

[Back](#)

Schools and Libraries News Brief

April 25, 2008

TIP OF THE WEEK: Monitor the preferred mode of contact (telephone, fax, or email) that you provided in Item 6 of your Form 471 in case PIA attempts to contact you during application review. If the contact information on your form is incorrect, you can change it by following the [Contact Information Change procedure](#) on the USAC website.

Commitments for Funding Years 2008 and 2007

Funding Year 2008. USAC will release FY2008 Wave 1 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) May 1. This wave will include almost \$353 million in funding commitments for approved Priority 1 requests (Telecommunications Services and Internet Access) for schools and libraries at all discount levels.

The first school, the first school district, and the first library to certify a Form 471 for FY2008 after the filing window opened will receive commitments in this wave. They are:

First school to certify	Townshend Elementary School	Vermont
First school district to certify	Cleveland County School District	Arkansas
First library to certify	Vicksburg District Library	Michigan

Funding Year 2007. USAC will release FY2007 Wave 48 FCDLs April 28. This wave will include commitments for approved Internal Connections and Basic Maintenance requests at 81% and above and denials at 80% and below. As of April 25, FY2007 commitments total over \$2.29 billion.

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.

New Automated Search of Commitments Tool Available

The next time you go to retrieve information on funding commitments from the USAC website, you will find a new tool. The look and feel of the new [Automated Search of Commitments tool](#) should make searches easier than before, and it also includes advanced search options for more experienced users. Some of this tool's new features are described below.

Funding information is much easier to locate. On the opening page, you have a choice of funding years. From this page you can get summary information for a specific year by clicking on that year. If you then select a particular funding wave, you can get summary information for that wave and also detailed information for a particular applicant or group of applicants from that wave.

- On each page containing wave information, you can click on a column heading to sort the available information alphabetically (or numerically) by that column.
- Each page with wave information includes the date that the wave was issued.

Funding information is no longer static, but is updated every night. After a funding decision is issued for a Funding Request Number (FRN) in a particular wave, that FRN continues to be associated with that wave.

- If an appeal on an FRN is successful and additional funds are committed on that FRN, those additional funds will show up in the detail for that FRN and the total for that wave.
- Conversely, if a Form 500 or a Commitment Adjustment (COMAD) is processed to reduce the commitment on an FRN, the reduced funding will show up in the detail for that FRN and the total for that wave.

Funding information is much easier to download. On each page that includes data, you will see a small Excel logo. You can click on the logo to download the data from that page in Excel format.

- You can sort your data by clicking on the appropriate column heading before you download it so that it is already in the order you prefer.
- If you are interested in keeping the original wave totals for historical purposes, you should download or print the information on a particular wave as soon as it is issued because the funding amounts may change for the reasons described above.

Following is some specific information to help you understand the differences between the old and new commitment search tools:

Wave numbers

- Wave numbers are always three digits. For example, Wave 24 for a funding year is "024" and Wave 24A is "24A."
- Because of certain data limitations, you cannot view FY1998 data by wave number.
- Some wave numbers were not consistently assigned in the early years of the program so some waves in these years may be listed out of sequence. For example, in FY2000, Waves 17A and DEN appear at the end of the list. However, Wave 17A ran between Wave 017 and Wave 018, and Wave DEN ran between Wave 028 and Wave 029.

Detailed wave information

- On the wave detail pages, if there is more applicant funding information than can easily be shown on one screen, the information is separated into multiple screens. To access another screen of information, click on one of the light blue numbers in the dark blue border at the bottom of the screen. (The number in white is the number of the current page.) If you click on the Excel logo on any page, however, you can download all of the information for that wave.
- The funding information in the [Data Retrieval Tool \(DRT\)](#) is updated a day or two later than the information in the Automated Search of Commitments tool, so the numbers in the two tools will not always match.
- You can click on the link marked "Help" to get information on how to set detailed search options to narrow your search. To perform a detailed search, click on the "Advanced Search" link and enter the search criteria you want in the correct order and format.

Cumulative data

- If you referred in the past to the Cumulative National Data report, the summary screen for each wave now provides that information.
- If you referred in the past to one or more State Funding Reports, you can produce a summary report for a state by entering the funding year and two-digit state code in the field marked "Basic Search." For example, if you want the cumulative data for all FY2007 applicants in the state of Alabama, you would enter "2007 AL" in the Basic Search field and click "Search."

Funding information that does not appear in the new tool

- The Automated Search of Commitments tool does not show FRNs with a zero commitment amount. This includes FRNs for which USAC has not yet made a funding decision, FRNs that were denied, and FRNs that were reduced to zero (for example, by Forms 500 or Commitment Adjustments).
- If an FRN is split after USAC issues a funding commitment wave that includes that FRN, the new FRN and its associated funding commitment will not appear. For example, if an applicant changes service providers on a committed FRN in the middle of a funding year, USAC will create a new FRN for the second service provider and move the appropriate amount of funding from the original FRN to the new FRN. The Automated Search of Commitments tool will only show the original FRN and the reduced funding amount allocated to the original service provider. However, the DRT will show both FRNs and both funding amounts.

Reminders for PIA Review

Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) is actively reviewing FY2008 applications. Here are a few tips to help you through the process:

- Organize all of your documentation. If all of your relevant documentation – including your technology plan, winning and losing bids, bid evaluation criteria and the bid evaluation itself, contracts, and so on – is readily available, you will be able to more easily respond to PIA questions.
- Monitor your preferred mode of contact for communications from PIA.
- File your Item 21 Attachments. Remember that you risk denial of your funding requests if your PIA reviewer asks for your Item 21 Attachment and you don't respond in a timely manner.
- If you have an FRN for FY2008 that is a duplicate of an FRN for FY2007 and your FY2007 FRN has been funded, cancel your FY2008 FRN. You can ask your PIA reviewer for details.
- If some of your questions involve technical details of the products and services in an FRN, talk to your service provider. Your service provider may be able to help with descriptions, network diagrams, cost allocations, and other details requested by PIA.

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[Back](#)