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## Schools and Libraries News Brief

August 10, 2007

**TIP OF THE WEEK: Applicants and service providers that submit invoices ([BEAR Form 472](#) and [SPI Form 474](#)) on paper MUST use the April 2007 version of these forms.** Submitting earlier versions will result in significant delays because USAC cannot process your invoice until you have resubmitted it using the current version of the form.

### Commitments for Funding Year 2007

**Funding Year 2007.** USAC will release FY2007 Wave 15 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) August 14. This wave will include commitments for approved Internal Connections and Basic Maintenance requests at 83% and above. As of August 10, FY2007 commitments total over \$952 million.

On the day after the FCDLs are mailed, you can check to see if you have a commitment by using USAC's [Automated Search of Commitments](#) tool.

### Service Providers Get Ready for BEAR Season

Now that June 30, 2007 has come and gone, applicants will be filing BEAR Forms for any remaining FY2006 recurring services. Service providers can help by taking several proactive steps to make this process easier for everyone.

#### 1. File Form 473 for FY2006 if you have not already done so.

[Form 473, the Service Provider Annual Certification \(SPAC\) Form](#), must be filed annually for each Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) that will appear on invoices for that funding year. Service providers use this form to make specific certifications that apply to that funding year. These certifications are especially important because:

- Form 474, the *Service Provider Invoice (SPI) Form*, contains no service provider certifications but relies on the certifications made on the Form 473.
- Form 472, the *Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement (BEAR) Form*, contains some service provider certifications but also relies on the certifications made on the Form 473.

USAC will not pay invoices ("invoices" includes both BEAR Forms 472 and SPI Forms 474) for a funding year unless a SPAC Form 473 for that funding year – and for the SPIN featured on the invoice – has been successfully processed. Service providers that file SPI Forms are probably aware of this and have already filed SPAC Forms for FY2006. However, service providers with applicants that file BEAR Forms exclusively may have neglected to file this form.

#### 2. Update your contact information using the online Form 498.

Each year USAC receives calls and emails from applicants that are unable to reach service providers to check on services already invoiced, get signed BEAR Form Service Provider Acknowledgments (page 4 of the BEAR Form), and other issues. In many cases, this is because applicants are relying on outdated information contained in the [SPIN Contact Search tool](#).

This search tool pulls its information directly from information submitted by service providers on Forms 498. Service providers that have already filed a Form 498 can easily update their information online. By doing so, service providers allow applicants to access correct information when using the search tool. This is especially important for applicants that file BEAR Forms for recurring services, as they may only file one BEAR Form after June 30 to cover all services received during that funding year.

If you want more information about updating your Form 498 information online, you can [send an email](#) to USAC's Customer Relations Management Center or call them at 1-888-641-8722. (If you call, remember to choose the "Form 498" option at the prompt rather than the "Schools and Libraries" option.) You can also go directly to the [E-File User's Guide](#).

### 3. Remind your customers of the October 29, 2007 invoicing deadline for FY2006 recurring services.

Each year USAC receives calls and emails from service providers concerning applicants that waited until the last minute to submit BEAR Forms to them for review and approval. While USAC reminds applicants every year that service providers may need time to review and approve BEAR Forms, service providers can also notify their customers of the approaching invoicing deadline.

If you do send out reminders, state clearly how much time you need to review and approve BEAR Forms so that applicants understand your constraints and submit their forms to you in plenty of time. Keep in mind that the submission date for an online BEAR Form is the date the service provider approves the form online, NOT the date that the applicant submits the form online.

Note that the deadline for invoicing USAC for FY2006 recurring services is **October 29** this year because October 28 falls on a Sunday.

### 4. Log in to the E-file System once a week to check for BEAR Forms.

Some service providers believe that they must receive an email notification from USAC before they can view and approve a BEAR Form. In fact, USAC sends an email notification as a courtesy to both the applicant and the service provider when an applicant has posted a BEAR Form online.

While the email notifications can be useful, remember that receipt of an email is by no means guaranteed. Service providers that log in to the [E-file System](#) once a week can check for any BEAR Forms waiting for approval and then review and approve these forms in a timely manner even if they have not received an email notification.

Again, if you have questions about the E-file System, contact USAC's Customer Relations Service Center as described above.

### First FY2008 RNLs To Be Issued Next Week

Applicants with long procurement cycles and other long-term issues can file FY2008 Form 470, *Description of Services Requested and Certification Form*, well in advance of the FY2008 window opening. In fact, over 300 FY2008 Forms 470 have already been posted to the USAC website.

On August 14, USAC will begin issuing Form 470 Receipt Notification Letters (RNLs) for those FY2008 forms already posted. Going forward, USAC will issue RNLs once a week for all Forms 470 posted since the last batch of letters was issued.

### Fall Training Update

On July 23, USAC opened registration for the fall training sessions. Here are the current numbers of registrations (as of 9:00 a.m. EDT today):

City	Dates	Registrants
Washington, DC	September 13–14	250
Orlando, FL	September 18–19	195
Boston, MA	September 27–28	141
New Orleans, LA	October 2–3	171
Cleveland, OH	October 9–10	168
San Francisco, CA	October 17–18	250
Phoenix, AZ	October 24–25	250

Once a session has reached 250 registrants, USAC starts a waiting list. If you find that you cannot attend a session after you have registered, please remember to cancel your registration to open a slot for someone else.

Remember also that registering with USAC for the training does not automatically reserve a hotel room. You must follow the hotel reservation instructions linked to the training session you want to attend in order to make a hotel reservation at the conference room rate.

If you have questions, you can direct them to the email address or the telephone number provided on the [2007 Training announcement](#) under "How to Register."

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