**VBA Budget Formulation and Execution**

**Virtual-Instructor Led Training**

**Question & Answer**

**Resource Guide**

**June 2018**

**Sponsored by:**

* Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)
* Office of Resource Management (ORM)
* VBA Administrative and Loan Accounting Center (ALAC)

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This resource guide provides answers to questions asked during the VBA Budget Formulation & Execution Virtual Instructor Led-Training (VILT) delivered by Office of Resource Management (ORM/ALAC) on May 30-31, 2018. The questions are listed in the order they were asked during the training.

VBA Budget Formulation and Execution Questions and Answers (Q&A)

| **Budget Formulation and Execution Question** | **Budget Formulation and Execution** **Answer** |
| --- | --- |
| Where and how do we do trend analysis?  | The trend analysis is done via spreadsheet. Keeping track of your expenditures across years or months and then projecting what you are looking to spend in the future year. It is important to recognize where you have differences.  |
| Does the CR apply to short-term contracts less than a year? | Let's say you had a contract for a specific service in the previous year. You can do a new contract and a new FY for that same service, you just can't contract beyond the continuing resolution date; we can't expend funds past CR date. Also, you can't start up a new contract for a different type of service if you are in a continuing resolution. For those things you have done historically, you can go ahead and extend or do a contract, but for new programs and services, you cannot do new contracts for those while under CR. |
| Where are the RSD reports and how can I download them? | This information is provided on the ALAC website in the Budget Formulation and Execution Job Aids section.[RSD Viewing and Extracting Reports](https://vbaw.vba.va.gov/VBAORM/alac/docs/RSD_Viewing_and_Extracting_Reports.pptx) in FMS (PowerPoint)The Regional Offices can view RSD reports via the website: <https://aacmf.aac.va.gov/eos/cgi-bin/logeoshome.cgi>* Click “Continue to this website (not recommended)”
* Enter FMS username and password
* Click “Logon To EOS” button
* Find Station folder. For example, Station 301’s folder would be F301.
* Click “Go to filter”
* Enter report number in Form Name field. For example, enter F850 to view the F850 report. Note, you must use all capital letters.
* Click on the report link to review details
* You can print or save the report using any of your print / save options available.
 |
| Question on the GSA auto.I understand you can't move those funds elsewhere, but if you are going to be short, can you move funds toward GSA? | No, you need to request additional funds from VACO for GSA auto. |
| What’s the best report to get actual expenditures? | We utilize the 826 that has obligations. Most of the time we use subsidiary ledgers in the way of spreadsheets for each of our obligation documents that has the expenditures on there and we verify our subsidiary ledgers against FMS. |
| Does everyone have print to PDF Function with RSD reports? How is it done? | This information is provided on the ALAC website in the Budget Formulation and Execution Job Aids section.[RSD Viewing and Extracting Reports](https://vbaw.vba.va.gov/VBAORM/alac/docs/RSD_Viewing_and_Extracting_Reports.pptx) in FMS (PowerPoint)The Regional Offices can view RSD reports via the website: <https://aacmf.aac.va.gov/eos/cgi-bin/logeoshome.cgi>* Click “Continue to this website (not recommended)”
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| We haven't gotten our allowance letter yet | If you haven't gotten your allowance letter yet, you should speak with your Director/District. |
| Is there a benefit to using FMS or CAATS to move funds? | The difference between FMS and CAATS is FMS is timing mainly. When you're CAATS accountant goes into FMS and makes a manual change, the accounting system is updated at that second. CAATS is a Graphical User Interface (GUI) with FMS that allows us to put in transactions but the transaction is held and run in a batch process overnight which sends the information into FMS the next day. It is not instantaneous like it would be if you went directly into FMS. Part of it may be personal preference.  Many who have been around before CAATS are just more used to getting them in FMS. |
| Stations do not have access to make transactions directly in FMS, right? | The only transaction we can do in FMS ourselves is the SA transaction with the ST transaction which moves money. Those are the only ones we can go into FMS. For everything else we are going through CAATS. |
| IF we use FMS to move funds, will CAATS reports update also? or not? | If you were to use FMS to move funds, the reports that show in CAATS will show the funds that have been moved. Your history of doing the SA exists there in CAATS. |
| What module do you use to process budget transactions in CAATS | It’s the CAATS Budget Tab and select Distribution on the down menu for the FCP transfer. |
| What is a reasonable accommodation? | Reasonable Accommodation (RA) is when accommodations need to be made to allow an employee to perform their job duties with a disability or other limiting factor. |
| Does our operating plan have to match our allowance letter? |  |
| Why do we accrue the leave without pay at the end of the month? | The system is going to automatically accrue every employee as if they worked their entire tour of duty. If you have somebody who is a full-time employee, they go ahead and get accrued -- let's say it is for 80 hours. But, if you have someone who was missing half of the pay period, you would have to go ahead and process a negative accrual to take off these dollars, and take off the hours for that person who was not working the entire pay period. You are basically telling the system what they don't know. It assumes everyone worked their entire tour, no matter what. We call that normal versus actual. It accrues based upon your normal payroll, as if everyone worked their tour of duty. |
| If we use FMS to move funds, will CAATS reports update also? | CAATS reports update daily. If you move funds in FMS today, it will reflect on the appropriate CAATS reports tomorrow. |
| Shouldn’t PCS funds be separate from your GOE funds? | PCS funds will be provided to your station separately by VACO. They watch F885 RSD report and provide funds following the obligation of your PCS orders. You would only ask for them if your GOE Funds are not enough at that time to support the obligation. |
| What is a job Aid? | A Job Aid is a “how to” instruction on how to perform a task. |
| Will the F20D become available in CAATS? | F20D is currently not working in CAATS. There is a software fix in development and it will work again. Estimated fix date is unknown. |
| How do we confirm what is mandatory and non-mandatory OT? | Mandatory OT is OT that is worked in response to a Mandatory OT guidance letter from OFO which will specify the positions involved and any special qualifiers, such as VSRs but only those who can promulgate, and it will also indicate the number of hours to be worked and in what time period (weekly, monthly, etc).  Any other OT worked would be voluntary OT. |
| When is the best timeframe to start giving excess funds back? | Best timeframe to return excess funds when the station identifies that they will not be needed for the intended purpose or a similar requirement.  An early return of funds allows for efficient reallocation against other unfunded needs. |
| What does FTP stand for? | File Transfer Protocol |
| Is there than one allowance letter sent out? | Usually. They may send out funding guidance initially, if a budget isn’t established but there is usually just one actual allowance letter. |
| How can you tell from the Operating Plan what item is reimbursable and non-reimbursable? |  |
| What is the cut-off date for awards? | Awards should be submitted the end of August each year. |
| How does the accrual interact with the employee debt for FEHB that is created because of the LWOP? |  |