

Financial Assistance Management

DOT Dash

2010-01

Date: November 6, 2009

To: DOT Grants Information System (GIS) Data Users

From: Financial Assistance Management Division

Subject: Inaccurate Financial Assistance Data Submitted to OST's Grants Information System

Summary: The purpose of this DOT Dash is to ensure that financial assistance data (grants, cooperative agreements, loans, and other types of financial assistance) submitted to the Office of the Secretary (OST) Grants Information System is accurate and complete.

Attached are several policy documents from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) explaining the requirement for maintaining and reporting accurate and complete financial assistance data to external mandated sites. All financial assistance data must be verified and validated prior to submitting to OST's GIS.

Also attached, are the step-by-step process for correcting and resubmitting inaccurate financial assistance data. This verification process should be completed no later than **Friday, November 13, 2009 by COB.**

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact ellen.shields@dot.gov.



Ellen Shields
Associate Director
Financial Assistance Management Division

Attachments

DOT Grants Information System (GIS) Data Users

In 2008 and 2009, the Federal Funding and Accountability Transparency Act, and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, were signed into law. These Acts required Federal Agencies to submit grant, cooperative agreement, loans and other types of financial assistance data to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in an accurate and efficient format. With the increased scrutiny being given to the issue of data quality of our Grants reporting system GIS, a considerable effort was made by the Office of the Secretary (OST) in the development of a replacement system to make data quality a priority consideration.

We've collectively identified data quality assurance issues beginning with Fiscal Year 2008 financial assistance data. The OST staff has worked diligently with the Operating Administrations (OAs) to assist them in data quality and data integrity process improvements, so that the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) meets the OMB verification and validation guidelines.

Staff within each mode was trained in data clean up efforts and informed that once training was completed they would be tasked with correcting inaccurate data submitted to the enhanced grants information reporting system GIS.

Bottom line is that the data quality and integrity issues are being addressed with new technology, refined processes and identification and agreement on trusted data sources. OMB has determined that Dun & Bradstreet is the authoritative source and therefore all financial assistance information should be verified through Dun & Bradstreet. (See attached OMB guidelines.)

OST currently has identified assistance data by OAs that requires verification by Dun & Bradstreet. Please review the data we are sending each OA, because initial checks with Dun & Bradstreet have identified inconsistencies, either with: Duns Numbers, addresses, other contact information, as well as incomplete data fields.

Your OA is responsible for correcting and verifying the data. OMB has stipulated that all assistance data submitted must have a Duns Number confidence code of "7" or higher. The Duns Number is issued, maintained, and validated by Dun & Bradstreet. Thus the confidence code issued by Dun & Bradstreet shows their relative assurance on the correctness of the recipient's identity.

Below you will find the procedures to follow in verifying your data. This verification should be completed no later than **Friday, November 13, 2009 by COB.**

Please be aware that as of **Monday, November 16, 2009** the enhanced GIS will be the only system available to accept financial assistance information for reporting to external sources.

Ultimately we all will be asked to account for inaccuracies of the data. We have provided the tools to address this data quality issue, but we need your cooperation to make this effort successful.

Thank you for your cooperation. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact ellen.shields@dot.gov, pamela.w.lynch@dot.gov or laverne.taylor@dot.gov.

The following are the procedures for financial assistance data correction and verification:

1. Download zip file provided by Laverne Taylor.
2. Review and verify each entry to ensure that all data is complete and accurate.

Verification means the following:

- a. Duns number (you will find that there are two Duns numbers one that the OA provided (column B) and the other (column J) that D&B provided.
 - b. Ensure all recipients information are complete with a full name (no abbreviations); and addresses must have street, city, state and zip codes with plus 4.
 - c. Submit address information to D&B for verification of Duns number.
 - d. Duns that are inconsistent with what is in your current records should reflect what D&B has provided. D&B validates DUNS number's based on addresses and non-abbreviated recipient names.
 - e. If there is a possibility that your recipient has not updated its Duns information then it is the responsibility of the OA to contact their recipient to correct discrepancies with D&B data.
 - f. Please refer to the page 11 in OMB memo June 1, 2009 for D&B verification guidance.
3. Corrected DUNS information (DUNS #, Name, Add1, Add2, City, State, Zip) should be placed on the excel spreadsheet beginning at columns AF through AL.
 4. Since some of these records are already a part of the GIS database, the corrected files will have to be returned to Laverne Taylor for upload. This allows OST to coordinate the data correction process.
 5. For additional tutorial for data verification and cleanup please review.
<https://dgarnett33.webex.com/dgarnett33/ldr.php?AT=pb&SP=MC&rID=13304537&rKey=24e425b3346e4e49>
 6. If you require assistance or have questions please contact Laverne.taylor@dot.gov or