

Best Business Practices for CITIdirect cardholders

Background

1. FASTDATA standardizes transaction processing for all types of transactions and purchases. It assumes all purchases using allocated funds go through a commitment, obligation, payable and expenditure phase (i.e., we order, receive, and pay the bill).¹ In this respect, the method of purchase is irrelevant to the FASTDATA accounting process (i.e., it doesn't matter if one uses a DD1348, a NC2276, a purchase card, a NC2275, or whatever). The key data field linking these phases is the transaction (i.e., document) number. FASTDATA allows pertinent information about a transaction to automatically update the FASTDATA database. FASTDATA relies on such inbound data to contain a transaction number which is either recognizable by FASTDATA for that site or a transaction number which already exists in the site's FASTDATA database.²
2. The CITIdirect process poses particular problems for FASTDATA users because it:
 - a) ignores the commitment phase,
 - b) assigns document numbers to transactions³,
3. CITIdirect starts after the card is used, (i.e., after the purchase is made). CITIdirect actually picks up the purchase process where we post obligations into FASTDATA. Thus, if one did not use FASTDATA, not only would the funds availability check prior to purchase be disabled, controls inherent in FASTDATA designed to minimize "impulse buying" would be disabled. FASTDATA requires users to post "intended purchases" (i.e., commitments) which are then tracked through the order (i.e., obligating) phase, the receipt (i.e., payable) phase, as well the payment (i.e., expenditure) phase.
4. It is recognized that the intended and proper use of the credit card and web based transaction processing will have many widespread benefits. It is also recognized that there are timing and processing difficulties when tying web based commercial bank processing into the current Navy accounting infrastructure. We believe the CITIdirect process is the best process currently available to move us into that web based environment. Some modifications will be made to FASTDATA to accommodate the current CITIdirect process as best as we can. A blueprint of those modifications will be forwarded as a separate document. Until such modifications are made, recommend following the "best business practices" delineated below.

Business Practices Using the GCPC system and FASTDATA

1. One could incorporate the CITIdirect process as is into local operating procedures by not posting anything to FASTDATA pertinent to use of the card until the CITIdirect generated SDN transaction is obtained, processed and forwarded to the site by the FA (see Alternative Business Practice below).. This process would eliminate the necessity to manually associate transactions

¹ The only exception is purchases of fuel. FASTDATA assumes the purchaser needs the fuel (a determination usually made during the commitment phase) and that s/he will accept the type of fuel dispensed (determined during the obligation phase) The purchaser however, does not know the quantity s/he will receive. Thus, such transactions are initiated in FASTDATA as receipts.

² This does not pertain to non-preceded expenditures. FASTDATA assumes that if such transaction can pass through the numerous edits and validations which preclude erroneous expenditures from automatically posting to a site, such transaction is probably a valid transaction for that site, and allows it to post and update that site's database.

³ This is particularly problematic when the card is used as a method of payment instead of an instrument of procurement.

and perform expenditure cost reallocations at the FA level, however, several days will elapse between the time a purchase is made and the time when the site receives the corresponding data file. Therefore, such practice is strongly discouraged because available balances found in FASTDATA would be highly inaccurate at all times, and a FASTDATA user could easily exceed available funds.

2. It is best to try to weave the CITIdirect process into the FASTDATA “system”, thereby retaining standardized transaction processing, proper transaction flow, effective funds controls and other user-friendly features. This will however, require some manual effort and closer monitoring of daily transaction postings to STARS-FL. Most of the effort will be focused on reconciling information from CITIdirect (as posted to STARS-FL) to that posted by the site user in FASTDATA. Since this effort relies on information only obtainable from someone with direct access to STARS-FL, the Fund Administrator will have to shoulder most of the work needed to properly accommodate CITIdirect processing.

Best Business Practice for Weaving the CITI direct GCPC processes into

FASTDATA. The recommended methodology will:

- a) Require very little modification to the FASTDATA site user’s routine,
 - b) Depend on cost allocations to be performed by the Fund Administrator,
 - c) Allow for the retention of the fund control mechanism at the FASTDATA site,
 - d) Preserve the standard transaction processing flow,
 - e) Allow for retention of an audit trail at the FASTDATA site.
1. The Fund Administrator should assign a unique range of NC2276 serial numbers to each site to be used by cardholders whenever the card is used (Fund Administrators should understand that since purchases and payments by credit cards are replacing those formerly done using NC2276’s, there should be no concern over “running out” of serial numbers).
 2. Cardholders will post purchases made by credit card as they have been doing in the past, using the NC2276 screen.⁴
 3. Cardholders who use a credit card as a method of payment for procurements made by an actual NC2276 will input “CREDIT CARD” in the OPTAR Log Description field.
 4. Cardholders will assign an “LOA” to their purchases in CITIdirect as soon as feasible. The information posted to CITIdirect should correspond to information input to FASTDATA (i.e., if the cardholder spreads a purchase against three job orders, the NC2276 in FASTDATA should have three ACRNs (one for each job order) and the purchase in CITIdirect should be allocated to the three LOAs corresponding to these job orders).
 5. Site will upload transactions to the FA as they have been doing in the past (recommended twice a week).
 6. The FA will import the transactions to the FA machine as they have been doing in the past.
 7. The FA will then suspend and delete from upload to STARS-FL those transactions pertaining to the site’s credit card usage. This can be done by selecting “Transaction Suspension” from the “Reject/Suspend” submenu of the “Process” menu, and, setting the filter to the NC2276 serial number ranges established in paragraph 1 above. See chapter 11 of the FASTDATA FA user’s manual found on the FASTDATA web site.
 8. Print the suspended accounting transactions following steps outlined in Chapter 11 of the user’s manual (available on the web site). Recommend a file be established and maintained by UIC.⁵

⁴ If the credit card is used solely as a method of payment for a purchase which was facilitated by an already existing NC2276, special processing, detailed throughout this enclosure, should be followed. If a NC2276 already exists in FASTDATA, the site should not generate another transaction in FASTDATA solely to use the card as a method of payment.

⁵ This file should be subdivided into three sections: 1) printouts of transactions which have not yet been assigned a “SDN” by CITIdirect, 2) printouts of transactions which have been assigned an “SDN” by CITIdirect but which have not yet been paid, and 3) printouts of paid transactions.

9. The FA will regularly download all credit card transactions for activities under their BCN from DAASC following instructions posted to the FASTDATA website. These transactions will be processed into the FA software (where they will be converted to the B1 record format).
10. The FA will print out these transactions and match them (using transaction amount and date) to the list of credit card transactions obtained in step 8 above. The list should be annotated accordingly.
11. The FA can review transactions posted to STARS-FL . This can best be accomplished by performing the “QMF” query “KX90206.LIKE_DOC”. You will be prompted to enter fiscal year, appropriation and subhead, BCN, and “LIKE_DOC_NR. Enter “N” followed by the UIC of the cardholder, followed by the two digit FY (“00”) followed by “CC” followed by the percent sign (“%”). This will produce a list of all CITIdirect generated transactions for the particular UIC cited.
12. FA’s will screen each expenditure downloaded from STARS-FL and suspend any expenditure related to a credit card (i.e., those containing a “CC” followed by a CITIdirect generated transaction number).
13. Each suspended transaction will be matched to the corresponding FASTDATA NC2276 document number, using the list described in paragraph10 above.
14. A cost transfer (using the cost redistribution process) will be performed for each credit card transaction, moving the expenditure from the CITIdirect generated transaction number to the corresponding NC2276 SDN/ACRN originally generated by the FASTDATA site.
15. After the cost transfer is processed in STARS-FL, the expenditure will, via the normal FA expenditure process, post properly to the NC2276 first generated by the site.

Alternative Business Practice for Processing CITIDirect Transactions into FASTDATA.

1. Credit card holders will not manually post any information to FASTDATA relative to purchase card procurements or payments.
2. Cardholders will assign a “LOA” to their purchases in CITIdirect as soon as feasible (this should be 2 to 3 days after the date of purchase/payment). A separate LOA will be assigned for each job order to be charged.
3. The FA will download all credit card obligation transactions from DAASC on a regular basis (transactions should be available for download 2 to 3 days after the cardholder assigns the LOAs (i.e., 4 to 6 days after the purchase/payment is made).
4. Obligation transactions will be processed through FASTDATA and forwarded to the appropriate site (this process works similar to the expenditure process).
5. The site will import these obligation transactions via the XP interface process.