

# IDIS LIVE

¼for the Integrated Disbursement and Information System

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Office of Community Planning and Development

## USERS STAMPEDE TO BUFFALO, PORTLAND

On Friday, September 12, grantees converged on Buffalo, New York. The Users Group meetings are good opportunities for grantees to meet each other, hear about the latest enhancements, and gain valuable tips from HUD Central about using IDIS. The participants in New York were treated to a welcome by **Mike Merrill**, the HUD/CPD Director in Buffalo.

The highlight of this session was a presentation by **Tom Mestico** from the City of Rochester. Tom explained how Rochester has gotten IDIS to work for them by coordinating the reporting of information from other City departments to his office. Tom was joined by **Wilma Wheton**, also with the City of Rochester; both of them were of great help to **Phil Helbling**, HUD Central, in presenting live demonstrations of the major modules within IDIS. *(cont'd. on page 4)*

### RECENT IMPROVEMENTS TO PERFORMANCE-REPORTING

IDIS has several reports for monitoring performance under ESG, CDBG, and HOME. HOPWA performance can be monitored by viewing the screens completed under the HOPWA path.

Some recent improvements—particularly the Status of HOME Grants report and the CDBG Summary of Activities report—have expanded performance-reporting capabilities. These improvements are described below. Programmers are busy working on additional improvements, particularly regarding CDBG financial data and new downloads.

### SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Summary of Accomplishments report (C04PR23) is the only IDIS report that was specifically identified in Joe Smith's December 5, 1996, memo to the field on the requirements for the annual review of performance under the Consolidated Plan. This report has been available for several months.

The primary purpose of this report is to summarize two things: the accomplishments entered under the MA04 screen for CDBG and the number of housing units reported to have been completed under HOME. The report

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also summarizes the funds disbursed during the program year for HOME and CDBG by “priority need” categories.

Currently, this report summarizes grantees’ 1996 program year activities. By the end of 1997, grantees will be able to select the program year. The current report assumes that the CDBG accomplishments on the MA04 screen apply to program year 1996. By the end of 1997, grantees will be able to retain and manipulate copies of the MA04 screens for each program year.

## **CONSOLIDATED PLAN ANNUAL PERFORMANCE**

The Consolidated Plan Annual Performance report (C04PR06) relates the projects proposed for each plan year to accomplishments reported for each of the activities set up under those projects. The report compares the description and proposed funding for projects with the dollars disbursed and the accomplishments reported for the activities related to each project. The information is ordered according to plan year and project number, with the most recent plan year shown first.

Changes are planned for this report, too. An enhancement scheduled for next year will allow users to view projects with activities that were “open” over a selected program year.

## **STATUS OF HOME GRANTS**

The Status of HOME Grants report (C04PR27) is new. It provides key financial information about HOME grants. It displays information that is needed to determine funding for specific program areas, such as CHDO reservations, administrative funds, and CHDO operating funds. It also provides information on overall commitments and disbursements by fiscal year.

While this is a new report for IDIS, it is not new for HOME. The Cash and Management Information System (CMIS) had a similar “Status of Funds” report (called the “CAA”).

A couple of minor enhancements are already planned to clarify possible issues with this initial version of the report. Specifically, the “Total Authorized Amounts” in the PJ Administrative and the CHDO Operating areas of the report will be changed so that they are always 10 percent and 5 percent, respectively, of the total amount authorized for each fiscal year. (The amounts in the system

*In this issue of IDIS Live ¼*

contain zero for recent grants.)

## **SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES**

The new Summary of Activities report (C04PR03) features several improvements that will help with the review of CDBG activities. It replaces the “Summary of Activities with Direct Benefits” report. (The title is changed because non-direct benefit CDBG activities are also included.) The total number of activities shown is reduced substantially; the reports lists only those CDBG activities that were active during program year 1996. To be considered “active” for 1996, the activity must have

- a 1996 plan year; or
- a plan year before 1996 and a status of “completed” or “cancelled”; or
- a plan year before 1996 and a status of “completed” or “cancelled” with a final draw during the reporting period.

The report provides a full description of the activity from the MA01 and MA04 common path screen. It also provides information on draws made throughout the 1996 program year as well as those completed during the program year. Minor format changes to this report improve its readability.

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A report menu to be implemented early next year will give the user the ability to generate a report for any program year. ■

## A SPECIAL NOTE FOR IDIS LOCAL ADMINISTRATORS

You should have received by now a memo that John Mayer distributed on September 22, 1997. The memo describes “a major change” that will be made to IDIS. If you have not received the memo, contact the CPD Representative in

### THE SF-272

Despite earlier advice to the contrary **grantees are required to submit the Federal Cash Transactions report (SF-272)**. HUD must collect and review this report for compliance with OMB (Office of Management and Budget) requirements. OMB requires this report in an effort to obtain financial information from the recipients of Federal funding assistance. This report is to be submitted to the program recipient's local field office, which reviews it for completeness and accuracy.

Under OMB Circular A-110, which is implemented under 24 CFR Part 85, HUD program recipients are required to submit the SF-272 report—quarterly and annually—to the administering Federal agency. With regard to the CDBG program, 24 CFR 570.610 requires compliance with 24 CFR Parts 84 and 85; therefore, all CDBG program recipients must complete this report.

CPD field offices have been able, for some time, to confirm receipt of this report automatically through the HUD Financial System. Prior to the IDIS conversion process, the HUD Financial System could automatically suspend drawdown activities for program recipients who

- The software comes with three compact disks: one is labeled “Community 2020—Grantee Version” and contains a CD for the region in which your community is located. **This is the only CD that you need to install 2020.**
- The other two disks in the package contain street and geographic data. They are from the off-the-shelf Maptitude product and **do not need to be loaded** onto your computer, because the information on these disks is contained in the 2020 CD itself. We decided to leave these disks in the package since they come with Maptitude and it would simply require more effort to remove them than to leave them in.

your local HUD office, or send a cc:Mail message to John Mayer (John\_Mayer@hud.gov). (You may also refer to *IDIS Live* 11, which included an article by John describing this major change. ■)

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had not submitted the SF-272 report on time. Since the IDIS conversion, the suspension can be done through the IDIS Utilities submenu on the C04MJ03 screen (Block/Unblock Grantee). Once this report is received by the field office and deemed complete and accurate, the field office has the authority to unblock the grantee to restore their drawdown capabilities.

It is important to understand that, whether or not this OMB requirement is fulfilled through an automated process or not, it is still a requirement. HUD program fund recipients must comply with the requirements, including all CDBG program recipients. ■

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## COMMUNITY 2020 SOFTWARE

*The following article was contributed by Bill Seedyke, Community Connections, HUD Headquarters.*

After reviewing a number of your questions about installing the Community 2020 software in the IDIS Users Group, I'd like to offer clarification on a couple of points:

For instructions regarding installation of the software, I recommend that you consult the “Community 2020 User Guide” that was included in the package (beginning on page 21).

And, finally, we have taken steps to ensure that the Community Connections Helpline is better able to answer basic questions, so that you will not have to consult with the software vendor. The phone number for the Helpline is 1-800-998-9999. ■

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## “SQL 911” PROBLEMS

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Have you ever gotten an “SQL 911” error message in IDIS? Ever wonder what that meant? An SQL 911 error means that the system is busy. Try your transaction again in a few minutes. Typically SQL 911 errors will happen on the C04MD10 screen—the Create Voucher screen. Simply press F4 to clear the error. You may want to process some other items in IDIS before coming back to that transaction. ■

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## HAS YOUR 1997 GRANT MONEY SHOWN UP YET IN IDIS? IDIS RELEASE 3.2.1 BRINGS NEW FUNCTIONALITY

Three new features appeared in the IDIS system effective Monday, September 22, 1997.

1. The HOME “CAA” Report. The Status of HOME Grants Report was released into IDIS. It is the equivalent of the old HOME CMIS CAA report. (See page 2, “Status of HOME Grants.”)
2. The Drawdown Authorization screen (C04D05) has been enhanced to allow large grantees (Detroit, for example) to scroll through their list of subgrantees. This is critically important when doing a draw against a CHDO. It is important to be able to view **all** of your subgrantees. This latest release will allow that.
3. Drawdown enhancement. The drawdown subsystem has now been enhanced to allow you to revise an old voucher (through the Maintain Drawdown option) using a negative amount. This procedure is used only in special circumstances, for instance, if you have returned money to the HUD Financial System (this applies mainly to HOME grantees who have returned money to the system because they did not spend it within the 15-day window after they had drawn it down). Instead of being returned to the grant, the voucher shows up as a negative amount. Grantees to which this applies will typically find their returned funds under HUD Activity Number 01 (Revise).■

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## INTRODUCING...ROGER MERIDETH

If you’ve ever called the CPD Technical Assistance Unit with a technical problem that had you baffled, the chances are that you may already be acquainted with Roger

If your 1997 grant money has not yet shown up in IDIS, check with your field office staff. They may still be reviewing your grant agreement, or it could be in review by Congressional Relations. Each year, these reviews must take place before your grant can be approved. After checking with your field staff, if your money still has not shown up in IDIS after a short period of time, call the CPD Technical Assistance Unit (TAU) at 1-800-273-2573. ■

Merideth. Roger is the TAU/CPD techno-guru.

With more than three years’ experience at HUD/CPD—working with Grantee Performance Reports, Consolidated Planning software, and IDIS—Roger knows the ins and outs of just about every large database in CPD. Even when he isn’t especially familiar with a system, he’ll be able to figure it out and make it understandable to others. His knowledge has probably helped you out somewhere along the way.

State-level grantees who are converting the CDBG Performance Evaluation Reports (PERs) to IDIS will soon come to appreciate Roger’s technical expertise, as well: He has been given front-line responsibility for addressing problems related to States.

If you attended an IDIS Users Group meeting in Little Rock, Louisville, Portland, or Rock Hill, you may have met Roger. He was also in Los Angeles helping out with the recent IDIS Training session.■

## CORRECTION

The names of two grantees were misspelled in “Grantees Converge on Little Rock, Oakland, Milwaukee” (*IDIS Live* 11). **Debbi Jones-Thomas**, of Redwood City, and **Em Rojas**, from Concord, helped Phil Helbling with live data-show demonstrations at the Oakland IDIS Users Group meeting. Thanks again to Debbi and Em!■

## USERS STAMPEDE...

~~(cont’d from page 1) Fifty four people attended the~~ Buffalo Users Group meeting. Special thanks go to **Margie Dziwulski** and **Peggy Meinl** of the HUD/Buffalo office, who coordinated and prepared a great meeting! **Tom Perl**, HUD Buffalo, gave a presentation on the HUD Web site. Thanks Tom!

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On Friday, September 19, grantees came from all over to attend the Portland, Oregon, Users Group meeting. Sixty-seven attended in all. The highlight of the Portland meeting was, again, grantees helping grantees to succeed. **Maurice Anderson**, from the City of Salem, Oregon, shared his city's techniques and recommendations for smoothly implementing and running IDIS. Maurice and **Alicia Blalock**, also with the city of Salem, helped with live demonstrations in IDIS, showing how to fund an activity and complete a draw. Thanks Alicia!

Also helping out was **Al Cooper**, from the City of Sterling. One of the big suggestions from the Portland participants was to extend IDIS's hours of operation to better accommodate people on the West coast. Other valuable suggestions included implementing a "go to" screen router that would take users directly to a particular screen. Allowing users to save a "draft" copy of a voucher so that they would not lose all of their information if they make a mistake was also voiced as a desirable enhancement.

All IDIS users are welcome and encouraged to attend Users Group meetings. The next IDIS Users Group meeting is in Hartford, Connecticut, on October 15.

The final Users Group meeting for the year is scheduled to be in Fort Myers, Florida, on November 21. Make your plans now! This last meeting of the year will be an "end-of-year" wrap-up, and everyone is welcome. Both **Phil Helbling** and **Lincoln Burruss** will be conducting this meeting. If you would like to attend or need further information about the Users Group, call **Sharon Lee-Thomas** at HUD Central at 202-708-0616, ext. 2985.■

Heights, Michigan, who helped to demonstrate the live running and downloading of IDIS reports. **Ray Webber**, of the HUD Portland office, helped to plan and coordinate.

Participants at both meetings delved into issues of mutual interest and concern. Reports were on everyone's mind (this is GPR time). Grantees also learned of new features, functions, and reports that will be coming soon.

extensions will automatically be forwarded to the 800 number, and they will "land" at the bottom of the voice-mail box. This means that they will be the last messages to be transcribed and forwarded to the staff.

In this respect, leaving a voice-mail message at an individual staff member's extension follows IDIS's first-in/first-out model: Calls and messages originally directed to the 800 number come first.

Assist us in our efforts to respond to your questions promptly by calling the 800 number and leaving your messages there. ■

## **ATTENTION IDIS HOTLINE CALLERS!**

We know that you wouldn't be calling a "hotline" unless you needed help on the spot. The Technical Assistance Unit (TAU) is doing its best to respond quickly to your calls.

Please keep this in mind: Priority is given to messages that are left at the TAU 800 number (1-800-273-2573). All messages that are left on individual TAU representatives'

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# IDIS TECHNICAL BULLETIN:

## CREATING AND REVISING CHDO SUBGRANTS IN IDIS

Have you ever wondered how to add a new CHDO for the HOME program now that you are Live in IDIS? Confused? Hopefully the illustration will help.

As you know, in the past HOME grantees simply sent in a new CHDO designation form to the old Cash and Management Information System (CMIS) unit, and the new CHDO would be added. Now **you** do the data entry. What is good about the new system is that now you are in control. Yes, you must do the data entry, but you no longer have to wait for confirmation from Washington that the data you submitted was complete.

The first step in adding a new CHDO (a CHDO with which you have never before done business) starts with your local field office. First, the field office goes in through the IDIS Utilities option (01) and creates the entity (CHDO) so that it exists in the system.

### ADDING A NEW CHDO: THE FIELD OFFICE TAKES THE FIRST STEPS

1. The field office will select IDIS Utilities option 01 (Grantee/ID Exceptions). At the U07 screen, the field office representative will type the UOG code of the grantee and will then press Enter. (The system will generate a sequential UOG number for the subgrantee—in other words, the system-generated number will depend on how many subgrantees already exist for that grantee.)

09/24/97	16:05:54	GRANTEE INQUIRE/UPDATE/ADD	C04MU07
UOG CODE: _____			
TO INQUIRE OR UPDATE ENTER UOG NUMBER; TO ADD LEAVE BLANK.			
UOG NUMBER: _____			
F4 = MAIN MENU			

2. Once the field office representative has completed step 1, he or she will notice that the screen “comes alive” or “activates.” The representative is now at the U06 screen. The next step is simply to type the information provided by the grantee to properly identify the CHDO. Some field offices require that you send them the signed contract before entering this information.

09/24/97 16:06:18	GRANTEE INQUIRE/UPDATE/ADD	C04MU06
NAME: HABITAT FOR HUMANITY CHDO		
UOG CODE: 052130	UOG NUMBER: 00004	REGION: 06
		FIELD OFFICE: 37
ADDRESS LINE 1: 200 EAST 8TH AVENUE		
LINE 2: CITY HALL		
LINE 3: _____		
CITY: PINE BLUFF	STATE: AR	ZIP: 716010000
CONTACT NAME: Betty _____	_____ Jones _____	
FIRST	M LAST	
TELEPHONE: 504-555-1212	FAX NUMBER: ____	_____
PROGRAM YEAR START: 01 / 01	END: 12 / 98	
GRANTEE IS NON-PROFIT? : Y	GRANTEE HAS BANKING? : N	BLOCK GRANTEE? : Y
CDBG EXCEPTION PERCENTAGE, IF ANY: _____		
PROJECT AMEND THRESHOLD PERCENTAGE: _____	OVER: 50.0	UNDER: 50.0
F4 = MAIN MENU	F9 = SAVE	

Once this screen is filled out, press Enter to go to the next screen.

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3. Now the field office is ready to enter a subgrant number for the CHDO. This is an important and critical step. Without it, the CHDO will not have been created **completely** within the system—even though this screen says that the entries are “optional.” At least one line must be completed before the field office can exit this screen.

Simply type an “M” in the Program Code column and enter a grant number. What grant number? Easy, you just take the parent grant number (the grantee’s) and add a sequential suffix. For example, if the parent grant is M97MC850621 and there are already three existing subgrants (CHDOs) for the grantee, the next subgrant “Grant Number” will be **M97MC85062104**.

09/24/97	16:06:23	ASSOCIATE GRANT(S) WITH GRANTEE	C04MU17
NAME: PINE BLUFF			
UOG CODE: 052130		UOG NUMBER: 00004	
REGION: 06		FIELD OFFICE: LITTLE ROCK	
OPTIONAL ENTRIES. ENTER PROGRAM CODE AND GRANT NUMBER			
PROGRAM CODE	GRANT NUMBER		
<b>m</b>	<b>m97mc85062104</b>		
—	_____		
—	_____		
—	_____		
—	_____		
—	_____		
—	_____		
—	_____		
F7 = PREV			

Once the U17 screen has been completed, the field office will receive a confirmation message from the system. At this point, the CHDO has been created. Now the ball is passed to the grantee.

## FUNDING THE NEW CHDO: THE GRANTEE'S ROLE

Once the field office has created the CHDO within in the system, the grantee can then create the subgrant. More specifically, the grantee can place money in that entity's "pot." (Basically, the field office has created an empty bucket into which the grantee can place money. The grantee will take money out of its general CR fund and put it into a specific CR pot created just for the new CHDO.)

The grantee will follow the step described below to create the subgrant.

At the Subgrant Allocation Screen, enter the UOG Code and number for the subgrantee. Also enter the Program Code ("M" for "HOME"), Fiscal Year, Source Type ("MC" for "metro city or county," "DC" for "consortium"), Fund Type (this will be "CR" for "CHDO Reserve"), and the amount of the subgrant or "suballocation."

SUBGRANT ALLOCATION SCREEN							C04MG01
UOG	UOG	PGM	FSCL	SCE	FUND	SUBALLOC	AVAILABLE
CDE	NBR	CDE	YEAR	TYPE	TYPE	AMOUNT	GRANT BALANCE
09/24/97	16:11						
<b>052130</b>	<b>0004</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>MC</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>70000</b>	
RECIPIENT NAME: _____						GRANT NUMBER: _____	
RECIPIENT NAME: _____						GRANT NUMBER: _____	
RECIPIENT NAME: _____						GRANT NUMBER: _____	
RECIPIENT NAME: _____						GRANT NUMBER: _____	

ENTER YOUR SUBGRANT REQUEST(S)  
 F1 = HELP F3 = VALDT F4 = MAIN MENU F6 = CLEAR SCREEN  
 F7 = PREV F9 = SAVE

Once your information has been typed, press Enter. The name of the CHDO (subgrantee) and the subgrant number will appear.

**Important:** With each new fiscal year, you will use this same technique (for adding a "new" CHDO) to create a fresh subgrant or pot of money for each existing CHDO. You will have to complete this function only once each year or at the creation of a new CHDO. In other words, at the start of each new grant year, you must go into the Subgranting "01" option to create a fresh pot of money for that year for each CHDO. IDIS and the HUD Financial System only set aside your 15 percent CHDO reserve money in a separate—general—CR bucket. What you are doing here is taking the money out of the general 15 percent set-aside bucket and distributing it to the various subgrantees.

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## INCREASING THE 15 PERCENT CHDO RESERVE SET-ASIDE

The grantee may wish to increase the 15 percent CHDO reserve. The steps involved in doing this are described below.

1. Enter Subgranting option 04 (Maintain Admin/CHDO Funds). (Yes, you will select this option to increase your CHDO reserve amount.) Type "M" in the Program Code field at the top of the screen, and press Enter to activate the screen.

09/24/97	15:49	MAINTAIN ADMIN/CHDO FUNDS				C04MG05	
PROGRAM CODE: <b>M</b>		FISCAL YEAR: _____		SOURCE TYPE: ____			
SELECTION: X - INQUIRE, C - CANCEL, R - REVISE							
		SRCE FUND		GRANT		AUTHORIZED	
SEL	PGM	YEAR	TYPE	TYPE	STATUS	NUMBER	AMOUNT
_	HOME	1993	MC	CR	ACTIVE	M93MC850621	\$112500.00
_	HOME	1994	MC	CR	ACTIVE	M94MC850621	\$127500.00
_	HOME	1995	MC	CR	ACTIVE	M95MC850621	\$142500.00
_	HOME	1996	MC	CR	ACTIVE	M95MC850621	\$135500.00
<b>R</b>	HOME	1997	MC	CR	ACTIVE	M95MC850621	\$158000.00
TYPE X, C OR R FOR SUBGRANT(S) YOU WANT							
F1 = HELP F3 = VALDT F4 = MAIN MENU F6 = CLEAR SCREEN							
F7 = PREV F17 = UP F18 = DOWN							

Once the screen populates with data, you see the "general" 15 percent CHDO reserve set-aside buckets, by year. This is just your general CR bucket. If you intend to expend more than the minimum 15 percent of your HOME grant on CHDOs, you must first raise the set-aside at this screen. What you see reflected under the "Authorized Amount" column is not the total of your grant, but rather the total CHDO reserve set aside for your community.

Flag the year for which you want to increase your CHDO suballocation amount with an "R" and press Enter. You will then be taken to the G03 screen.

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2. Next, enter the "Suballocation Amount." This will be the total amount that you are dedicating to all CHDO reserve activities.

09/24/97 16:11	REVISE ADMIN/CH	C04MG03
UOG CODE: 333333	UOG NUM: 03865	PGM CODE: M
FISCAL YEAR: 1997	SOURCE TYPE: MC	SUBALLOC AMT: <b>230000</b> _____
RECIP NAME: IDIS ENTITLEMENT GRANTEE	GRANT NBR: M93MC850621	
AUTHORIZED AMOUNT:	\$112500.00	
AVAILABLE SUBGRANT BALANCE:	\$112500.00	
AVAILABLE PARENT GRANT BALANCE:	\$750000.00	
PRESS ENTER TO CONFIRM REVISION		
F3 = VALDT F7 = PREV ENTER = CONFIRM		

Press Enter; your change will be saved, and the data will be updated.

The result of this whole process is to make sure that the pots of money from which you fund in Activity Funding have been allocated enough money to support your activities.■

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# YOU HAVE QUESTIONS?

## WE HAVE ANSWERS

### ACTIVITY SETUP & REVISE

#### *Q: How do I find my list of projects in IDIS?*

**A:** Easy. First go in through “Revise” or “View” activity. From the A59 screen, press F2 to view your list of projects. (Headquarters and field office staff will first need to press “F1” to associate themselves with a particular grantee.) On this question, a good resource for both grantees and field offices is *Technical Bulletin 3*, “A Guide for Understanding Converted Activities in IDIS.” (The *Technical Bulletins* (and *IDIS Live*) are available at the IDIS Web site ([www.hud.gov/cpd/idisweb.html](http://www.hud.gov/cpd/idisweb.html)) or from your field office.)

#### *Q: How do I set up an activity in IDIS?*

**A:** If you are setting up a new activity (one that has never before existed), go in through Option “A” from the Main Menu. Every time you go in through “A,” you’re telling the system, “I want to create an activity that never existed before.” Next, follow these steps:

1. Identify the project under which the activity exists.
2. Complete the first four screens, the “common path.” You must complete these screens (and the A08 screen) by entering an estimated amount for the activity.
3. Save the activity.

#### *Q: Please explain “estimated amount” on the C04MA08 screen.*

**A:** The estimated amount field on the A08 screen reflects the grantee’s anticipated **budget** for the particular activity. The budget may be for one year or several years, depending on how the grantee does their activity. You may **never** fund or draw more for the activity than you have budgeted on the A08 screen. It is important not to over-budget on this screen, as the system automatically checks the total amount of your available grant money plus estimated program income. If you over-estimate, your ability to budget for other activities will be impaired.

#### *Q: Explain the “Site/Location” and “Address” fields on the A01 screen. Are these required fields?*

**A:** These fields are **technically** optional. If you have a site address and know it, however, you should enter it. The fields are optional, because some activities (such as paving a street) either do not “reside” at an exact address or may cover **several** addresses. Bottom line: If you have an address, enter it.

#### *Q: I don’t understand the question on the A03 screen, “Will this activity be carried out by an entity other than the grantee?” What does this mean?*

**A:** Think of this Yes/No field as a HOME question only (more specifically, a CHDO question only). The question really asks “Is this a CHDO activity?” Answer “yes” to this question **only** if there is a CHDO involved. Otherwise, always answer “no.” It is critical that you answer this question right the first time, as it is not changeable (we call this field the “indelible ink” field). The only way to change your answer is to **cancel** the activity and recreate it. If you answer “yes” to this question, you will then get a pick list from which to identify the CHDO that is involved.

#### *Q: What is the purpose of the “Activity Status Code” on the A04 screen?*

**A:** This is an important field: It allows you to inform HUD of your activity’s status (e.g., underway, funds budgeted, canceled, or completed). You are in charge. This status flag changes only if **you** change it. It is important, because it determines whether you are able to do drawdowns against that activity. Activities that are “canceled” (“1”) or “completed” (“2”) may **not** have funds drawn against them. It is also important that you change this flag to “underway” when the activity is actually occurring and to “completed” when it has been finished.

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**Q: What am I supposed to write in the “Accomplishments Narrative” field on the A04 screen?**

**A:** Please refer to IDIS *Technical Bulletin* 1R, “A Guide for Using IDIS to Report on CDBG Annual Accomplishments.”

## ACTIVITY FUNDING

**Q: I don’t understand Activity Funding.**

**A:** To learn about Activity Funding, first read IDIS *Technical Bulletin* 4, “A Guide to Understanding IDIS Activity Funding.” Next, read *Technical Bulletin* 5 on “advanced” activity funding. These materials contain step-by-step examples. (The information in these bulletins is also reprinted in *IDIS Live* issues 10 and 11.)

**Q: I don’t understand the column “Amount Avl. for Funding.”**

**A:** This column reflects the amount in the grant less the funds that have already been committed toward other activities. Once funds have been committed to an activity via Activity Funding, that money is no longer available to fund other activities. To learn how much remains in your grant, refer to the grant query screens in drawdowns.

## DRAWDOWN

**Q: How do I revise a pending voucher?**

**A:** There is currently no way to revise a pending voucher; however, plans are under way to allow grantees to do this. The only time that a grantee can revise a voucher is when the status says “complete.”

**Q: What do I do if I drew funds from the wrong grant?**

**A:** Send the funds back. There is no place in IDIS in which a grantee can correct such an error. Only under special conditions (as determined by Lincoln Burruss) will a matter like this be dealt with in another way.

**Q: Why is the voucher status still “pending” after 72 hours?**

**A:** The voucher may not have been approved. If it **has** been approved, check to see if the voucher has been paid in the HUD Financial System. If it has, the grantee should check with their bank to see if the funds have been received. If the funds are at the bank, then the “pending” status is more than likely a systems problem. If none of the above are the case, refer the problem to Lincoln Burruss.

**Q: While creating a voucher, I hit Enter, and my**

**information disappeared. What happened?**

**A:** Usually this problem occurs when a grantee is confusing “Fund Type” with “Source Type.” Back out of and then re-enter “Create Voucher” to make sure that the correct “Type” has been selected.

## SUBGRANTING & CHDOs

**Q: How do I create a CHDO in the system?**

**A:** First, your field office representative needs to create a UOG number for the CHDO. Start by sending the following information to your field office representative: the name of the CHDO, its address, and its contact person. Once the UOG number has been established, you will be able to set up an activity. On the second screen in the common path, where it asks the question “Will this activity be carried out by an Entity other than the Grantee?” you will answer “yes.” When you press Enter (after all fields on this screen have been satisfied), a list of all CHDOs and Other Entities will appear. Choose the new CHDO, and make a note of its UOG code and number (you will need this information when you are creating the subgrant). Continue setting up the activity. Once the activity setup is complete, you must create the subgrant before you can do Activity Funding. Return to the Main Menu, and choose the “Subgrant” option. Under this option, choose “A” (Create Subgrant). Enter the UOG code and number, program code, FY, source type, fund type, and amount of funds. (If you have additional CHDOs or Other Entities’ fiscal years of funding, you can enter them also.) You have now added a CHDO and can perform Activity Funding and draw down funds.

**Q: I have a new grant for HOME, but I do not see any Admin. funds.**

**A:** When a new grant year is entered in IDIS for HOME, there will be no Admin. funds reserved. The grantee must choose the “Subgrant” option. From this menu, select Option “3” (Create Admin/CHDO), which will allow you to reserve up to 10 percent of your grant for Admin. Here the grantee will have to enter the program code, FY, source type, and fund type and amount.

**Q: I have an existing CHDO and would like to give it more money.**

**A:** There are several issues here:

1. If you want to give an existing CHDO more funds in the same year, use Option “B” under the “Subgrant” menu. This step will allow you to choose the grant and

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- year under which you would like to give the increase.
2. If you try step 1 and receive a message that there are not enough funds, you will need to increase your 15 percent CHDO reserve grant. Again, under the "Subgrant" menu, choose Option "D" (Maintain Admin.). You will then be able to increase the pot of money that is available for that year. Now you will be able to complete step 1.
  3. If the CHDO was funded in prior years, choose Option "A" (Create Subgrant). Use the same UOG code and number for that CHDO, and give it a new year's funding.

## PROGRAM INCOME

***Q: How do I add (receipt) my Program Income (PI) into IDIS?***

**A:** This is easy. Go to Option 01 from the Program Income submenu, and receipt your PI. Remember, IDIS works by HUD rules, so if you report PI into IDIS, it will be used on the **next** draw.

***Q: Should I include PI as part of my budgeted amount in Activity Setup?***

**A:** Yes! Be sure to include PI as part of the estimated or budgeted amount for your activity on the A08 screen. IDIS will check the total of all your grants and estimated PI to make sure that you have the money to budget for that activity.

***Q: How do I get my Program Income estimate for the year into IDIS?***

**A:** Your PI estimate will get into IDIS in one of two ways:

1. It will be input for the year based on the information on your HUD form SF-424, or
2. You may enter the estimate the first time (and the **first time only**) that you go in to do a receipt for PI on the I01 screen. A hidden field will pop up, into which you will be able to insert an estimate of the **total amount of PI that you expect to receive for the whole year**. Be careful! Many people think that this hidden field is requesting an estimate for the current receipt only and not for the whole year. You will get only one chance, so be careful!

## PROJECT INSERT/ADD

***Q: The system will not allow me to set up an activity***

***under the project that I just added.***

**A:** Has the project been approved? If not, you will not be able to set up activities.

***Q: I need to amend my project. What do I do?***

**A:** If the status is "open," you can revise the project. If the status is "approved," you must first change the project status to revoke, then you may revise the project.

***Q: Can I add a project for a grant year that does not exist in IDIS?***

**A:** Yes, you may now add a new project and a new program year (one that did not previously exist).

## HOME PROGRAM

***Q: How are housing activities to be set up in IDIS?***

**A:** HOME and CDBG have different requirements.

HOME program regulations at 24 CFR 92.502 require that each HOME project be entered as an IDIS activity. For homeowner rehabilitation, each property is a separate HOME project and must be set up as an IDIS activity. When a contract for assistance has been executed with an individual homeowner, this becomes an **activity** and is set up as such in IDIS. Of course, the financial- and beneficiary-characteristics information for the **specific owner and address** of the unit that is being assisted must then be entered.

CDBG permits grantees to set up each project as an activity with multiple properties. However, if a property is funded jointly with HOME and CDBG, special requirements apply (see next Q&A).

***Q: How are activities that are jointly funded with HOME and CDBG to be set up in IDIS?***

**A:** Activities that are funded using more than one source (such as a combination of HOME and CDBG funds) may be set up using the IDIS Activity Funding function. This will allow multiple program fund sources to be combined and associated with a single activity number.

For a detailed explanation of Activity Funding and examples of its use, please refer to *Technical Bulletin 5*, "A Guide on 'Advanced' IDIS Activity Funding."

## REPORTS AND REPORTING

***Q: Which report should I use?***

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**A:** Some users have complained that it is difficult to track the growing number of reports. **To work your way out of the report maze, start by asking what type of data is needed to solve the task at hand.** Do I need plan, activity, grant disbursement, or program data? (A future modification of the reports menu will help you through this process by organizing the reports into categories.)

**Q: Which reports focus on projects?**

**A:** The Consolidated Plan Annual Plan and Performance report (C04PR06) and the Summary of Accomplishments report (C04PR23) are the only two reports that currently summarize plan- and project-based data. We are working on giving you the ability to download all project data.

**Q: Are there any reports that are organized by grantee number?**

**A:** Yes. The Grantee Activity report (C04PR08) is organized according to grantee number. It cross-references the grantee's number with the IDIS plan and activity number.

**Q: Is there one report that summarizes a grantee's activities?**

**A:** Yes. The Activity Summary report (C04PR02) lists the drawdown and commitment information for each activity in sequence by plan year, project number, and activity number. We are working on giving you the ability to download plan and project data.

**Q: Is there a detailed list of disbursements?**

**A:** The Grant Drawdown report (C04PR05) provides a detailed list of disbursements for each activity. It is organized by plan year, project number, activity number, and voucher number. The draw amount and grant number are provided for each disbursement.

**Q: Is there a summary of all the CPD formula grants, by fiscal year?**

**A:** Yes. The first report in IDIS, the Federal Entitlement Grant Summary (C04PR01), lists the amount authorized, funds drawn, and amount available to draw for each formula grant, by fiscal year.

The report currently breaks HOME funds out by fund type so as to display the disbursements for CHDO operating and Administration fund types. The report will be simplified by the end of the calendar year to eliminate fund type, because this information is now available, in an improved form, under the HOME Grant Summary report.

**Q: What is happening with accomplishment reports?**

**A:** See page 1 to get the latest on performance-reporting.

**Q: Can I produce a Grantee Performance Report for CDBG?**

**A:** The recently revised Summary of Activities report (C04PR03) resembles the activity summary for the GPR. See page 2 for a detailed description of the Summary of Activities report.

**Q: What other reports are available for CDBG?**

**A:** The system provides reports on Program Income, Rehabilitation Activities, New Housing Construction, Float Funded Activities, and CDFI Activities.

**Q: When can we expect to see the CDBG Financial Summary?**

**A:** It's coming. The major CDBG report now under construction is the GPR's Financial Summary. This report will provide you with the ability to establish key program thresholds, such as low/mod percentage, public service cap, and admin. cap. The report should be available by the end of October.

**Q: What reports are available for the HOME program?**

**A:** The major new report is the newly released Status of HOME Grants. It provides the key program indicators. See page 2 for a description of this report.

Also available are the HOME Status of Activities report and the Status of CHDO Funds report.

**Q: Please explain the Status of HOME Activities and CHDO Funds reports.**

**A:** All HOME activities that had not been closed or canceled more than 18 months prior to the report date are listed in the Status of HOME Activities report (C04PR22). This report provides the funding, disbursement, status, and status date of each activity, by category (e.g., new construction, rehabilitation, acquisition). This report is similar to the Status of Projects report (the "CLA"), which is available under the CMIS.

The Status of CHDO Funds by Fiscal Year report (C04PR25) is similar to a CMIS report called the Status of CHDO Funds report ("CBA"). It lists the amounts reserved, committed, and disbursed for each CHDO by fiscal year.

**Q: What reports are available for ESG?**

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**A:** There are three reports available for ESG. The ESG Financial Summary report (C04PR12) shows the grant amount, committed amount, and disbursed amount for each entity funded by an ESG grantee. The ESG Program—Grantee Statistics report (C04PR19) displays summary beneficiary statistics for ESG projects. The ESG Grantee Activity Summary report (C04PR20) shows the amount committed and disbursed by eligible activity category for each project.

***Q: What type of reports are available for HOPWA?***

**A:** No hard copy reports are currently available for HOPWA. Nevertheless, the system does capture—by screen in the HOPWA path—the same information that was previously reported by hard copy. These data may be viewed electronically or downloaded.

***Q: How do I run a report in IDIS? Nothing seems to come off my printer.***

**A:** Take the following four steps to run a report in IDIS:

1. Go to “Report Selection” from the Report submenu. Place an “x” in front of the report that you wish to run. Set the Priority to “I” for “immediate.”
2. Go to “Report Status.” Check to see that the report you requested is listed with a report status of “Ready.” When the report is “Ready” this means that the report has been compiled and is waiting to be downloaded to your computer (Option “D”). (Unless you have an old, dot-matrix printer that prints on “green bar” computer paper, you will **always** want Option “D” for “download.”)
3. Once you have downloaded the report, you will get a message in white print at the bottom of your computer screen. The message will include the file name of the report that you selected: Make a note of this name. (The report’s file name will end with the suffix “.rpt.”) Each report will have a different name.
4. Now go to your WordPerfect or Word application and “Open” the report as a file. Then select the whole report (“Select All”), and change the font style to “Courier” and the font size to “9.” Finally, make sure that you are printing in “landscape.”■

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# *IDIS LIVE GUEST COLUMN*

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*This month's IDIS Live Guest Column was submitted by Lisa Clark, Assistant to the Administrator of the Housing Authority for the City of Eau Claire, Wisconsin. We thank her for taking the time to share her thoughts.*

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## **MAKING IDIS WORK FOR US**

If it isn't broken, don't fix it. How many times have you heard that? From several of the comments I have heard or read over the last year, I get the feeling that many grantees feel that way about the conversion from the HUD Financial System (formerly known as "LOCCS") to IDIS. However good the HUD Financial System may have been for us as grantees, it obviously left something to be desired for the Government Accounting Office (GAO) and Congress. With the billions of federal dollars floating around out there, it is reasonable to expect that those who ultimately designate those funds would require some accountability. Thus, the theory behind IDIS.

Although the theory behind IDIS is wonderful, the actual implementation has been cumbersome and, as we all can attest, somewhat frustrating. As a colleague of mine from Wisconsin put it, "We will make IDIS work for us because we have to." I believe that we are achieving some success in making that happen: All of the grantees with whom I have spoken have been able to make drawdowns and receive the money within a few days. The work with IDIS will continue, however, as long as it remains the dynamic system (with its once-a-month upgrades) that it has been.

Due to the monthly upgrades and the influx of new users, situations and problems arise that need further explanation and solutions beyond those that are offered in the *IDIS User Manual*. (The *User Manual* provides a good walk-through of all areas of IDIS, but not often does it answer the question "What if I do that, and it doesn't work?") For those of you who are newer grantees, there are several means available for seeking solutions and advice.

- **The Internet.** The IDIS Chat Room and the IDIS listserv are two places in which you can solve several small problems quickly. For example, you might learn that you need to enter the national objective before you can get to the beneficiary input screen. If you're not

afraid of a little embarrassment (posting your questions for other users to see), you'll find that the Chat Room and the listserv are relatively painless methods of getting answers.

- **Your CPD Representative.** CPD representatives may have a different—more official, if you will—level of contact with the TAU or may be able to answer your questions directly.
- **Other users in your area or local users' group.** If you don't have a local users' group, take the initiative, and start one now.
- **The TAU.** They will either answer your question or refer you to someone who can.

As IDIS reaches its second anniversary, it is a time for reflection and pats on our backs for making it this far. In this next year, the biggest challenge that I see for grantees is to continue this dialogue among ourselves and to develop it into a resource for solving problems and making improvements. I would like, therefore, to present a challenge—to everyone: ***No matter how small or large your problem, when you find a solution, share it!*** No matter how small or large your problem, when you find a solution, share it! Share it with everyone—your users' group, your CPD Representative, and, especially, the TAU. Don't wait until the question is raised by someone else. Let's shake government up a bit and do something in a proactive, rather than a reactive, manner. If we are finding solutions to problems, it is our obligation to share them. This information could be documented by HUD Central and used as a resource to help the next person who encounters the same snag.

IDIS will work for us, because it has to. It will continue to evolve, challenge, and amaze us for the next several years. The great achievement will be when it works for everyone and not only the grantees—when it works for HUD, Congress, the GAO, local units of government, and the ever-interested public.

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I would like to thank those at HUD who offered me the honor of sharing my “big picture” of IDIS through this column. I look forward to the upcoming Guest Column and the new viewpoints that will emerge as we make IDIS work for us.

*For those of you who would like information about the IDIS listserv or the IDIS Chat Room, refer to pages 4 and 10, respectively, of IDIS Live 8, where you’ll find detailed instructions on how to “subscribe” to either group. The two groups operate similarly: You post a question or comment to the group, and any member of the group may respond. Likewise, your expertise may be called upon at some point. Both forums offer IDIS users the opportunity to do exactly what Lisa is suggesting—share information!*

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## **A BLURB FROM BERNIE**

***Bernie Finn**, Fiscal Manager for the Community Development Agency in Bridgeport, Connecticut, had a few words to share, as well.*

Though I am new to IDIS—as is practically everyone else who is reading this publication—I am not new to government computer systems. I’d like to share a bit of my background so that you’ll understand how grateful I am for the help that I’ve received from the CPD Technical Assistance Unit.

In 1984, when I was working as an accountant for the Community Development Agency, the City of Bridgeport purchased a local government financial reporting system. Along with my then supervisor, the former fiscal manager, I had to transform a totally manual system of

recordkeeping into a “new-age” computer system. During this conversion, I was strictly an employee, following the instructions of my supervisor. I got the job done. Setting up IDIS, however, presented a different challenge: I was totally on my own. I attended a week-long training session in Fairfax, Virginia, in June 1996. The transformation for Bridgeport began in November of that year.

The first time that I encountered a problem I could not solve, I called the Hotline. The person who answered bent over backward to help me. During the next two months, during which time I called with numerous questions, I began to become acquainted with the Hotline staff. Though I felt that my questions were dumb, because I was almost always certain that I knew the answers myself, this made no difference to the Hotline staff: There was no such thing as a dumb question. They were always ready to help.

During a “distress call” in August of this year, I mentioned that I was planning a trip to Washington, D.C.—and I received an invitation to visit HUD Headquarters! I gladly accepted the offer. I really enjoyed visiting the Hotline office and meeting the people whom I deal with on the phone—the “faces behind the voices.”

*Thank you for your kind words, Bernie. We’re glad that you had time to visit us on your trip to the nation’s capital.*

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If IDIS has inspired you, too, contact Jennifer Stanley by phone (202-708-0614, ext. 4411) or cc:Mail (Jennifer\_C.\_Stanley@hud.gov) to discuss your idea for an *IDIS Live* Guest Column. ■

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# FUTURE GROUP MEETINGS: SAVE THE DATES!

## USERS GROUP—HARTFORD

The next IDIS Users Group meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, **October 15, 1997, in Hartford, Connecticut.** The meeting, which will begin and 9:00 AM and end at 4:00 PM, will be held at

One Corporate Center  
(corner of Main and Church Streets)  
19th floor  
Hartford, Connecticut 06103

Make your hotel reservations now:

Ramada Inn (East Hartford): 860-528-9703  
Holiday Inn (Downtown): 860-549-2400  
Ramada Inn (Capitol Hill): 860-246-6591  
Goodwin Hotel (Downtown): 860-246-7500

If you plan to attend this meeting, please call **Ann Mack**, HUD/Hartford, at 860-240-4800, ext. 3055. You may also register by calling **Sharon-Lee Thomas** at 202-708-0614, ext. 2985 (HUD Central).

## USERS GROUP—FORT MYERS

In November, there will be an IDIS Users Group meeting in **Fort Myers, Florida** (Lee County). The meeting, on Friday, **November 21, 1997**, will be held at

Southwest Florida Regional Medical Center (auditorium)

Possible lodging sites include the Marriott Courtyard (941-275-8600) and the Residence Inn (941-936-4144).

If you plan to attend this meeting, contact **Wayne Paulsen** (HUD/Florida) at 904-232-3588 or **Sharon-Lee Thomas** at 202-708-0614, ext. 2985.

There will be a Users Group meeting in **Los Angeles, California, in February 1998.** See the next issue of *IDIS Live* for more information about this meeting.

## FUTURE IDIS TRAINING

Here are the dates and locations for future IDIS Training sessions.

**October 27-30, 1997**, Washington, D.C.

**November 17-20, 1997**, Seattle, Washington

For information about training offered by HUD, call 202-289-8100.

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## FOR MORE IDIS INFORMATION

Your IDIS Users Group contacts are **Lincoln Burruss**, **Phil Helbling**, and **Roger Merideth** at CPD. You may contact them via the following:

Telephone: 202-708-0790, ext. 4570 (Lincoln)  
202-708-0614, ext. 4410 (Phil)  
202-708-0614, ext. 4691 (Roger)

Internet: Lincoln\_Burruss@hud.gov  
Philip\_B.\_Helbling@hud.gov  
Roger\_E.\_Merideth@hud.gov

Mail: HUD/CPD  
Office of Executive Services  
451 Seventh St., S.W.  
Room 7226  
Washington, D.C. 20410

**For technical information**, contact your field office or the CPD Technical Assistance Unit (at 1-800-273-2573).

**For SprintLink ID and password information**, contact your local HUD field office.

**To have your IDIS password reset**, call HUD Security at 202-708-3300. ■