

TPPS Oversight Council Minutes

Date: June 30, 2010 – 0830 to 1530 ET
Place: Office of the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Transportation Policy) – Arlington, VA

MINUTES:

Note: Action items begin with a double asterisk ()** and are highlighted in a brown, bold font.

TPPS Working Groups

ICWG

- Richard Morrow has agreed to lead the ICWG.
- OSD [McNulty] explained that HHG will have a larger role in the ICWG in the future.
- Navy [Jones] stated that the GSA post-payment audit results for HHG are needed to assess if the legal requirement is being met in the current prepayment reviews.
****OSD [McNulty] will share the Army Audit Agency (AAA) HHG audit results with the services and agencies.**
- DLA [Morrow] emphasized the importance of receiving GSA's audit results at the account level to identify problematic trading partner relationships (TPRs). In the past, OSD [McNulty] requested a copy of the letters that were sent from GSA to the TSPs. ****McNulty and Morrow will follow up with GSA to obtain copies of the carrier letters.**

Non-temp Storage Working Group

- U.S. Bank [Webb] reported that several parties met at DFAS Indy to model an interim non-temp storage solution that should be adaptable to a future DPS module. The group identified three possible solutions.
- John Hosley was appointed to lead this working group.
- OSD [McNulty] tasked the working group with completing a CONOPS or course of actions.

Over Ocean Working Group

- DLA [Morrow] reported that there is an existing group with DLA and SDDC representatives that work with over ocean issues.

USTRANSCOM AQ Contract Number Issue

- OSD [McNulty] explained that inclusion of the contract number in the TPPS dataset would allow for "cradle to grave" audits.
- U.S. Bank [Webb] responded that TPPS has a field for the contract number. The shipper systems must be able to provide it. We would have to identify who will enter the contract number into the shipper system because the TMO may not know it.

- DLA [Morrow] added that DSS would require a systems change to send the contract number, and the change request cannot receive a high priority without a supporting regulation.
- ****OSD [McNulty] will identify the regulation for the TPPS members.**

TGET Update

- SCR X3992 to update Army LOA validation to change SIFS and COE AINs to a Treasury-level edit only is in testing. Army [Peterson] explained that LMP is scheduled to take over all SIFS LOAs on 10/18/10, but Army is concerned this date might slip.
- Army [Peterson] requested a status update on GFEBS LOA validation. TGET [Stele] reported that GFEBS does not yet have an interface with TGET. The request will have to go through BTA and may be significant since GFEBS is an SFIS compliant system. ****Stele will follow-up to see if there are any plans for GFEBS LOA validation and follow-up with Peterson.**
- Navy [Jones] reported that the CMET interface must be in place by September in order to load the FY11 LOAs in time for the fiscal year change. TGET [Stele] responded that because the change is only to the data source and not the file format, the change should be relatively simple. ****TGET [Stele] will provide a status update to Navy within 2-3 weeks.**
- OSD [McNulty] asked whether all the Phase IV requirements are funded. TGET [Stele] responded that all Phase IV requirements are funded except for Web Services, which would be new functionality coordinated through BTA. Per the FRB the Web Services requirement is currently on hold.
- Army [Peterson] expressed concern that Army will be unable to establish the FY11 funding in time to have all LOAs/TACs loaded by 10/1/2011. ****DoD TPPS PMO [Soderlund] has a meeting planned for July 21 with DFAS-Accounting and plans to raise this issue. Soderlund will coordinate Army attendance and representation with Jerry Bogle.**
- ****Stele is researching asterisks in LOA segment values as well as what other characters should not be allowed and will provide a status update in the next few days.**

Foreign Currency

- IBM [Hamilton] reported that the only entitlement system that can pay in foreign currency is CAPS-W. The overall preference is to receive the EDI 810 from US Bank in USD.
- Army [Frisoli] reported that ASA/FMC is reviewing the CONOPS. ****Army will provide concurrence or non-concurrence with the TPPS Foreign Currency CONOPS.**
- Navy [Jones] added that the process may need to be refined based on input from the services/agencies.
- Only CMOS has confirmed that they can provide the FX currency code on the EDI 858. Morrow raised the potential for an intermediary system (GEX) to provide the FX currency code based on sort key to avoid SCRs at shipper systems (GFM and DSS).

Automated Process Implementation

- Navy [Jones] expressed concerns that DPS BoLs are not being loaded into EDA. Soto reported that this was sent to SDDC for further analysis. ****SDDC [Lindsey] will provide a status.**
- USCG [Huffman] asked why the electronic percentages for HHG are low. IBM [Hamilton] responded that while IBM does not perform detailed analysis, historically the cause is user entry error. Additionally, prior year LOAs will load as manual if the services do not create a new FY TAC relationship in TGET.
- AFMC [Tirey] asked why the DD Form 577 must be mailed to DFAS. DoD TPPS PMO [Farler] responded that DFAS tried to change the policy in 2008 to allow electronic documents, but was unsuccessful as this would require a change in the Treasury regulation promulgated within the FMR. DoD TPPS PMO [Soderlund] explained that DFAS outsources the 577 upload process to DISA, which requires the original hardcopy document. ****DoD TPPS PMO [Soderlund] will follow up on the DD Form 577 requirement.**
- U.S. Bank [Webb] reported that DECA expressed interest in automated reimbursement with U.S. Bank. AAFEES appropriated freight may also be a candidate for automation. ****DoD TPPS PMO and IBM will research whether automation is possible.**
- Huffman is researching whether USCG LOAs and TACs can be loaded into and converted in FACTS. Jones reported that John Ryan loads the USCG LOAs in FACTS under Navy's tables.

Offsets Interim Capability Update

- U.S. Bank [Webb] reported that the Freight offsets capability is being used by the DFAS Claims Office to collect Army freight offsets. Other services and agencies have expressed interest in using the offsets capability. Webb asked for TPPS guidance on a rollout plan. ****Soderlund will provide a rollout plan for implementing the interim offsets capability across the DoD.**
- U.S. Bank [Webb] explained that the HHG carriers agreed to the offset process in the 5/1 rate filing. Webb drafted HHG business rules based on the TPPS functionality and submitted to the TPPS Council Co-Chairs for review. ****OSD [McNulty] will distribute the HHG business rules to the services/agencies for review and feedback.**
- IBM [Hamilton] asked the status on the capability to offset non net-settle carriers. U.S. Bank [Webb] responded that the capability to collect against non net-settle carriers should be available by the end of the year.

U.S. Bank Status Update

- U.S. Bank [Webb] reported that there have been several changes to the U.S. Bank team. Jeff Lineberger has moved to the commercial side and is being replaced by a new government consultant hired by the bank. Grainne Fennell is currently on maternity leave and her position is temporarily being filled by Deborah Orzechowski at the Brussels office.

- The GSA data archival feed is in progress. U.S. Bank reduced the file size from a yearly to monthly to daily feed to accommodate GSA file size limitations. Webb believes an upgrade at GSA may be necessary to receive the data.
- Operational 810s were not being received by CWA/DPS. The root cause was identified and fixed. US Bank is coordinating a resend of files from the past 18 months, but it is unknown how many are missing. The CWA/DPS Branch of Service report is impacted by this error. USCG [Huffman] reported a 110% increase in matches between CWA and US Bank 810s since the fix.
- GEX is now parsing the operational 810s between CWA and DPS.

U.S. Bank System Performance

- U.S. Bank [Webb] reported that the R2 UI performance was enhanced by the March release. Troubleshooting issues at JPPSO Colorado Springs provided insights on the type of local and administrative network issues encountered by DoD users. A monitoring tool was added in the April release to identify specific performance issues.
- Navy [Gottlick] stated that system response time is Navy's #1 issue. Jones explained Navy's response time could be impacted by NMCI issues.
- U.S. Bank [Webb] reported that the FRT and HHG platforms will converge – migrate to a single platform. This should be transparent to the user. Navy [Jones] expressed concern that maintaining the DoD within one platform could hinder the system's response time. DLA [Morrow] suggested that U.S. Bank consider a single platform with separate instances to improve performance.
- OSD [McNulty] asked the services/agencies to send performance issues to U.S. Bank for review.

U.S. Bank New User Interface Release Update

- U.S. Bank [Webb] reported that the new transaction manager will be enhanced to provide required fields without multiple drill downs. The enhancement was demonstrated at the last U.S. Bank Supply Chain Conference to several super-users. The interface is scheduled for release by the end of the summer. Draft training materials will be sent to OSD [McNulty] and DoD TPPS PMO [Soderlund].
- Army [Peterson] recommended that account names follow a standardized format. U.S. Bank [Webb] recognized the issue, and noted that DLA has standardized their naming convention. There have been attempts in the past to standardize the account names, but they have been unsuccessful.

USPS

- USPS is looking to be a carrier alternative for DoD's small parcel business. USPS [Gullo] is looking for a team or SME to work with to understand the DoD's system and process requirements. USPS can provide the 214 tracking information to the DoD transportation systems. USPS is willing to develop a custom industry (not client) specific solution if needed. USPS reported their small parcel service is limited to 70 lb capacity and they prefer under 20 lb.

- Navy [Jones] explained that the purchase card is not accepted by USPS for commercial accounts. A commercial account is required for USPS to pick-up on site.
- Federal law requires USPS to be paid upon pick-up rather than delivery. Each customer maintains a USPS CAPS account which is funded at time of mailing. In today's environment, DFAS funds the CAPS accounts as advanced trusts and applies the cost as shipments are made.
- U.S. Bank [Garcia] stated that TPPS does not require delivery to be completed in order to pay. TPPS business rules can be configured to pay on pick-up, so payment could post the same day. However, standard payment method is ACH so payment will not be received the same day.
- Webb cautioned that commercial competitors are being paid at delivery and may also request payment at pick-up if granted to USPS.
- DLA [Morrow] added that in order to use USPS, either USPS modules would have to be built into the shipper systems or they would have to process under the carrier invoicing model.
- OSD [McNulty] stated some advantages of using USPS over existing TSPs: free boxes, reduced paper costs, and no accessorial charges. Address changes on a \$5 shipment can cost up to \$10 when using competitors.

HHG Issues/DPS Timelines/DP3 Program

- SDDC [Johnson] stated that most of their concerns had been discussed throughout the meeting. The TPPS Council is a good forum for discussing issues that affect HHG users. The DP3 program will report substantial issues to the TPPS Council.

TPPS Oversight Council Minutes

Date: July 1, 2010 – 0830 to 1300 ET (late morning session restricted to **government only**)
Place: Office of the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Transportation Policy) – Arlington, VA

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Opening Remarks

- McNulty reported that DoDIG will be doing a review of the DTCI program.
- DoD TPPS PMO [Ruiz-Torres] explained that the rebranding of PowerTrack to Syncada to US Bank has caused confusion. Moving forward, all references to “PowerTrack” and “Syncada” within the DoD should be replaced with “TPPS” for Third Party Payment System.
- McNulty commented that the council would be happy to entertain presentations from anyone with best practices to share.

Navy Best Practices

- Navy monitors monthly certification via the Navy webportal and provides additional training to sites that have transactions on the manual SI that could have been electronic. Navy guidance is to certify within 3 government business days.
- Navy monitors account balances and works with DFAS for resolution.
 - USAF/DLA [Witter] commented that use of the TPPS to reconcile accounts is only a workaround. The services and agencies need access to the entitlement system data.
 - Navy [Gottlick] explained that the MAS can be used to reconcile individual accounts, but each account must be checked individually. Navy would like a report with only the exceptions that have not been paid.
 - DoD TPPS PMO [Soderlund] stated that DFAS is working on a possible solution with Operational Data Storage (ODS), however ODS does not currently receive feeds from all the entitlement systems.
 - DoD TPPS PMO [Silas] recommended that the services obtain access to the ePortal balance sheets to monitor reconciliation status. Navy [Newman] already has access.
- Navy uses standard and custom reports to monitor shipper performance over time, and target the few worst sites that require additional training. Navy also looks to identify duplicate billings, improper payments, and potential fraud by comparing shipping volume comparative to the command’s size, cost per pound, and reviewing high dollar volume transactions.
- Navy [Gottlick] stated that many of the reports used to manage the Freight program were created in Data Analysis.

- Navy requests that the same functionality be available for HHG.
- U.S. Bank [Garcia] explained that the Transaction Summary Monitor provides all the data, although it must be parsed and filtered. Air Force/DLA [Witter] added that there is no Service/Agency indicator in the data, which makes it difficult to manage.
- U.S. Bank [Garcia] stated that the HHG Analytics Tool is still in testing and not ready for release. Air Force/DLA [Witter] recommended that the TPPS grant some service/agency super-users access to the COGNOS environment so they can mine the data and create reports to share with the DoD community while U.S. Bank continues with testing and development. ****McNulty will discuss the possibility of granting a few super users access to US Bank's COGNOS environment prior to official release.**
- OSD [McNulty] asked about the origins of the Navy TPPS team. Navy [Jones] responded that the financial positions were pre-existing, but the functional positions were created specifically for this task and initially funded by Navy FMO. ****Navy [Jones] will provide supporting documentation for the initial creation of the Navy TPPS team.**
- USCG [Barry] added that USCG travels to each site to conduct training and provides report cards quarterly to the commanders. This has created a competitive environment for the TOs, providing incentive to improve performance. TOs provide and receive feedback, and review procedures when low grades are given. USCG [Barry] added that it is mandatory for TOs to log into the system at least once every Tuesday and Thursday to ensure PPI requirements are met.
- Navy [Gottlick] added that initial training is almost always done in person. Navy [Newman] added that Navy provides FMs with a two day training course on reconciling TPPS charges. This training has helped with rolling balances and reduced the volume of requests made from the FMs to the TOs.
- Navy [Gottlick] would also like for U.S. Bank to create a report showing certification status and requested this be added to the top 10 issues list.
 - **** Webb replied that there is an SR open for this enhancement and will check on the status for both FRT and HHG.**
 - Air Force/DLA [Witter] recommended U.S. Bank provide a certification status report via email, similar to the delinquency report.
 - IBM [Hamilton] has requested that U.S. Bank send the MAS upload file weekly. This file contains the certification date and could be used to monitor certification status.

DLA Best Practices

- DLA is working to use direct cite funding as much as possible, but requires a TAC to do this. When a TAC is not available, DLA will generate a DLA ("S") TAC to use on the shipment and then go through a reimbursable "bill back" process. Army [Peterson] asked whether the DLA bill back process is documented. ****DLA [Morrow] will confirm with DDC, the process owners.**

- Tracker-Lite generates notes to the TAC coordinator when a TAC fails to convert so that the TAC/LOA relationship can be corrected in TGET. Only invalid TACs fail conversion.
- Tracker-Lite receives a daily TGET feed and is working to be able to convert HHG TACs used on FRT shipments.

Data Storage Payment Status

- LOAs to pay the first of three data archive bills have been received and processed for Navy and MC. If the bill is not paid, US Bank is not likely to allow the bridge extension. USAF's [Tirey] LOA should be in transit. ****Army [Taylor] to follow up with Army ASA/FMC [Bogle] for LOA.**
- OSD [McNulty] reported that a legal review is being conducted to determine if some of the data can be purged. ****McNulty will confirm the legal requirement to store data.**
- USTRANSCOM [Steffy] purchased and has three terabyte drives ready to ship to US Bank to download the data, if needed.
- GSA is the official DoD solution to archive data necessary for legal proceedings.
- USTRANSCOM [Steffey] is developing a tool called ICG that allows for reporting and data mining across data sets. It uses COGNOS for BI. For access email Steffey.

Rolling Balances

- DoD TPPS PMO [Soderlund] stated that DFAS can grant access for the services to view the carrying balance project on the DFAS webportal.
- DoD TPPS PMO [Soderlund] explained that ODS is a possible cost-efficient replacement for the MAS that has COGNOS query capabilities, but requires interfaces to additional systems.
- Navy [Jones] explained that the rising HHG Navy debit balance is a BUPERS funding shortfall issue. Additional funding has been requested.
- DLA [Morrow] suggested changing to a billing cycle of every 4 weeks vice monthly (13 cycles vice 12) to better control the day SIs become available for certification. Navy [Jones] prefers monthly. USCG [Huffman] is uncertain that the financial systems could process an extra billing cycle as they are set-up for monthly invoices.
- IBM [Hamilton] suggested shortening the certification window. AF [Tirey] will be moving to a 3 calendar day policy for FRT shippers.
- IBM [Hamilton] proposed condensing the electronic 821/810 timeline so that the 821 and 810 are sent immediately upon certification, rather than delaying the 810. ****Navy [Newman] will follow up on whether the 821 must be received prior to the 810 to pay successfully in One Pay.**
- IBM [Hamilton] proposed requesting an SCR for US Bank to generate files on the weekends. Navy [Jones] reported that One Pay would not be able to accept weekend files as this would put two or more files in queue for processing on Monday morning and One Pay only pulls the last file submitted.

DoD Training Session Survey Feedback

- OSD [McNulty] stated that the SDDC conference has moved out to Scott and has merged with the FRT workshops, which are scheduled for the first week of

December. The training is targeted for TOs, and will focus on technical TPPS skills. OSD recommends that U.S. Bank and IBM help provide training at this event, and focus on areas identified in the DoD Training Sessions Surveys.

- ****OSD [McNulty] will send additional information about the SDDC conference to the service and agencies and asked for input on suggested training topics.**
- USAF [Tirey] reported that the USAF hosted a service symposium in Southbridge, MA and invited Eric Schoo at Syncada to provide one-on-one training. USAF [Moran] added that the facility is free for the government, and recommended the venue for other services/agencies who may want to host a similar event.
- U.S. Bank [Garcia] suggested that a working group be established to create a standardized training program, as recommended in the June 2009 DoD Assessment Report. ****OSD [McNulty] recommended that the topic be addressed at the next TPPS Council Meeting and asked the services and agencies to send IBM any training topics that should be addressed in a DoD training program as well as training best practices.**

Foreign transaction resolution process

- IBM [Hamilton] recommends using a DoD clearing carrier account to resolve instances where transactions from one site incorrectly appear on another site's summary invoice. The process requires some timing of the TPPS to ensure no disbursements are made. IBM plans to conduct some additional tests on the process.
- Navy [Limjoco] asked whether there is a way to make it a linked eBill. IBM [Hamilton] responded that it is not possible since the trading partners are different than those on the original BoL.
- USCG [Huffman] stated that the offsetting eBill be created at the TCN level so that the line items on the LID offset at the TCN vice BoL level. Huffman also stated that the process should only be done prior to the SI cycle date.
- SDDC [Soto] asked whether this is a common issue. IBM [Hamilton] responded that it is not common, but is also not an issue that is actively monitored. Instances are generally discovered when reported by the sites.

Business Rule Review

- IBM [Hamilton] explained that in light of the DoDIG audit, business rules and operational filters should be reviewed and DoD-wide standards established.
- The current auto-approval thresholds have a wide range of levels. Interpretation of 41 CFR 102-118.290 could justify that all bills > \$2,500 require manual approval. Therefore, auto-approval thresholds above this standard could raise audit flags if not properly justified. SDDC [Johnson] is reviewing the \$2,500 standard.
- Current operational filters and approval rights indicate a potential weakness in separation of duties.
- U.S. Bank [Webb] stated that a systemic review of user operational filters is in order.
- DLA [Morrow] agreed to take this review as a tasking for the ICWG.
- ****OSD [McNulty] requests that the services/agencies examine their own business rules and operational filters.**

- ****IBM [Hamilton] will distribute a list of current business rules and operational filters.**

Processes for USB Updates

- ****IBM [Hamilton] requested that the TPPS Council review and approve or provide comments on the proposed process for establishing and updated trading partner relationships (TPRs).**
- IBM [Hamilton] presented a new account request form to standardize the process. U.S. Bank [Webb] asked whether the intent is to automate new accounts at creation. IBM [Hamilton] responded that the goal is to automate new accounts from the start.
- ****IBM [Hamilton] requested that the TPPS Council review and approve or provide comments on the proposed process for change requests/enhancements.**
- ****IBM [Hamilton] asked SDDC to review and approve or provide comments on the item code updates process for DPS.**
- IBM [Hamilton] requested a standardized process for establishing payee codes for HHG.

Creating new automated COAs for FY11

- IBM [Hamilton] explained that invalid LOAs and TACs cannot be deleted from the Chart of Accounts (COA). In order to remove the old and invalid records, a new COA needs be created.
- IBM [Hamilton] stated that during the month of the changeover in the COAs, identical LOAs may appear twice on the summary invoice. The same LOA used across two COAs will not rollup into one line item on the SI. This should only occur during the transition period.
- IBM [Hamilton] requested approval from the TPPS Council to create a new COA. TPPS Council granted approval.

TPPS Contract Status

Government-only session. Minutes will be distributed separately.

USB TAC routing capability

- IBM [Hamilton] explained that the capability exists, but does not require that the services/agencies use it. The goal of the presentation was to raise awareness of the capability.
- DLA [Morrow] is considering integrating this capability into their bill back process (routing S TACs to different SIs for approval).
- Morrow also suggested that the process be applied for all non-DoD TACs, as these TACs are often the cause of rolling balances.
 - U.S. Bank [Webb] stated that there may be some complications with non-DoD TACs, as the non-DoD agency must be under the DoD org and be set-up to do business with US Bank.
 - For the most part, U.S. Bank should be able to accommodate the non-DoD agencies.