project you want to select and a list of activities will appear.

To scroll down the list, use the Shift + F8 keys; to scroll back, use the Shift + F7 keys together. If these combinations do not work, it means that your keyboard may be configured differently, in which case, use Shift + F6 to go forward, and Shift + F5 to scroll back.

■ ***How will a Consolidated Plan amendment get into IDIS?***

The Consolidated Plan amendments will be transmitted from the Grantee to the Field Office and then directly to the National Database using CPDTS. It may take 1-2 days to complete a dataload since the updated information is processed overnight.

A system enhancement that is currently being worked on by IDIS staff is the capability to edit the proposed project table in IDIS.

■ ***Can a Grantee modify data loaded for GPR's?***

Yes! Once you are in production, all the information on CDBG activities loaded from GPR can be modified. You may see all of the converted activities under a project labeled, "1994 CDBG Converted Project." The activity number from the GPR is entered in the Grantee Activity Number field in IDIS, for your convenience.

NewsFlash

Upcoming News Items & Events

- *Hot off the press . . .* The latest release of IDIS software, **Version 2.6**, is now available! The primary enhancement of V2.6 involves the **HQ/FO Drawdown View Capability**. This new feature will allow CPD staff at Headquarters and in Field Offices to easily select and view a specific grantee's drawdown data. It will allow a HQ/FO person to press the F1 key from the C04MD05 screen (Drawdown Authorization) to have the UOG Code/UOG Number/Grantee Name help screen appear, to allow the user to select which grantee's data to view. An informational message will be displayed at the bottom of the screen when a HQ/FO person enters the Authorization screen.

As in other selection/help screens of this nature, a Headquarters user will have to enter a Region and Field Office code to get the grantee list. A Field Office user will simply get a list of grantees in their Field Office to select from. Once a grantee is selected, the user will be able to access the two view options from the Drawdown Menu:

- Option 2: View Grant Summary or Details
- Option 3: View Activity Funding Details

- **USERS, TAKE NOTE!** The very first **Users' Group Meeting** is scheduled for Thursday, **October 24, 1996**, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. It will be located at HUD's Headquarters Building, Room 10233, in Washington, D.C. All IDIS users that are "live" on the system are welcome to attend.

This promises to be an informative session on "hot" topics that are of concern to you, the

IDIS user. Specifically, topics planned for discussion include:

- Recent enhancements to the system;
- Techniques and practices (i.e., best practices) that have been working well for users; and
- "Bugs" that IDIS staff have already been trouble-shooting for you.

Please also come prepared to share your biggest difficulties in using IDIS effectively, and help us to prioritize these problems for our plan of attack in resolving them. Our ongoing goal is to resolve at least 50 percent of the problems identified at each Users' Group meeting no later than the date of the next scheduled meeting. With your input, improvements to IDIS are *always* underway. Hope to see you there!

For More IDIS Information . . .

For more information on IDIS or to send in your comments for the next issue of **IDIS "LIVE"**, use the following:

- Your IDIS Users' Group contact person is **Lincoln Burruss**, at CPD. You may contact him via the following:

Telephone: 202-708-0790, x4570
Internet: lincoln_burruss@hud.gov
Mail: HUD/CPD
Office of Executive Services, Rm

7226

451 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20410

- For technical information, contact the IDIS Hotline at 1-800-273-2573.
- For ID and Password information, contact your local HUD Field Office.

IDIS "TOP TEN" LIST

**Here are the top ten ways to know
you are an IDIS User . . .**

Number 10: You start having dreams about the Main Menu;

Number 9: You have switched your modem from com 3 or 4 to com 1 or 2;

Number 8: You know the CPD Hotline number by heart;

Number 7: You are on a first name basis with all the members of the IDIS Hotline Staff;

Number 6: The screen turns to black and the little orange "working" light is flashing in the bottom right hand corner, . . . but nothing is "working";

Number 5: You have downloaded the "latest" version of the IDIS Student Guide from the HUD BBS;

Number 4: You actually miss the voice of the man on the Voice Response System;

Number 3: You begin to think "Set Up" means something that has already happened to you;

Number 2: You are behind schedule with your "I-owe-you-one" lunches with your computer technician;

and, . . . the Number 1 way to know you are an IDIS User:

**You actually comprehend the phrase,
"Hang up auto dial modem."**