

THE FINANCIAL CONNECTION

NEWS FROM THE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SERVICE
A BUREAU OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Agencies Get Their “Hands-On” Cash with US Debit Card

Inside this issue:

CELEBRATING A DECADE OF DEBT COLLECTION	2
BANNER YEAR FOR E-FILE, REFUND DIRECT DEPOSIT	3
CALENDAR: FMS CONFERENCE SET FOR AUG. 8-10	3

BY BRETT SMITH

Eleven agencies participated in a May 2 “hands-on” session using the US Debit Card to conduct a mock emergency and issue financial assistance.

The exercise, held at the **Financial Management Service (FMS)**, featured three perspectives:
cardholder, on-site agency team, and headquarters.

Attendees first assumed the role of card recipients. They were instructed how to use the card, how to access transaction data, how to change their PIN and where to use the card. Attendees then took on the role of onsite agency personnel. They enrolled cardholders pursuant to their own application process, loaded funds to the

EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES



cards via the Web site and reviewed reports describing the day’s activity. Finally, attendees took on the role of headquarters and discussed card communications, reporting, agreements with Treasury, and lessons learned based on previous implementations dating back to 1998.

Participants received sample cardholder materials, Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and cards, and an emergency planning checklist.

Agencies and bureaus that participated included: **U.S. Courts; Departments of Justice, Veterans Affairs, Energy, and Transportation; International Trade Commission; Office of Personnel Management; Pension Guaranty Benefit Corporation; Social Security Administration; U.S. Postal Service; and Transportation Security Administration.**

For more information, please contact Brett Smith at (202) 874-6666.



Debt Collection Conference 2006: Celebrating a Decade of DCIA

BY SHIRLEY WILLIAMS-JEFFERSON

Nearly 300 people attended the **Financial Management Service's** annual debt collection conference May 1-2 in Arlington, Va. The conferees represented most federal Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and non-CFO agencies.

The conference included recognition of the 10-year anniversary of the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 (DCIA). Gina Myers,

director of the Agency Support Division within FMS's Debt Management

DEBT COLLECTION

Service (DMS), set the tone for this year's conference theme—"Perfect Ten"—by outlining the schedule of events for the two-day conference.

On the opening day of the conference, Jeffrey Schramek, director of the Birmingham Debt Management Operations Center (BDMOC) discussed some of the debt management

Need Training?

Information about upcoming DMS workshops is available at www.fms.treas.gov/debt/training.html.

July 18: *Treasury Report on Receivables (TROR) Workshop, Denver, Colo.*

July 19: *FedDebt Training for Cross Servicing Agencies, Denver, Colo.*

Aug. 17: *TROR Workshop, Washington, D.C.*

Sept. 21: *Debt Collection 101 and TROR, Washington, D.C.*

program successes in the last 10 years and debt collection operations. Martin Mills, the assistant commissioner of DMS, discussed the successes, progress, and milestones reached in the debt collection program since the inception of DCIA.

The conference's second day featured a newly updated Debt Collection 101 workshop and overview sessions on the Treasury Report on Receivables (TROR), FedDebt demonstrations, and **Internal Revenue Service (IRS)** 1099-C processing.

Dick Gregg, who retired as FMS commissioner at the end of May, was the conference's keynote speaker. He thanked the Federal agencies for working hard over the last ten years to reduce their delinquent debt.

Mr. Gregg noted that writing off old debts that are not collectible and accuracy of reporting to DMS were among the improvements made by the agencies. He also indicated that roughly \$27 billion had been collected by DMS's collection programs over the last ten years.

For more information about FMS's debt collection and management process, please visit www.fms.treas.gov/debt/index.html.



Direct Deposit, E-File Setting Records in the 2006 Tax Filing Season

BY NEVELYN JONES & SHIRLEY HOPKINS

As the end of the 2006 tax filing season nears, taxpayers are using direct deposit and e-file in record numbers. The options are promoted by the **Financial Management Service (FMS)** and the **Internal Revenue Service (IRS)**.

By the end of April, 53 million taxpayers had chosen to receive their refunds by direct deposit. That was a 7 percent increase from the same time in 2005. Taxpayers who use direct deposit receive their refunds faster, in as few as 10 days.

As of April 26, 70 million taxpayers had used

DIRECT DEPOSIT

the IRS e-file and learned its many benefits: free or low-cost filing; fast, safe refunds; security; accuracy (an error rate of less than 1 percent); electronic signatures; proof of acceptance; electronic payment options; and the ability to file both state and federal returns.

The number of returns filed from home computers has climbed 18 percent from the same period during the previous tax filing season.

For information about getting a tax refund by direct deposit, visit fms.treas.gov/eft/promotional/ddtaxrefund.html. For general tax information, call IRS's help line at (800) 829-1040 or visit www.irs.gov. To learn the status of a refund, visit www.irs.gov and click on "Where's My Refund?" or call (800) 829-1954.



UPCOMING EVENTS

For more about FMS events, see www.fms.treas.gov/calendar.html.

July 11: Philadelphia Financial Center (PFC) Customer Advisory Board Meeting, Washington, D.C.

July 13: Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) Federal Program Agency User Group Meeting, Silver Spring, Md.

Aug. 8-10: FMS 16th Annual Government Financial Management Conference, Washington, D.C.

Aug. 15-16: AFC Agency Awareness Forum, Dallas, Texas.

Aug. 23-24: SFC Customer Advisory Board Meeting, Denver, Colo.

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