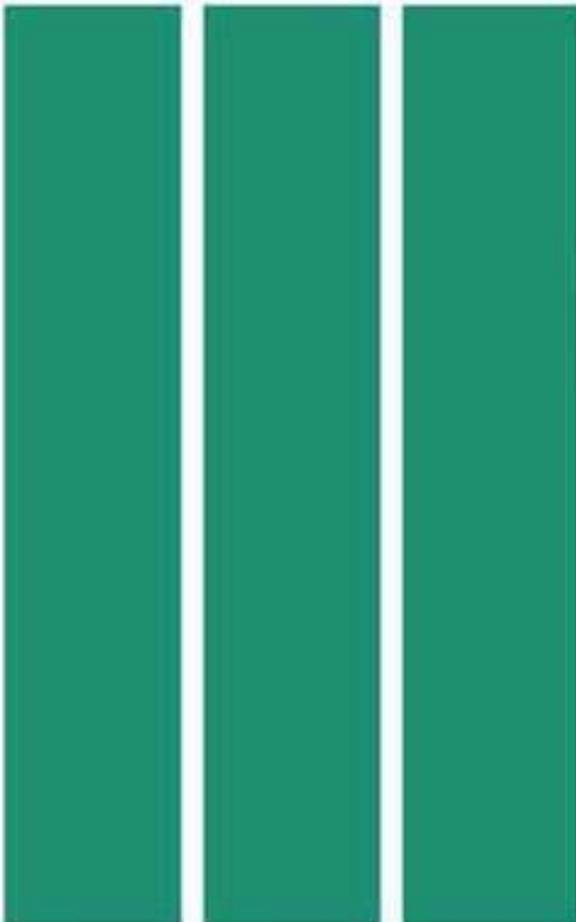
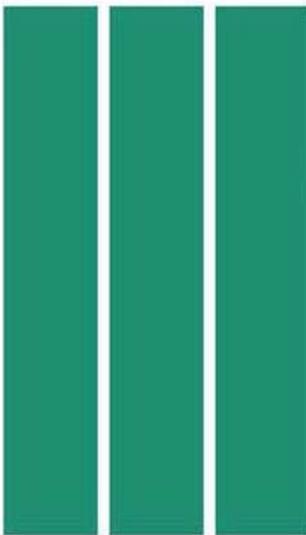
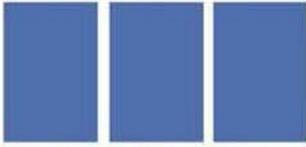




PIC HELP NEWSBRIEF

May 2003 Volume 2, Issue 4





The purpose of the PIC News Brief for the month of May will be to inform PIC Coaches, Field Offices, and PHA's about merged units, the SEMAP process, DERS, Release 4.1, Demo Disposition, and more exciting new issues evolving in PIC.

As always, we welcome suggestions to improve the newsletter and, if you have a suggestion or a special topic you think needs to be covered, please send an email to robert_harmon@hud.gov and cc your response to tjones@mssi2000.com.

How, when and why to Merge Units

How to merge units:

One unit will be classified as Merged and will contain the total bedroom count. One unit will be classified as Non-dwelling and will contain zero bedrooms. (Before classifying one unit as Non-dwelling, that unit must be vacant) or you can make the smaller size unit the "Merged" unit and change the unit type to whatever the other unit is. This will keep the merged unit in the total unit count for the development.

Example: Unit 9 (1-bedroom elderly) and Unit 11 (2-bedroom family) are merged into one 4-bedroom family unit. The merged unit is assigned the unit number of either one of the units being merged. Let's say the PHA wants to use the number 9 for the 4-bedroom unit. The PHA would change Unit 9 to a 4-bedroom family unit in PC and would change unit 11 to a "merged" unit type.

The PHA saves its work and then submits it to HUD for approval. HUD reviews the entries for accuracy and approves it or rejects it. If it is approved, the "official inventory" of buildings and units is updated. If it is rejected, the PHA corrects the error to the Field Office's satisfaction, and then resubmits it to HUD. "Merged" units (unit type="merged") are removed from the vacancy count and the various development and building subtotals when they are approved by HUD.

"Merged" units do not count against vacancies and are only retained as a record of what was previously listed in the ACC.

Notes:

The "merged" unit should be the one with the physical (or mailing) address since the non-dwelling one will show no tenant data. The "merged" unit should not be called Non-dwelling since its use is exclusively as a dwelling.

When to merge units:

Once the PHAs get the written approval from the Field Office, they can merge the units.

Why to merge units:

A "merged unit" occurs when the number of public housing units in a building is changed by structurally combining two or more smaller units into one larger unit. For example, two 1-bedroom units might be combined into a 3-bedroom family unit. Merged units only occur when remodeling or rebuilding permanently changes the building. The "merged" unit is the one that ceases to exist as a separate unit. (It becomes a virtual unit).

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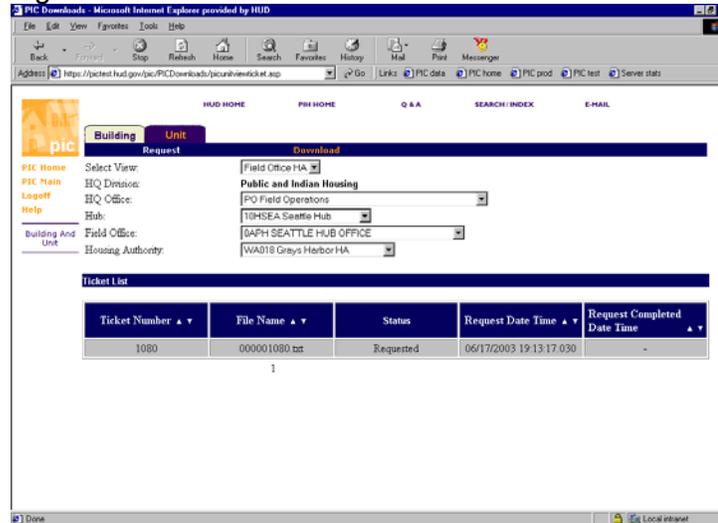
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How to download buildings and units



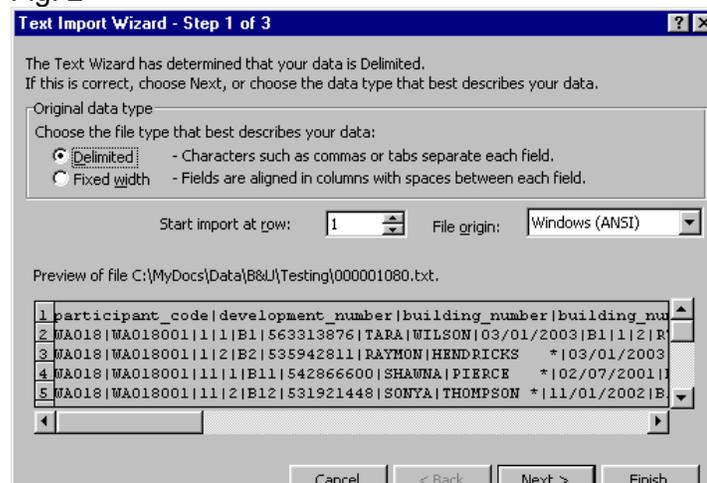
Release 4.1 added a new module to PIC called "PIC Downloads" with a submodule called "Building and Unit". This submodule permits the user to download either the building or unit data one or more of its developments into a "txt" (text) file that can then be loaded into a spreadsheet for review and analysis. When a user requests a download, he or she receives a "ticket" (like at the bakery) for the download. The actual download file must then be created by the PIC system and will be ready in 15 minutes or less. When it is ready, the user selects the "Download" sub tab (in the blue bar below) and clicks the ticket number link (shown in Fig. 1 below), the text file is downloaded to the users local computer. (Note the folder location of the downloaded file.)

Fig. 1



To bring the data into a spreadsheet in Microsoft Excel, choose File|Open and navigate to the folder in which you downloaded the file. Change the default for "Files of Type" to "Text Files: *.prn, *.txt, *.csv". Click on the file name and it will be imported into Excel. Excel will open the "File Import Wizard" to help convert the data format. Leave it on "Delimited" and click "Next". Step 2 asks what delimiters are used. Select "Other" and put a "pipe symbol" (looks like |) in the box. Click "Next" and then "Finish". In the spreadsheet, click "Save as" and change the "Save as Type" to "Microsoft Excel Workbook (*.xls)".

Fig. 2



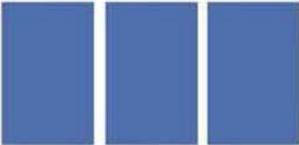
SEMAP Assessment Processing Cycle

Steps in SEMAP Processing Cycle	SEMAP Status	For Fiscal Year Ending:				Comment
		3/31	6/30	9/30	12/31	
HA Fiscal Year ends	New	3/31	6/30	9/30	12/31	
System creates blank certificate	New Certification	3/31	6/30	9/30	12/31	
SEMAP Report and data extract are run		Friday after FYE	Friday after FYE	Friday after FYE	Friday after FYE	Creates " zero-profile " for HA with no Form 50058 data in SEMAP extract
HA staff completes certification	Certification to HA Exec. Director	as occurring	as occurring	as occurring	as occurring	All indicator and bonus fields are filled in with data or marked "NA" in PIC
HA Executive Director approves and submits certification to HUD	Certification submitted	as occurring	as occurring	as occurring	as occurring	
Overnight scoring batch process creates profile with initial scoring	Preliminary rating to FO	daily 4/1-5/30	daily 7/1-8/29	daily 10/1-11/29	daily 1/1-3/1	Profile appears the following morning after submission
Certification must be submitted in PIC by the PHA Exec. Dir. within 60 days after FYE	Preliminary rating to FO	5/30	8/29	11/29	3/1 (2/29)*	If not submitted by deadline, automatic failure is assigned by Overdue Batch Process
Overdue batch process is run; creates profiles for HAs that did not submit by deadline	Overdue SEMAP certification	5/31	8/30	11/30	3/2 (3/1)*	HA receives Troubled " zero-profile " if certification not received by due date
FO staff reviews certification, completes Indicators 13 and 14 and saves work	Overall rating to FO Director	Due date as determined by PH Director				Review and approval must be completed within 120 days of the PHA's FYE
FO Director approves (or rejects back to staff)	Final rating	7/30	10/29	1/28	4/30 (4/29)*	FO sends notification letter with designation (Standard, High, or Troubled)

The SEMAP assessment process is an annual one. However, once a PHA is designated as "Troubled" in SEMAP, it retains its Troubled designation, regardless of subsequent SEMAP scores, until a confirmatory review has been completed by the Field Office which substantiates its corrective actions and improvement. The current guidance for handling PHAs under SEMAP is included in PIH Notice 2002-27.

A common error for PHAs is to fail to realize that the 60-day deadline after their Fiscal Year End to submit their SEMAP certification is not equal to two months. For example, according to the chart, **6/30 + 60 days equals 8/29** and **9/30 + 60 equals 11/29**. **8/30 and 11/30 are too late!**

Another common error is to complete the certification then fail to submit it to HUD. When it is submitted, status shows as "Certification submitted" until the profile is created the following morning when the status changes to "Preliminary rating to FO".



SEMAP Issues

SEMAP 06/30/03 certifications and Indicator 12:



Beginning with the 6/30/03 FYE, PHAs will be scored on Indicator 12. However, the scoring capability will NOT be added to the PIC SEMAP module until Release 4.2 some time in August. Since the PHAs will have until 8/29/03 to submit their certifications to HUD, scoring Indicator 12 should not be a problem. Indicator 12 is Annual HQS Inspection and uses data from Form 50058 line 5(i). PHAs having difficulty with completing the certification should call the local HUD field office for programmatic help or call PICHelp at 1-800-366-6827 for help with PIC itself.



SEMAP (No FO adjustment for “zero” profiles:

The way PIC SEMAP now works, when a PHA fails to complete and submit a certification by the due date, the “overdue batch scoring process” is run and these PHAs receive what is called a “zero profile” (because the profile contains all zeroes for Indicator scores. A zero profile cannot be edited or approved and it currently does not permit a Field Office Adjustment.

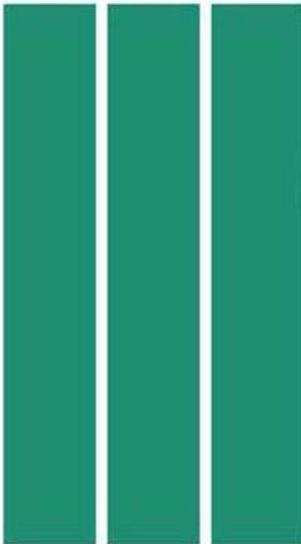
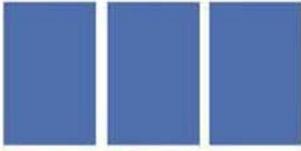
Executive Summary:

When selecting certain PHAs in Executive Summary, the user gets an error message that says the user must “relogin to the system”. Here are the salient facts, as we know them:

1. When the user selects “Select All” or selects “performance” check box only and generates the report, the system pops up the dialogue box with the “relogin” error message for some (not all) PHAs. (Same info is available in the “Housing Authority” submodule.)
2. Although the error message says the user must relogin, if the user closes the dialogue box, he/she does NOT have to relogin but can continue the session.

Security Administration-New SEMAP Role:

“SEMAP FO Approver” is a new role that has been created in production. This will allow the Public Hsg Director to approve assessments unless this function is delegated to another person. The new role was created because users were having problems with authorizing approvals in SEMAP due to roles not being operable and users losing their rights. If your SEMAP approver is having problems with approvals in SEMAP (e.g. missing approval button), remove all existing SEMAP roles and re-assign the “SEMAP FO Approver” roles to that user for the field office or hub. Even if your approver is not having problems, make the appropriate changes at your earliest convenience so that the erroneous roles can be cleaned up.



DERS and Bldg & Unit Reset Status

PIC Data corrections procedures:

1. PIC Help receives the request from the user.
2. PIC Help will review them, batch them, and forward them to the PIC maintenance team.
3. PIC maintenance team will prepare SQL scripts to make the changes in the database.
4. These scripts are then checked for accuracy and approved by the PIH CCB (Change Control Board).
5. PIC maintenance team tests the changes in the PIC Test environment for accuracy and requests the CIO's staff to implement the changes in the PIC production environment.
6. CIO's staff implements the changes in the production and inform the CCB.
7. PIC Help informs the user that that changes have been implemented.

Status: PIC maintenance team started writing scripts. As they get going, we should be able to implement all the data corrections soon.



Role of the PIH Change Control Board

CCB members represent all of the stakeholders and interested parties in the system. It is designed to have reps from PIH HQ Program Offices, PIH HQ IT Department, Field Offices, Area Offices and PHAs, as well as contractor representatives for PIC Maintenance, PIC Help, etc.

The CCB usually meets weekly with written minutes maintained and an agenda distributed before hand. The CCB is responsible for deciding action on bug reports, data corrections, maintenance releases, and new enhancements. Bug reports are reviewed and prioritized for the maintenance contractor and approved for development. Data fixes (such as Bldg & Unit resets, DERS corrections, FY changes, etc.) are approved for development, then after testing, approved for implementation in production. The CCB also reviews and approves User Acceptance Testing plans and procedures and technical documentation.

It is intended that CCB members outside the Washington DC area would normally participate by teleconference. However, we would like members to make at least one visit to participate in person for an introduction to the CCB process and to other CCB participants. We realistically expect no one will be able to participate in every CCB meeting, which is why we want more than one representative from each stakeholder group. The previous minutes and agenda are distributed by email as attachments to the next meeting invitation. For HUD staff, the invitation is part of the Lotus Notes calendar system and, if you accept the invitation, it will be automatically added to your calendar.

If a PIC Coach is interested in being involved with the PIC system decision-making, please inform Bob Harmon via email.

If a PIC Coach knows of a PHA staff member who is an active PIC user and is interested in participating, tell the PHA to contact Bob Harmon via email or via phone. Contact information is at the end of this newsletter.

Since it takes some experience to become familiar with the process and the issues, we ask for a six-month commitment as a minimum if invited to participate in the CCB.



PIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

I. Release 4.1:

- Release 4.1 was migrated successfully into PIC Production on May 17.
- Release 4.1 has over (50) items that cover many areas.
- PIC users can access the summary for Release 4.1 by clicking on the following link:
http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/systems/pic/news/picrelease4_1.pdf

II. Release 4.2

- The release of 4.2 should be available in early August.
- The issue of “orphaned records” should be corrected in this release.

III. Removal of Local Roles

- HUD officials were examining local roles in the system because of a subsequent problem with another module within the PIC system. It was decided in an emergency CCB meeting that all local roles are going to be removed. The responsible Security Administrator will need to assign corresponding global roles to users that were assigned local roles. The contractor is going to disable the local roles and the ability to create new local roles has been disabled.

IV. User guides/Training

- Bob Harmon has submitted a request for funding of additional user guides. This has been approved.
- Volunteers with systematic knowledge and PIC expertise are needed to review drafts for the user guides and also will need to review the final product. The user guide will be posted as a .pdf file on the web. A MS Word version will also be made available in order to make future changes without spending a lot of money.
- Executive Summary, Form 50058, and Demo Disposition are user guides that are completed and can be accessed online. A contractor is currently working on Risk Assessment. Additional user guides to be implemented into production will be for Security Administration, Housing Authority, Development, and SEMAP. Other user guides are being considered.
- Bob Harmon is working on the final version draft for the training plan. The current plan is to have field training for HA's and HUD staff in multiple locations around the country.

V. Special Report Generation

- Drayton & Lamar is a contractor whose contract is to do data analysis and reporting. They run queries against databases and create the PIC Data page and spreadsheets. The contractor can report data from LOCCS, PIC, and HUBCAPS. If a PIC Coach needs a special report generated:
 1. Describe your request and forward to Eugene Chen who is the GTM-HUD staff member and works with Drayton, Drayton, & Lamar. Contact information: **eugene_chen@hud.gov** Backup GTM is Bob Harmon: **robert_harmon@hud.gov** (phone 202-708-0614, x-7653 in his Washington office or 312-353-1915, x-2356 in his Chicago office).