

**WebTCAS Deployment
Frequently Asked Questions**

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NRCS-ITC, Fort Collins, CO

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1.0 CAMS

NEW! Q1: Do you have to be on the USDA network to access CAMS?

A: Both CAMS and WebTCAS are designed to allow access from a field service center workstation and from a public Internet provider. Over time there will be several web links that point to the WebTCAS application site. Initially, the page at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/webtcas> will include a link to the WebTCAS application site. When the CAMS web page modifies their navigation page at <http://cams.usda.gov>, it will have one also.

NEW! Q2: How often is CAMS data updated in WebTCAS and the OIP Employee Directory?

A: We currently update the Fort Collins database from CAMS on the following schedule:

- Login IDs, Passwords, Employee Name, E-mail Address, and Phone Number are refreshed hourly from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM MDT.
- All other data (including OIP Office ID) is refreshed every two hours from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM MDT.

The refresh process begins on the hour. It takes 5 to 10 minutes to complete.

NEW! Q3: Do CAMS passwords expire? If so, will employees be alerted to change their password?

A: In the current version of CAMS, passwords do not expire. For security reasons that will change in a future version. Complete details are yet to be worked out.

NEW! Q4: We have a couple employees (on job-share) who don't work the same number of hours each week, but CAMS wants you to enter a "weekly value". How do we make this work?

A: CAMS multiplies the "weekly value" you enter by 2 in order to get the total hours worked in a pay period. If you have employees that don't work the same number of hours each week, here's how to figure out what to put in the CAMS "weekly value" so that there will be no conflict with WebTCAS. Add the hours for Week 1 with the hours for Week 2 and divide the total by 2. Enter that number as the "weekly value" in CAMS. CAMS will accept ½ hour values so you can enter 20.5 as a "weekly value". For example : Week 1 hours (25) + Week 2 hours (30) = 55. Divide by 2 = 27.5. Enter 27.5 in CAMS as the "weekly value".

2.0 Conversion

Q1: Are the preview screens interactive?

The screens are not currently interactive. However, we will try to get some interactive screens up so Timekeepers and employees can "play" with them.

Q2: If you're on the list for conversion in PP16, what does that mean?

That means you will complete the conversion steps in the first week of PP16 and be ready to use WebTCAS by the second week of PP16.

Q3: Monday of PP17 is a holiday, what happens then?

The second Monday of PP17 is actually the holiday so we expect minimum impact to the conversion schedule.

Q4: Our new director has not yet reported to our office so we are not doing his timesheet yet, another NRCS office is. How does his TCAS data get converted to WebTCAS?

His data will be converted when the office currently doing his timesheet submits their data files for conversion to WebTCAS. When he reports to your office, the POI Coordinator at his previous duty station will change his timekeeper to "Unassigned". The POI Coordinator for your office will assign him to one of your Timekeepers.

Q5: The conversion timeline says by Tuesday of conversion week the files will be sent to ITC for conversion. Are these the same 4 files that were sent for pre-conversion testing?

Yes, it is the same group of files, but they will contain the data from the latest PP. In this way, the most current data and leave balances will be converted to WebTCAS.

Q6: What if we can not get T&As transmitted by Monday on Conversion Week?

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We will work with you. Employees might have to keep a side record of their time for the first week during conversion until WebTCAS is up and running.

Q7: Who receives the log of errors from pre-conversion testing?

The log is sent back to the person who sent in the TCAS files unless a different name was designated in the email message.

Q8: Do not understand the resolution to the “record did not convert” message on the error log

If a record did not convert, we have found that 95% of the time when the HR person goes into the CAMS and looks at the record, they discover that the OIP ID for that position is missing. All they need to do to resolve this problem is to add the OIP ID to the CAMS record.

Q9: Error Log #26 is noted as “information only” – does this mean we can ignore it?

Yes. Do not worry about it. WebTCAS uses NFC data for the AL category since CAMS data for AL Category is not kept up-to-date.

Q10: Will a Timekeeper be required to transfer each employee’s timesheet into WebTCAS?

No. The conversion process will enter all master data for you. The Timekeeper will need to check the timesheet and master after conversion to make sure all the data is correct.

Q11: For intermittent employees who are in CAMS but not in the TCAS database because they’re not currently working, will Timekeepers have to enter their master records in TCAS prior to conversion so their data is converted to WebTCAS?

Two options:

- Can leave them out of the TCAS database and if they start working again have the POI Coordinator assign them a Timekeeper who will then set up their master record.
- Add them to the TCAS database in non-pay status now and their data will then be converted.

Q12: Please clarify Conversion Message #19. What are the Military Reserve Category codes that we can use? What code do we use for National Guard?

Ignore WebTCAS Pre-Conversion Messages #19 and #22 regarding military leave and military reserve category. The Military Reserve Category is not kept current in CAMS, WebTCAS will not worry about this during conversion.

Q13: What are Culprit 53 and 152 reports?

Culprit 0053 – Error Analysis by Contact Point

Every pay period, the TIME system at NFC checks each T&A that is submitted for processing. TIME is also known as the T&A Validation System. TIME performs all editing and validating necessary for acceptance of T&A data for payment. TIME utilizes the Payroll/Personnel System database and table files in its edit/validation process. The Culprit 0053 report provides detailed information on problems detected by the TIME process. Culprit 0053 errors commonly identify areas where the NFC data is not "in sync" with the data being submitted. Every site (POI) should review their Culprit 0053 reports at the end of each pay period to ensure that problem areas are "fixed" before the next T&A cycle.

Culprit 0152 – Leave Error Report

Current leave balances are submitted on each T&A record submitted to NFC for processing. These leave balances are then checked against the leave balances maintained in the Payroll/Personnel System database at NFC. When discrepancies are detected, they are listed on the Culprit 0152 report. Every site (POI) should review their Culprit 0152 reports at the end of each pay period to ensure that problem areas are "fixed" as soon as possible. Leave audits are usually required to resolve the problem when an employee is listed on the Culprit 0152 report.

Q14: As part of pre-conversion, sites are supposed to resolve errors on the Culprit 53 and 152 reports. When are updated 53 and 152 reports available?

Updated Culprit Reports are not available until 7 days after the end of a pay period. The first 6 days following the end of a pay period (Sunday-Friday) are for data transmission. On day 8, NFC runs the payroll job. Then updated Culprit Reports are available.

EXAMPLE: PP14 ended on July 28

July 29-August 3 is for transmission of PP14

August 5 payroll runs for PP14

August 6 Culprit Reports 53 and 152 are available for PP14

Q15: When is Clean & Prep done for the last TCAS pay period prior to conversion?

Ideally on Tuesday morning of the first week of conversion. After the Culprit 13 report has been run to ensure that all T&As for the site have been received by NFC. [EXAMPLE: If the site is listed as converting in PP16, then the last TCAS Clean & Prep is done the first Tuesday of PP16.]

Q16: If an address associated with an OIP ID is incorrect, will that affect conversion to WebTCAS?

No, this will not affect conversion. However, if an employee has the wrong OIP ID assigned to them, that must be corrected in CAMS prior to conversion to WebTCAS.

Q17: How do I check to see if all the employees in our POI are assigned the correct OIP Office ID?

Go to the OIP Employee Directory draft web page at

<http://grama.itc.nrcs.usda.gov/scripts/ndisapi.dll/ed/pgMain> and run a report for your POI.

NEW! Q18: Can a state change its Timekeepers immediately after conversion? Right now we have multiple Timekeepers for TCAS and will only need 3-4 with WebTCAS?

A: Normally, this could easily be done by the POI Coordinator using the Timekeeper & Fund Maintenance option. Depending on when your state converts, the POI Coordinator screens may or may not be functional. They will NOT be available for PP16. If those screens are not available and Timekeeper changes need to be made, the individual Timekeepers in the POI can go into each employee master record and assign a different Timekeeper from within the POI. If the employee is transferring to a different POI, you need to e-mail your Deployment Coordinator explaining your needs, and the ITC will make the appropriate changes in the database.

NEW! Q19: What needs to be kept in the way of files for the old TCAS system? Can we get rid of everything except the data directory?

A: The entire TCAS system must be maintained for 1 year following conversion. If a corrected T&A needs to be done for a pay period that was transmitted with TCAS, the old TCAS system is the only vehicle for preparing and transmitting that corrected T&A.

NEW! Q20: How do we handle an Annual Leave accrual change that happens the week conversion takes place?

A: Allow the record to convert with the old accrual rate. Then after conversion, the Timekeeper will have to go into WebTCAS and change the accrual rate in the employee's master record.

NEW! Q21: Do we have to do anything after conversion so WebTCAS knows who our POI Coordinator and backup is?

A: All you have to do is make sure the ITC knows who those individuals are. This information will then be entered into the system when the site is converted.

NEW! Q22: Should we be concerned if an employee doesn't show up on the reports from the OIP Employee Directory but has used their CAMS ID and password?

A: Yes. If an employee is not showing up in the OIP Employee Directory, it's a good indication that some data is missing in CAMS. CAMS information is located in two databases. WebTCAS pulls information from both the records database and the security database. The OIP Employee Directory gets its feed from the records

database. So if the employee is missing in the OIP Employee Directory, you should definitely check their CAMS data.

NEW! Q23: How do we handle conversion for O&E staff located at the Regional Office? They are not part of the Regional Office staff, but currently their Timekeepers are from the Regional Office and their data is in the Regional Office TCAS database.

A: For the purposes of conversion, have the O&E staff convert in the TCAS database they are currently in. However, WebTCAS can accommodate any scenario that works best for the O&E staff, the office where they are located, and NHQ since the system allows an employee located in one POI to have a Timekeeper in another POI. After conversion, if all parties involved decide it would be preferable to assign an NHQ Timekeeper for the O&E staff located in the Regional Office, WebTCAS can easily handle that.

3.0 New Employees/CAMS

Q1: How do you transfer employee records from state to state?

The POI Coordinator from the state the employee is leaving changes the timekeeper to “Unassigned”. Then the POI Coordinator at the new duty station assigns one of their Timekeepers to the employee with the unassigned timekeeper.

Q2: How timely will new employees receive their CAMS IDs?

Every night CAMS scans the system for new employees in order to generate needed IDs and passwords. The CAMS team is currently working on the details on how to quickly notify the new employee of their ID and password. A new feature is being introduced to CAMS that will allow Human Resources (HR) to establish/change User IDs and passwords for existing and new employees.

Q3: If Human Resources can't get a new employee's information into CAMS in time for the current pay period, can data for that pay period be entered in a later pay period?

No, WebTCAS does not support that right now.

Q4: How does a new employee get an ID and password to use WebTCAS?

WebTCAS is accessed with the CAMS ID and password. When a new employee is entered into CAMS, they automatically receive a CAMS ID and password.

Q5: If a new employee has been entered into CAMS but has not yet received their CAMS ID and password, can a timesheet be entered?

Yes, as long as an employee is in CAMS, WebTCAS will recognize them and their Timekeeper will be able to enter a timesheet for them. A new feature is being introduced to CAMS that will allow Human Resources (HR) to establish/change User IDs and passwords for existing and new employees.

Q6: Is there a link between an employee and timekeeper in CAMS?

There is no Timekeeper in CAMS. When a new hire is entered into CAMS, the record will get into CAMS and a default timekeeper will be assigned when it reaches the WebTCAS system. The POI Coordinator will then assign the Timekeeper to the new person's record.

4.0 POI Coordinator Functions

NEW! Q1: Will a message about the transmit deadline show up on the POI Coordinator's main menu message section?

A: No, this type of message will show up on the Timekeepers' main menu message section.

NEW! Q2: Can the POI Coordinator print a list of all the employees assigned to a Timekeeper?

A: The POI Coordinator can print a list of all the employees in the POI. If they sort the list by group before they print it, they will be able to see which employees are associated with each Timekeeper. However, this function will not be available in the early stages of WebTCAS deployment.

NEW! Q3: Does the POI Coordinator have access to the timesheets and profiles of all the employees in their POI?

A: No. The POI Coordinator has access to a list of all the employees in their POI so they can assign Timekeepers to them, create new Timekeepers from the list of employees in the POI, and generally manage the timekeeping process at the POI. However, a POI Coordinator is NOT automatically a Timekeeper. Those are two separate functions. In order for a POI Coordinator to do timekeeping, he/she MUST be listed as one of the Timekeepers for the POI.

NEW! Q4: Can a POI Coordinator be a Timekeeper and vice-versa?

A: Yes, they MAY be a Timekeeper, but they don't HAVE to be a Timekeeper.

NEW! Q5: Can a POI Coordinator be a Backup Timekeeper to all the Timekeepers in the POI?

A: Yes, but it's not automatic. To make this happen, the POI Coordinator first must be listed as one of the Timekeepers for the POI, and then each Timekeeper in the POI must go into their user Profile and name the POI Coordinator as one of their two Backup Timekeepers.

NEW! Q6: Will the POI Coordinator's Timekeeper & Fund Maintenance screen be functional when WebTCAS is rolled out.

A: No. It will not be available in the early stages of the roll-out. However, most of the functions that a POI Coordinator would use the screen for will be available to Timekeepers. For functions that are not available online via the Timekeeper screens, the POI Coordinator can contact the ITC for assistance.

5.0 Policy

Q1: Can you provide some supporting document on what you expect states to do for conversion to take to our program managers to back up our request that all these conversion steps be done?

Review the notes from the 1st Weekly Regional teleconference. It includes the "Steps of Conversion" and a section on what each site needs to do to prepare.

Q2: Could you put into writing that it's the employee's responsibility to enter their timesheet accurately including clock hours.

NHQ will retrieve the policy on that, and the Deployment Coordinators will distribute it to the states.

Q3: Do supervisors have to pre-approve leave online?

No the supervisor screens are optional at this time. In addition, leave approval is not included in the WebTCAS application. Only timesheet certification is included in WebTCAS.

Q4: Has the FNM-320 been abolished?

Yes, as soon as your site converts to WebTCAS, the need to maintain the FNM-320 is no longer there – UNLESS the Timekeeper enters timesheets for employees. If that is the case, then a 320 (or equivalent) will need to be done by the employee so the Timekeeper has supporting documentation for the time they entered into WebTCAS for the employee.

Q5: On the preview screen for the timesheet, it shows the employee changing their lunch hour on Wednesday. Is that allowed?

HR will be issuing new policy that allows employees to flex their lunch hour (to a maximum of 1 hour). A copy of the draft policy can be found at

<http://dc.ffasintranet.usda.gov/hrd/cover.html>

Then click on Hours of Duty, then Policy.

Q6: What is the deadline for Timekeepers to verify timesheets?

NFC policy states that timesheets should be transmitted by COB Tuesday. Timekeepers will need to verify employee timesheets on or before Tuesday following the end of the pay period.

Q7: Where is it envisioned that Timekeepers will be located?

States have control over that. Timekeepers can be located wherever it works best for the state to have them.

Q8: Will there still be a requirement for pre-approval of Comp Time and Overtime?

Yes. WebTCAS does not change that requirement. That is one of the things the Timekeeper is expected to confirm when verifying timesheets. If they see Comp Time or Overtime was recorded, they need to check for the backup documentation that pre-approves this time.

Q9: Will Timekeepers still need to keep paper files?

Yes. Timekeepers will still need to maintain files on their employees to keep track of documents that authorize overtime, etc. Paper copies of the actual timesheet will no longer need to be maintained in these files IF the supervisor certifies the timesheet online.

Q10: Is a Personnel Action required when a student employee works more hours during their school breaks?

No. They can exceed their scheduled minimum weekly hours in WebTCAS for one to three pay periods without needing to do a Personnel Action to adjust their hours of duty.

6.0 Program/Activity Codes

Q1: Will there be changes in the Program/Activity codes?

The codes do not change for the remaining pay periods of FY2001. Several changes are planned in FY2002 and will be addressed in the upcoming training sessions being developed by NEDC.

Q2: Our PRMS coordinator had a teleconference that said there would be 4 to 6 hours of face-to-face training. Should we coordinate the weekly WebTCAS teleconference information with the IAS training?

No. The WebTCAS teleconferences are for training on how to deploy WebTCAS and use the screens. The training that IAS will be providing is to develop a better understanding of the new county-based program/activity codes that will be used starting in FY-2002. For consistency in data entry with IAS (WebTCAS, PRMS, etc.) the Chief has emphasized face-to-face training to field personnel.

Q3: In WebTCAS we have to use text names instead of program/activity codes, is there a listing of the names that go with each program/activity code?

ITC will send states a list of program/activity codes and the corresponding text names.

Q4: Will program/activity codes be carried forward for three pay periods and then dropped if they are not used?

No. in WebTCAS the employee has control of what codes are shown on their timesheet. They can add and drop them as needed.

Q5: Will a POI Coordinator be able to block out program codes that don't pertain to their POI?

Initially WebTCAS will not allow you to block out codes your POI doesn't need. This capability is planned as an enhancement to the system at some later date.

NEW! Q6: We have heard that the "Benefits All" Program code will go away in WebTCAS, yet it is shown as one of the options in the Program code section on the Preview screens. Why?

A: The "Benefits All" Programs code will be eliminated at the beginning of FY-2002. However, since WebTCAS will be deployed before FY-2002, the code was included so it could be used for the remainder of FY-2001. It will be removed from the choice list at the beginning of FY-2002.

NEW! Q7: Will the Master Record screen change after October 1, when we begin using the new program definitions.

A: No. There is no Program/Activity information on the Master Record so there will be no changes to the Master Record on October 1. Program/Activity codes are selected from the Employee Profile screen or directly on the Timesheet screen.

7.0 Supervisor Certification

Q1: Can a supervisor go in and review and sign timesheets online?

Yes. That feature is available in WebTCAS, but it is optional. If supervisors certify the timesheets online there is no need to print the timesheets. However, if the supervisor does not certify the timesheet online, then Timekeepers must print each timesheet and get the supervisor's signature and maintain the signed printout as the official file copy.

Q2: How long does the supervisor have to certify timesheets online?

Right now there is no deadline; it's open-ended because online supervisor certification is optional. If FMD/HR establishes policy making online certification mandatory and includes deadlines for certification, WebTCAS will be changed to follow those guidelines.

Q3: What happens if a supervisor is not available to certify timesheets online?

Every employee in WebTCAS has a "Profile". Supervisors have an option on their profile screen to name two backups for online certification purposes. These backups can be changed as often as necessary to meet the current circumstances in the office. For example, if the two named backups are also going to be out of the office when the supervisor is gone, the supervisor can go into their profile and change their backups for that PP.

Q4: What is the "Supervisor certification required before transmission" box for under Processing Options on the employee's master record?

It is an option that is available to supervisors and locations that choose to require supervisor certification of a timesheet before it will be transmitted to NFC. Since this option is available in each employee's master record, it can be set on a case-by-case basis. If a Timekeeper has an employee for whom a supervisor says "I want to certify their timesheet before it is transmitted", the Timekeeper will check that box on the employee's master record. When this box is checked, the timesheet will NOT be sent to NFC until it is certified online by the supervisor. This feature may not be available for FY-2001 data entry.

Q5: Can an acting supervisor certify timesheets online?

Yes, if the supervisor has gone into their Profile screen and named the acting supervisor as a "backup". A supervisor can name two backups and change those names as often as needed. NOTE: Backup Supervisors must be from the same POI as the primary Supervisor.

Q6: Does the supervisor have to certify the timesheet before it is transmitted?

No. FMD policy does not require supervisor certification of timesheets prior to transmission. If a supervisor wishes to certify an employee's timesheet before it is transmitted to NFC, the "Supervisor certification required before transmission" box on the employee's master record must be checked by the Timekeeper to prevent the timesheet from being transmitted without certification.

Q7: We have an employee in our POI, "Steve", who's supervisor, "Barbara", is in a different POI. How will supervisor certification be handled in WebTCAS for a situation like this?

We have employees in our POI who are stationed in a different state. Will they be able to do their timesheets in WebTCAS and have them verified and certified online by their Timekeeper and supervisor in our POI?

WebTCAS was designed to accommodate this situation. Timekeepers and supervisors can verify, certify, and perform any other necessary WebTCAS function online for all their employees regardless of where those employees are physically located, even if they are assigned to a different POI. As long as CAMS shows

“Barbara” as “Steve’s” supervisor, WebTCAS will accept that relationship. When “Barbara” accesses her supervisor screen in WebTCAS, she will see all the employees she is assigned to supervise (regardless of what POI they are in). Similarly, a POI Coordinator can assign one of their Timekeepers to an employee who is located in a different POI. Once that assignment has been made, the Timekeeper will see that employee’s records right along with all their other employees on the Timekeeper Screen.

Q8: How will a supervisor access the online certification feature?

Like Timekeepers and POI Coordinators, Supervisors will have additional options available to them on their WebTCAS main menu screen. These options will enable them to review any of their employees’ timesheets and certify them. To see what the supervisor screens look like, go to the WebTCAS home page at www.nrcs.usda.gov/webtcas and click on the link to the demo site.

Q9: Once the supervisor certifies the employee timesheet, is she/he the one to release the timesheet, or is the Timekeeper the one who releases the timesheet?

Currently, WebTCAS does not require supervisor certification before a timesheet is transmitted to NFC. Even if the supervisor certifies it on line, they do not “release” it to NFC. The Timekeeper verifies the timesheet, and once it has been verified, it is eligible to be picked up and transmitted to NFC. The actual transmitting process happens automatically 4 times a day during transmit week when the CRON systems located at the ITC “wakes up”, scans the system for verified timesheets, and transmits them to NFC.

Q10: If an employee works Overtime or uses Comp Time, how will this time used be approved by the supervisor prior to the timesheet being submitted?

Overtime or Comp Time, in most cases, is pre-approved by the supervisor. This is in writing and will be filed in the employee’s timesheet file which is maintained by the Timekeeper. WebTCAS does not keep track of approvals. There are occasions when the employee may earn Comp Time or Overtime without prior approval (this is known as “suffered & permitted”). Employees need to request permission to use leave from their supervisor. Supervisors are ultimately responsible for verifying that all leave used and earned in a pay period is correct. If a supervisor wanted to see the timesheet prior to submission to NFC, then the “supervisor certification required before transmission” block on the employee’s Master Record would need to be checked. WebTCAS does not currently require supervisory certification for transmission to NFC.

NEW! Q11: Can a Supervisor only certify the current pay period or is there a way for them to go back for instance 2-3 or more pay periods and certify?

A: At this time, the plan for the online certification system allows a Supervisor to certify Timesheets from any of the pay periods in the database.

NEW! Q12: Will a Supervisor be able to rescind an online certification?

A: We are not sure right now if WebTCAS will allow this since this has implications to archived files. The system might allow a rescind in the current pay period but not for past pay periods. We will work with NHQ Financial Management Division to define the rules for this process.

8.0 Timekeeper Functions

Q1: Does the Supervisor’s Name in the employee master record come from CAMS?

Yes. It should be there unless a supervisor is not assigned in CAMS.

Q2: What information in the master record comes from CAMS?

Everything in blue (on the employee master record) is extracted from CAMS. In most cases, the Timekeepers will not be able to override this information. There are two exceptions -- The duty station OIP ID can be changed if needed and the pay status for Intermittent employees can also be changed. NOTE: Hourly rate data is also extracted from CAMS for ACRES reporting but is not shown on the master record.

NEW! Q3: We have been told that in WebTCAS an employee's contact point will be their Timekeeper's contact point. Is that contact point shown on the employee's Master Record? Does the employee's OIP ID replace the contact point? We currently use the employee contact point for reporting purposes when we need to know the office type of the employee performing the work. That will no longer be feasible if the Timekeeper's contact point is used in WebTCAS.

A. The contact point in TCAS and WebTCAS is there strictly for NFC use. It is not used in any reports. In WebTCAS the Duty Station OIP ID replaces the county code and office type that the Timekeeper maintained in TCAS for reporting purposes.

NEW! Q4: The information in the Master Record for whether or not an employee is "New" comes from CAMS. If the answer is "yes" will WebTCAS automatically enter the Eff. Start Date or will that be a Timekeeper responsibility? The Eff. Start Date block looks fill-able, which makes us think the Timekeeper has to enter the data.

A. There are 2 scenarios when the effective start date must be completed on the Master Record. In one scenario the information is automatically entered by CAMS, in the other, the Timekeeper must enter the data. So that's why the Eff. Start Date block is fill-able.

- Scenario #1: When the employee is new, this data will automatically be populated from CAMS with the effective date of the new hire.
- Scenario #2: When an action is processed because of a status change (for example, when an employee goes on extended LWOP in the middle of a pay period), the Timekeeper is responsible for entering the effective date of the status change.

NEW! Q5: Is there a limit to the number of Timekeepers a POI can have?

A: No, you may have as many as you need.

NEW! Q6: Can an employee be a Backup Timekeeper for more than one Timekeeper?

A: Yes.

NEW! Q7: Does a Timekeeper use the employee's CAMS ID and password to enter the employee's timesheet?

A: Absolutely NOT. The Timekeeper uses their own CAMS ID and password to access WebTCAS. Their Timekeeper screen will show them a list of all their employees. From that screen, they will be able to access any of their employee's timesheets and profiles. Similarly, Backup Timekeepers and Backup Supervisors will use their own CAMS IDs and passwords to access WebTCAS if they need to perform backup duties for the Primary Timekeeper or Supervisor. Never compromise CAMS security by giving your CAMS ID and password to another employee.

NEW! Q8: What is the Group block on the employee Master Record for?

A: That is an optional field that Timekeepers can use if they wish. It allows the Timekeeper to group their employees in a way that is meaningful to them. For example, if a State Office Timekeeper is responsible for employees in several Area Offices, he/she can divide those employees into groups by assigning a group name to each Area Office and then entering that name in the Group block on the Master Record for each employee who is part of that group.

NEW! Q9: How will Home Leave accruals be handled in WebTCAS?

A: Right now there is no automatic accrual for home leave. After conversion to WebTCAS, the Timekeeper will go in and use the PP Adjust column on the Master Record to enter the current Home Leave balance. Then as additional Home Leave is accrued, the Timekeeper will go back into the Master Record and manually update the Master Record, again using the PP Adjust column to add in the newly accrued hours.

9.0 Timesheet

Q1: Do Timekeepers have to release timesheets?

Yes. The Timekeepers must continue to “verify” timesheets before they will be transmitted to NFC.

Q2: How do you change a timesheet to charge time to different accounting?

The process is similar to what is currently done in TCAS today. You will have to modify the NFC transaction codes. In WebTCAS, you click on the "A" next to the employee’s name on Timekeeper screen. That takes you to a screen where you can add a new line to the accounting information and select the 2nd fund code you want to use. Remember to deduct the number of hours you’re charging to the 2nd code from the first line that the system generated.

Q3: How does an employee get a copy of their timesheet?

If the supervisor certifies timesheets online, the employee can go into WebTCAS and print a fully signed, verified, certified copy whenever they want. If the supervisor is not certifying online, then the Timekeeper will have a manually signed printout that can be copied for the employee. Also, an employee, Timekeeper, or Supervisor can, at any time, print a “draft” or current version of the timesheet.

Q4: How would you record extra hours when employee earns both Credit and Overtime on the same day?

In the employee’s profile, the “Fill-in My Extra Hours as” option should be set to “No Default.” Then under the Extra Hours section on the timesheet, the employee would have to show two lines, one for the Credit earned and one for the Overtime and then complete as needed. In the Actual/Extra Clock Hours section, the employee would record the hours involved in the extra time earned. There is no need to differentiate between the clock hours for the credit time versus the clock hours for the overtime. If the hours are consecutive, then they could show only one set of hours that covered both the Credit Earned and the Overtime. If the hours involved were not consecutive, then the employee would have to record a set of hours for the Credit Earned and a separate set of hours for the Overtime.

Q5: If employee in CAMS has a 48-hour schedule and the employee works more hours will they not be paid for those hours?

If we have a part-time employee who is shown as working 24 hours per week and in one PP they work 32 hours in a week, what happens?

The employee will get paid for all their hours. You will get a warning whenever the tour of duty is not followed, but it’s only a warning. The part-time hours listed for the employee are the MINIMUM number they must work in a week. It is OK to exceed the minimum. However, if the employee works FEWER hours, they must make up the difference with LWOP in order to reach the weekly minimum listed in their master record.

As a side note, the rule is that if an employee exceeds their weekly hours for three consecutive pay periods, a HR action should be processed to change their TOD hours to reflect the amount of time they really are putting in. Since the WebTCAS database will now be national, there will be some checking of data looking for problems like this.

Q6: If the employee has not completed the timesheet correctly, haven’t recorded hours in the clock hours section, what happens?

WebTCAS forces employees to enter clock hours for leave taken. However, WebTCAS will not edit the clock hours to ensure the From/To values entered match the hours of leave recorded. This requirement is another good reason to encourage employees to enter their own time. Timekeepers who enter employee data from paper copies with missing clock-hours data, they will have the added burden of tracking down the employee to have them complete their paper copy correctly before they can enter the data into WebTCAS.

Q7: What about the employee’s signature if the Timekeeper is entering the data in WebTCAS?

If the Timekeeper is entering the timesheet data instead of the employee, then the timesheet must be printed for the employee to sign to make it legal.

Q8: What happens if an employee wants to make a change after the Timekeeper has verified the timesheet?

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If the Timekeeper has already verified the timesheet, then the employee must notify the Timekeeper of the needed changes. WebTCAS works like the current TCAS. The employee cannot change a timesheet after it is verified.

Q9: Will employees be able to go a couple PPs ahead to enter a timesheet if they are going to be on leave?

No. Only two timesheets will be available, the previous PP and the current PP. WebTCAS does not provide the capability to enter data for future timesheets. Timekeepers will enter timesheets for employees who are on leave.

Q10: Are there controls built into WebTCAS to prevent employees from changing their leave balances?

Employees will not be able to change their own leave balances. Leave balances will be displayed, but will not be something employees can directly edit.

Q11: Are there controls built into WebTCAS to prevent employees from using leave they don't have?

WebTCAS will not allow employees to use leave they don't have. The application checks available leave balances when employees record leave on their timesheet and will not allow them to take more leave than they have available unless the master record indicates they have been approved for advanced leave.

Q12: Is a master copy of each employee's timesheet kept in the office, or is there a master copy kept in the system?

If a Timekeeper enters the employee's data, then a hardcopy must be printed for the employee's signature and kept on file in the office. If the employee, timekeeper and supervisor do everything in WebTCAS, then there is no need for a copy to be filed. WebTCAS will maintain the data for 6 years. It can be printed if necessary. Employee files will still need to be kept for leave slips, requests for schedule changes, etc.

Q13: Is there a limit to the number of lines you can add to an employee timesheet? Some of our employees have as many as 13 program/activity codes listed.

Is there a way to delete the ones you don't need for that pay period?

There is no limit to the number of lines you can add. Click on the + key associated with the Program/Activity/Modifier/County section on the employee timesheet to both add and delete codes in the current timesheet. To permanently add or delete codes, go to the employee Profile.

Q14: How does an employee on a 5-4-9 schedule change their non-duty day?

A: Two options:

- If they have not gone into the timesheet and recorded time for the current pay period, they can go into their Profile, make the change to the schedule shown there, then save and exit the Profile screen.
- If they have already begun to record time in the current timesheet, they would use the override button on the employee timesheet to adjust the schedule (type in the number of hours worked on the regularly scheduled non-duty day and delete number of hours worked on the day they have chosen as their non-duty day in the current pay period). This is purely a one-time change. So if the employee wants to permanently change their non-duty day, they also need to go into the Profile screen and make the schedule change there as well.

Policy: Employees on a 5-4-9 schedule are allowed to change their hours and/or non-duty day up to 4 times per year with supervisory approval. There are occasions when it may be necessary to change the non-duty day within a pay period because of unforeseen work requirements, not for personal convenience, which also requires prior supervisory approval. This should be the exception not the rule and the employee should explain in the remarks section of the timesheet. When employees are in travel or training status, they are to revert to a straight 8, 40-hour/week schedule unless it will not affect the time they are at work.

Q15: Will WebTCAS automatically populate the timesheet with holiday hours? If so, what happens when a new employee enters on duty in the second week of a pay period that contains a holiday in the first week? Will the Timekeeper have to delete the holiday hours from the timesheet?

WebTCAS will automatically insert holiday hours in the appropriate pay periods. However, it will be designed in such a way that holiday time will not be given to employees who did not start work until after the holiday.

NEW! Q16: What happens if an employee's timesheet doesn't get transmitted to NFC?

A: ITC will closely monitor timesheet transmittal to NFC. As we near the end of transmission week, someone from the ITC will contact POI Coordinators in states that have missing data. The POI Coordinators will then work with their Timekeepers to resolve the problems. If NFC does not receive timesheets, they too will be contacting individual sites as they do today. So it is highly unlikely that a timesheet will be "missed". However, if that were to happen, NFC policy is to always pay for one pay period even if no timesheet is received.

NEW! Q17: On the Timesheet, do you have to enter 2.00 or can you just type a 2?

A: WebTCAS will accept a 2 or 2.00

10.0 Training

Q1: Will there be training documents available to assist sites in training their employees on how to use WebTCAS?

Annotated screen captures called "Quick Guides" and some short "cheat sheets" are being developed and will be available on the WebTCAS home page www.nrcs.usda.gov/webtcas.

Q2: I heard there would be a four-hour face-to-face training session for each employee, is that correct?

A: The training you are referring to is not on WebTCAS deployment but rather on developing an understanding of the new program and activity codes that will be used beginning in FY-2002. This training will be done through NEDC and is scheduled for late August and early September with a Train the Trainer format down to the Area level and then face-to-face format at the field level. How to use WebTCAS (input timesheets, verify, etc.) will NOT be covered in that training.

NEW! Q3: Will there be a teleconference held specifically for Timekeepers?

A: No. At this time we have no plans for a teleconference designed specifically for Timekeepers. If states wish to have their Timekeepers sit-in on the weekly teleconferences, they are more than welcome. However, we are going with a Train-the-Trainer approach. We are putting together a basic set of training materials which are posted on the WebTCAS home page (www.nrcs.usda.gov/webtcas) as they are finalized. States can augment this information with their own training materials if they so desire. POI Coordinators (and WebTCAS Deployment Coordinators) are available to answer questions from Timekeepers and provide additional assistance if needed.

NEW! Q4: Will there be an interactive training site where employees can practice using WebTCAS?

A: The ITC still would like to make available a live training site, but don't know when we'll get to that. The production site must come first.

NEW! Q5: Is the blue "New to WebTCAS" button at the bottom right of the Employee Main Menu a tutorial?

A: It is not intended to be an interactive tutorial. What it will do is link to a 2-page "cheat sheet" that will have getting started instructions to walk a new user through the basic steps of completing and submitting a timesheet

11.0 WebTCAS Access & Performance

Q1: Currently my employees do not "save" their timesheets in TCAS because the system does it automatically. Will there be a reminder in the WebTCAS timesheet screen to save before you exit?

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No. If the employee has used a browser before, they are probably aware that a “save” action is required. All other employees will have to be taught this requirement when using a browser.

Q2: How will employees access WebTCAS?

Two options:

- There will be a link to WebTCAS from the CAMS Self-Service Page
- ITC will publish the URL for WebTCAS so employees can go there directly (www.nrcs.usda.gov/webtcas)

Q3: How will the server stand up to 12,800 people using it (visions of the Civil Rights training problems)?

ITC will be monitoring that closely, but we do not believe we will encounter serious performance problems. Current ITC systems have withstood over 20,000 transactions per day for PRMS at the end of fiscal years.

Q4: If individuals can get to WebTCAS from a public site, what about security?

There is nothing sensitive on any of the WebTCAS screens. The employee’s SSN does not appear anywhere on those screens. CAMS IDs are unique and never reused so that is how we uniquely identify employees in WebTCAS. Behind the scenes, the SSN is available for NFC; but it’s on a different server. So redundancy is our main security issue. We will be on the Web Farm and they have backup systems.

Q5: If the ITC communication backbone goes down, are there backup plans in place to keep WebTCAS up and available?

WebTCAS will be part of the Web Farm. Redundancy and availability issues are addressed in the Web Farm implementation.

Q6: Is the CAMS ID and password encrypted?

The CAMS password will be encrypted after CAMS upgrades to the web version that is planned for release this fall.

Q7: Is there a certain version of Acrobat Reader or Internet Explorer we should be using?

If you are on a CCE machine, use the versions provided on the CD# 3. For non-CCE platforms, IE 5.01 SP2 is recommended and Acrobat Reader 5.0. If you have a non-CCE machine we recommend IE 5.01 SP2 and Acrobat Reader 5.0. The easiest way to get these items is to go to the WebTCAS information site at www.nrcs.usda.gov/webtcas. There are links on that page that will take you to sites from which you can download both these products.

Q8: What if WebTCAS goes down?

It is unlikely that WebTCAS would be unavailable for more than a few hours. In a worst-case scenario, employees would still be paid even if the data was not transmitted for the PP because NFC always pays employees for one PP even if a T&A is not received.

Q9: Will WebTCAS work on a Macintosh?

We do not know. We would like Macintosh users to try to access the WebTCAS preview site and then notify their ITC WebTCAS Deployment Coordinator of the results. The ITC does not have a Macintosh on site to test with.

Q10: How often does WebTCAS pick up new information from CAMS?

A: The WebTCAS database is updated from CAMS on the following schedule:

- Logon IDs, Passwords, Employee Name, Email Address, and Phone Number are refreshed hourly from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Mountain Time.
- All other data (including OIP Office ID) is refreshed every two hours from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Mountain Time.

The refresh process starts on the hour and takes 5 to 10 minutes to complete.

NEW! **Q11: When I went to the WebTCAS home page and entered my CAMS ID and Password, it says that I am Sandy Jones. Please advise as to what I need to do to correct this.**

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A: This is a demo site only, with made up data. Sandy Jones is the demo. You do not login to the demo site.

NEW! Q12: Do states need to put in place backup systems in case their whole telecommunications lattice goes down? Some states have experienced two-day telecommunications failures.

A: It's highly unlikely that such a failure would last so long that it would prevent a state from submitting their timesheets. Also, in a worst-case scenario, employees could access WebTCAS from the public Internet using their home computers or from public computer facilities located at places like libraries.

NEW! Q13: Some of our WAEs don't have e-mail. Is having e-mail critical for WebTCAS?

A: No. We are encouraging employees to enter their e-mail address and phone number in CAMS because the e-mail address is needed for the CAMS "I forgot my password" capability. However, now that HR staff have the ability to reset CAMS passwords, a WAE who forgets their password can go to HR and ask them to reset it.