

# What's Up - What's Coming

## For registered users of the Fiscal Management Information System

October 7, 2008

### FMIS SYSTEM UPDATES

#### GENERAL INFORMATION:

- On October 1, 2008, FMIS will begin 24 hour a day operations. Users will be able to log on even in the middle of the night to view information. However, users will only be able to make updates to the system from 7 a.m. to 11:45 p.m., EDT.
- The FUNI website will now automatically post a message when the expenditures are applied each month. This message will let users know that the Phase II pre-published reports are available to download. For instance, users are unable to run Q40A reports until all the expenditures have been applied from the previous month; the FUNI site message lets users know when to check for Q40A.

#### RELEASE NOTES:

- FMIS now displays the environment information to the user. Previously, all screens in the FMIST and FMIS4 system environments appeared exactly alike. With the current FMIS System Update Release, the FMIS Test environment forms displays "FMIS -- -TEST---" on the uppermost menu bar on most forms or screens. The change was incorporated into the FMIS module in order to assure the user that he or she is testing in the correct environment. In the past, a user would need to completely exit FMIS Test in order to verify the current FMIS operating environment (i.e. Test - FMIST or Production - FMIS4). Further details are in the "System Release Notes" published to the FUNI site on September 2, 2008.
- The W96A Report has been added to the FMIS Project Header screen. The Project Header screen now includes a button entitled "FHWA 37 Rept." This button can be used to generate the current or previous versions of the W96A Report. Please refer to the "System Release Notes" for detailed instructions.

#### In this issue:



Then check THIS out! We honor a groovy mamma who began working for Uncle Sam waayyy back then! (See Pages 4-5) Also:

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# End of Fiscal Year Report

Is it 2009 – *already*?

It doesn't seem too long ago that we were caught up in the eerie unknowns prophesied about Y2K. But indeed, we have closed another Fiscal Year in FMIS.

The Fiscal Year-end close started with Terri Marcelli in New Hampshire and Jeannette Sheldon in Kentucky who finished a full week before the deadline. Jim Ent in Illinois thought the year was behind him when Budget needed to make some last minute adjustments. So Joy Kelly opened FMIS on September 29<sup>th</sup> for the last 2008 obligation. After 12 months of stumbles, knock-downs, lumps, bumps and bruises, you scored a knock-out and the final bell rang to end Fiscal Year 2008.



## FMIS Team Contacts

For assistance, users may email the FMIS Team at [FMISTEAM@dot.gov](mailto:FMISTEAM@dot.gov). Individual members of the Team may be contacted by telephone or email:

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New  
contact!

New  
Number!

So now we can look ahead. The FMIS Team has plans for significant changes to the system, services and reports in 2009. Our Performance Plan is under review by Office of Financial Management Director Joe Dailey. There are even going to be more training opportunities in 2009. We will ask the FMIS Focus Group to review our plan and help prioritize activities so that our goals more closely align with your needs.

Watch *On the Horizon* in *What's Up* for sneak peeks into the happenings at FMIS headquarters.

Your 2009 apportionments and limitation under the continuing resolution are loaded in the system. So, let's get rolling and make 2009 another knock-out year!!

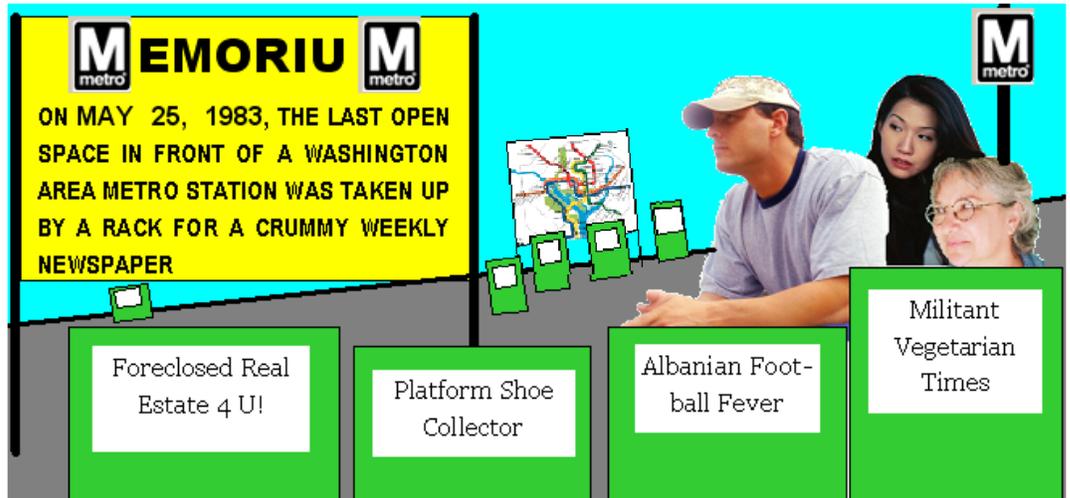
*The FMIS Team*

## FEATURED ON THE FHWA WEB SITE

An occasional look at what our agency puts on the web

Ever wonder what happened to that proposal to post speed limits in kilometers instead of miles? It officially died on **June 24, 1977**, in part because 98% of over 5,000 comments received were negative.

Learn this and more at **FHWA by Day: A Look at the History of the Federal Highway Administration**, at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/byday/intro.htm>. This was published in book form in 1996. Now, the site allows visitors to choose a calendar date and see what (if any) significant FHWA-related things happened that day. It is just one of the interesting things you can find on the FHWA web site.



## Three Common Problems for New Users of FMIS 4.0

New users of the FMIS 4.0 system sometimes have difficulty getting started. The FMIS Team has observed that the following three issues are the most common ones. Referencing this article, a call to the user's local IT support can clear these up rather quickly. **The user should not try to fix these problems unless he or she is technically adept.**

**(1.) Jnitiator has not been installed.** Jnitiator (the first two letters are capitalized) is an Oracle web browser plug-in necessary to work in FMIS 4.0. (FMIS 4.0 is an Oracle environment.) The first-time user of FMIS 4.0 who does not already have the Jnitiator plug-in will get a prompt to download it; sometimes, pop-up blockers (see below) or anti-virus software will prevent the download and installation of Jnitiator. Without it, the user will not be able to get into FMIS 4.0 at all. Instead, a white screen or just an error

message may appear.

**(2.) No PDF reader.** Many reports in the system appear as PDF files. If the user does not have Adobe Acrobat reader, a white screen or just an error message may appear. Users without a PDF reader can gain access to FMIS 4.0 and run queries, but will not be able to access many of the final reports.

**(3.) Pop-up blocker.** Pop-up blockers, which are meant to protect against annoying ads on commercial web sites, can interfere with FMIS 4.0. If the browser is not set to allow pop-ups from the FHWA web site, some or all of the FMIS system may be blocked from view.

These tips are meant to be helpful. Remember, however, to always feel free to email the Team at [FMISTEAM@dot.gov](mailto:FMISTEAM@dot.gov) for help with the FMIS 4.0 system or with the Business Objects XI reporting tool. 

SPOTLIGHT ON FMIS TEAM MEMBER ...

Joy Kelly

Reflections on a Gem

Last month, Joy Kelly invited me to attend a Service Awards program where she would be recognized for 35 years of service in the Federal government. Indeed, I was honored to have been invited and (considering my short tenure

as a civil servant) I thought that I would take this time to explore what it is that makes a person want to stay with Federal Highway. So I asked her, "What have you been doing for 35 years and why did you stay so long?" Joy was a bit reluctant to take the proverbial memory lane stroll, but I persisted, dragging her down the path kicking and screaming, so to speak.

The first thing she made clear to me is that — simply put — she has stayed with Federal Highway because she loves what she does. Particular emphasis was placed on *what she does* as if to hint that something was not being said. Umm, I didn't want to venture in that direction, so I hastened onto another path. "Tell me, Joy, what caused you to come to work with the FMIS Team?" I asked. She explained that FHWA wasn't her first Federal job. She worked at the Treasury Department for fifteen years. When she joined FHWA, she worked with the Current Billing group in the Office of Budget and Finance

(the predecessor of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer). Of course, things were quite different back then. No RASPS, no electronic billing. Joy seemed to enjoy the memory stroll as she reminisced about the days of

punch cards and large magnetic tapes that she had to load onto Diebold machines. It was a lot of work with lots of manual processes. "Ok, that explains why you are so knowledgeable about the RASPS and Delphi sides of the OCFO — your roots are in Financial Services," I remarked. "Yes," she replied, "but after twelve years

of learning the ropes of that side, I accepted a ten month rotational assignment to the FMIS Team in 1994."

At the time, the FMIS Team was barely a team — just Minnie Baskerville and two assistants. Joy's spirit was obviously lifted when she started to talk about FMIS. It was a pleasure to listen to her talk about the evolution of FMIS to the current web-based FMIS 4.0. She told me about the days of the mainframe dummy terminals [so called because there was no hard drive, just a screen and keyboard linked to a central server elsewhere



Joy Kelly receives a certificate commemorating her 35 years of Federal service from FHWA Executive Director, Jeff Paniati (left) and Administrator, Tom Madison at a ceremony held September 3.

(See "Reflections" on Page 5)

# APPRECIATION

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in the building] with the black screen, green displays and PF function keys. She helped implement provisions of ISTEA, TEA-21, SAFETEA-LU and many programs of Appropriations Acts during this time. Therein lies a reason for Joy's longevity. She said, "One thing that has made me stay with the FMIS Team is that it's constantly changing, there's always something to do, and always something to learn. The laws change, so FMIS changes."

I have no doubt that her joy stems from helping people. Her demeanor changed; she smiled broadly, obviously in reaction to a memory that wandered into her mind. She spoke about getting to know people in the Divisions and States, long before she meets them. "I get to know them over the telephone a lot. They ask me all sorts of questions, not just FMIS questions," she told me. Our offices are close to each other, so I have seen the people who drop by asking for her help. Some are her FMIS Team members, while other visitors are employees from Financial Services, the Budget Division, Program Offices, FMIS IT Support Team, and others. She doesn't complain about the steady flow of visitors, emails, and phone calls. I think she understands that when people need answers, they seek them from the most knowledgeable people. Their questions are daily confirmation of her value to FHWA, so she gladly shares her knowledge.

FMIS may be Joy's "baby," but it pales in comparison to her true love — her handsome 10-year-old son, Patrick. He frequently visits the office; we have watched him grow up. Joy dreams of becoming a stay-at-home Mom before he goes off to college. Joy and I were talking that day

because I had asked her to look back on her FHWA career, but her thoughts, otherwise, are clearly focused on the future. She reminded me that she could retire within a few years. I shudder to think what a loss that would be for the FMIS Team, so I dismiss the thought.

I attended that Service Awards ceremony on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. I was proud of Joy. Dale Gray of our Division was honored for thirty years of service. I came to Federal service a mere seven years ago (although I am older than both Joy and Dale). On the program that day was a lady who began her career with FHWA in 1942!! The longevity honored on that day crystallized my belief that there's something special here. It may be different for each person and sometimes hard to pinpoint, but it affects us all. I think that I know what it is for me, but I'll hold my thoughts until I take my own stroll down memory lane.



Joy Kelly (left) is honored for her 35 years of Federal service by Acting Chief Financial Officer, Margo Sheridan on September 3 at DOT Headquarters in Washington DC.

Congratulations, Joy. We sincerely appreciate you!

*Donna L. Jones*, FMIS Team Leader



An additional operator will be added to the Free Form reporting tool. The object is "Not =." The operator is under Project Funding Selection Criteria. It allows the user to extract data that is not equal.

In the future, the FMIS Team will be modifying the list of available reports. The Team has discovered that some reports are rarely or never used. These reports will be phased out during FY 2009. Further details will be in the next issue of "What's Up."

Business Objects inactivity threshold will extend to 60 minutes in FY 2009, making it easier to avoid being logged out. The roll-out of this function is on hold pending security review.

**Multiple Demo IDs Coming Soon**

The FMIS Team is currently working to allow multiple Demo IDs on a single

project. The long-awaited project involves several large changes to the FMIS and RASPS systems, including:

- Screen changes to the Project Input screen
- Making changes to various Standard and Ad Hoc Reports
- Testing of all the FMIS 4.0 interfaces

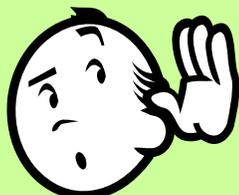
News about the project will appear on the FUNI Pages web site. 📧

**FMIS SYSTEM UPDATES**

*(Continued from Page 1)*

**BUSINESS OBJECTS XI:**

- A list of available Classes and Objects were added to the "Public Folders/FMIS/Projects Information" folder in the Business Objects XI application. A brief description of the Object and Class is included in the document, which can be printed or saved to the desktop.
- Making selections from the "List of Values" menu in the Projects Universe has gotten quicker. Software fixes have made certain fields, such as County Code, Federal Highway Area, and Congressional District, load in a timely manner. Before the modification, there had been a pronounced delay as the fields were populated. 📧



**WE REQUEST YOUR FEEDBACK!**

*What content would be useful to you?*



The **What's Up** newsletter, published quarterly, exists to let FHWA and State users of FMIS 4.0 know about changes and additions to the system. We also want this publication to contain other valuable information beyond immediate changes. So, what kind of articles would help you? If you have suggestions pertaining to **FMIS 4.0-related information** you would like to see in these pages, please send them to Eric Cline at [Eric.Cline@dot.gov](mailto:Eric.Cline@dot.gov), or call him at 202-366-2864. 📧