

# News From



A Publication for GMS Accounting and Revolving Loan System Clients

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Volume 19, No. 3

March 2007

## ***Important - Windows Conversions in 2007***

We want to make sure that all GMS clients who are presently still using the DOS version of any GMS software are informed that we are discontinuing all DOS license/warranty and service/support contracts as of 12/31/2007. GMS does offer to convert your DOS employee files, YTD information, employee setup files and vendor files to the Windows Accounting and Financial Reporting System in either Microsoft Access or SQL Server versions. We will also convert your DOS RLSS loan profiles and histories to the Windows RLSS System. In addition, we offer a Windows GL and Financial Reporting System which is a cut down version of the GMS Accounting System. All other DOS software that was used was not rewritten in a Windows version and will have to be replaced with other Windows systems that are on the market.

Since the accounting conversions are normally done at the time your new fiscal year begins to eliminate you from doing a lot of back coding to get the accounting system current, it is important that you place your order a couple or more months in advance of the new fiscal year start date. Place your order for the Windows conversions on our website at [www.gmsactg.com](http://www.gmsactg.com). Once your order is placed, you will be emailed instructions on what needs to be done to prepare for the conversion and how to send your DOS directory to us for conversion. We have found that once orders are placed and the instructions have been sent, several things may need to be updated on your computers, new printers may be required, and even new network setups have been needed.

**NOTE:** *Peer to peer networks cannot be used with any of the GMS Windows software.*

## ***Welcome New Users***

### ***Accounting Systems***

#### ***Central Mississippi, Inc. - Winona, MS***

Tela Collins, ED                      Joe Cotten, FO  
Joanne Moore, Grant Mgr.

#### ***Action for A Better Community - Rochester, NY***

James Norman, Pres/CEO   Stanley Purdie, CFO  
Eric Binazewski, Dir. Fin. Rpt.

### ***Loan Servicing Software Systems***

#### ***Richland Economic Development Corp. - Sidney, MT***

Leslie Messer, ED                      Darcy Peters, Project Asst.

## ***July FY DOS Accounting Clients***

According to our records, there are 26 GMS clients that are still using the DOS accounting system with a July fiscal year. Of those 26, we have presently received orders from 12 of them. Since you will not have a license to use the DOS software after 12/31/07, you need to make sure that you have time to complete all close-out procedures and the audit prior to that time.

No matter when your fiscal year begins, make sure you place your order for the Windows conversions on our website at [www.gmsactg.com](http://www.gmsactg.com) if you are planning to upgrade. If, for some reason, you do not plan to order the Windows upgrade, as a courtesy to GMS, we would appreciate if you would email us your intentions. Most of the DOS contracts have a provision for a 60 day written notice to terminate the contract, so keep that in mind if you do not intend to upgrade.

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***In This Issue: RLSS Database Maintenance...Zip and Unzip Files?...Drill Downs Revised...***

## ***Drills Downs Revised for Personnel Codes***

In the March 2007 accounting revisions, you will see the addition of Personnel Drill Downs under the Security Menu, Monthly Processing and Financial Reports. The revision will block any user from producing the drill down detail for any GL code that was assigned for Salary, leave or fringe expense in the class setup under Tools, Cost Allocation Setup, Class Setup. This is an added security to block those users who should not have access to specific employee salary and fringe information. However, the user that has access to the Security menu can assign rights to any user that should have the ability to produce the drill down detail for these personnel related expenses. In the future, when we add the drill down capability to other supplemental financial reporting software, the same security will be included for the drill down detail of personnel expense codes on those reports also.

After we added the drill down feature to the financial reports in month end, it became an issue for those agencies that want to give program managers their own access to the financial reports. This was a valid issue and needed to be addressed. It may convince other clients that their program managers should be given access to the Financial Reports so they can produce reports when they want to. Another feature we have added is to display the month that the cost allocation and financial reporting menus have been run. That way, on March 15<sup>th</sup>, if a program manager wants to see if data has been changed since the last reports they produced, they could go to the Financial Reporting menu. If they see 3/31/07 they know that a mid month financial report can be displayed and they can get a more current report. Towards the end of the fiscal or program year, there are many clients who want to produce reports for a particular program weekly so it can be closely monitored.

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## ***Can You Zip and Unzip Files?***

One of the things your staff needs to be familiar with is zipping and unzipping files. Windows software used in zipping and unzipping files comes from an outside source, not GMS, and it is extremely helpful if everyone using GMS software is familiar with their program and the procedure for zipping and unzipping files. When we send revisions there is a file that must be unzipped to complete the installation. In order to solve some service issues you may be asked to zip your database and send to a service representative. Another instance where it is necessary to know how to zip up a file is when you are converting to the Windows version and need to zip up your entire DOS directory to email to us.

GMS regularly sends out revisions to our software, and a part of the instructions for installing the revisions is to be able to unzip the file to a specific location. When you are using a zip program other than the one being used by the GMS service representative, it is difficult for us to walk you through the steps when you call with questions. You must be able to select the correct location of the resulting file after unzipping. Installation of revisions will only be completed properly if the files are unzipped to the location indicated in our instructions.

Another instance where you need to be familiar with the zip program you use is when being asked to zip your database. Sometimes when talking with a GMS service representative you will be asked to zip your database and send to us. Again, you need to know how to use the program on your computer in order to zip the files to send to us. At times the file may be too large to be emailed even after zipping. In that case we may ask you to put the file on the GMS ftp site. Instructions for connecting to the ftp site can be found in the Help manual under Operating Information. Whenever you put a file on the ftp site you will want to be sure it is password protected. ***GMS is not responsible for any databases put on the ftp site that are not password protected.*** The Winzip program will allow you to add a password to the file while other software, such as the Windows XP version, doesn't have the capability of adding passwords. Any time you put a file on the GMS ftp site, including saving a copy of your database or DOS directory on the ftp site under Client Backups, make sure it is password protected so it can only be opened by an authorized person that has been given that password. Encrypted means the same thing as password protected. Your zip software may use that technology.

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### **Conference Reminder!**

**If you are planning to attend the GMS Annual Conference in April, You MUST have your hotel reservations in by March 23 or earlier to guarantee a room at the designated rates.**

*Present versions of Windows  
Software are:*

**Accounting: 1.2.250**

**RLSS:1.0.302**

## **Supplement #412 R & E Report Designer**

The R & E Report Designer allows you to design a revenue and expenditure report in a format with the information you desire. You can prepare the report with total allocated cost allocation amounts or with cost allocation detail if you use Supplement #399 Consolidated Cost Allocation Detail. Specify which projects and elements you wish to include in the report by using a combine element/combine project format number or just entering the desired codes. All columns from the regular month end revenue and expenditure report will be included. However, if you do not want to include all columns on your final report, export it into a spreadsheet and delete the columns you do not wish to include. Cost categories can be established and you can assign your revenue and expenditure codes to these categories and save in different format numbers. You may have the report reflect individual line item revenue and expenditures, or choose to use a cost category format. Your report format can be saved so it can be retrieved the next time you wish to prepare the report. It is such a time saver each month to have all of your grant/contract reporting categories set up for each grant and contract you have. Once they are set up, every month you just retrieve each format and print and you have the information grouped together as each grant or contract requires.

Refer to your Help manual for additional information on this supplement. It will be under GL Supplements on the Table of Contents. To order this supplement, go to our website at [www.gmsactg.com](http://www.gmsactg.com) and select Supplement Orders.

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### **RLSS Database Backup and Maintenance Recommendations**

Having a backup of the database is an important precautionary procedure. The name of the revolving loan database is *rlss.mdb*, and in nearly every situation, is kept in a folder named *rlssdata*. The folder is located either on the network drive or the local C drive. Most servers have automatic backup procedures in place. You may want to verify *rlss.mdb* is being backed up on a regular basis and that the backup is available to retrieve the database if the need would arise. GMS-RLSS software is installed on the workstations and the program can easily be replaced. Keep the original cd in a safe place in case it needs to be reinstalled or installed on a new computer. It is the database that contains the loan master files and lending activity, so having a viable backup is always essential.

If there is not already another folder on the C drive named *rlss backup*, create one. To make a backup, close the RLSS program. Right click on the start button, and select *explore*. Open the drive where the *rlssdata* folder exists,

locate and open the folder named *rlssdata*, and look for the red key icon (Microsoft Access icon) named *rlss.mdb*. Put the cursor on this icon, **right click**, and select **copy**. Then open the *rlss backup* folder that is on your C drive, **right click** on a clean space within the folder, and select **paste**. We strongly recommend creating a backup of *rlss.mdb* on a regular basis, especially at the end of every month.

Although copying and pasting the database into a folder on your computer is a good thing, we have had clients call with serious problems resulting in loss of that backup. Computer crashes, stolen computers, floods and fires can all result in the total loss of the workstation and all files stored on it. Because of this, we also recommend using a cd, external backup drive or flash drive to put a copy of the backup on. The cd or other devices can then be taken off-site and stored in a safe place to be used if needed.

Because of the dramatic weather problems some clients have recently survived, if your agency is located in a high-risk area we offer the option of storing a backup of the database on GMS's ftp site. The database must be zipped, named with your client number (ex: 0225.zip), password protected, and copied to a folder named Client Backups on the site. Instructions for accessing the ftp site can be found under General Operating Instructions in the RLSS Help Manual. Because it may become necessary for GMS staff to help retrieve the database, please email [service4gms@gmsactg.com](mailto:service4gms@gmsactg.com) to let us know you're storing your backup of the database on the site, and include the password needed to unzip the file. GMS is not responsible for any data stored on the ftp site, but will cover the rental costs.

Other than a solid backup system, the only other maintenance necessary to the database is a schedule for running the database utility named **compact and repair**. The program must be closed on each workstation before the utility can be run. There are two ways to open *rlss.mdb* and accomplish the task – choose from option 1 or option 2 below:

1) Launch Microsoft Access, select **file** then **open**. Locate and select *rlss.mdb*, then enter the password. From the task bar, select **tools, database utilities**, then click on **compact and repair database**, or

2) right click on **start**, select **explore**, locate and open the *rlssdata* folder, then **double-click** on *rlss.mdb*. Enter the password, and select **tools, database utilities** from the task bar. Click on **compact and repair database**.

A progress indicator bar will appear on the lower left corner of the screen. If your database is not very big, the

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process is very fast and the indicator bar moves so swiftly you may not even see it. However, when the database screen reappears you will know the process is complete.

The schedule for running compact and repair depends on the number of loans you have and the amount of activity posted. At a minimum, it should be run at the end of each month. If the portfolio contains more than 500 loans, a weekly routine is recommended. There is no harm in running as frequently as desired, and a daily routine is in place by some GMS clients with large databases.

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### ***How the Leave Pool Works***

Most GMS clients choose to allocate leave costs to grants and contracts by using the leave pool. When the leave pool is used, leave elements must be established identifying the types of leave allowed at the agency. Examples of leave elements are 995100 Annual Leave, 995200 Sick Leave, 995300 Holiday Leave, etc. In the Windows version, you can assign any description of the leave you have since you are not restricted like you were in the DOS version.

Leave Taken charges are tracked by Leave type. Each employee identifies the type of leave being taken on his/her timesheet and the system calculates total leave taken by class and by leave type and lists the totals by class on the Leave Rate Computation and Analysis. If the agency charges leave to grants and contracts at the time it is taken, the system divides the total leave taken by the base for allocating leave (usually RT salaries) to calculate the leave rate. The leave rate is then applied by multiplying the regular time worked in each element times the leave rate for each class.

If an agency pays unused leave upon termination, the leave balance amounts are a true liability to the agency and should be charged when earned. If the agency chooses to charge leave to grants and contracts at the time the leave is earned rather than at the time the leave is taken, the GMS system will calculate the amount of the increase or decrease in leave liability for each class and allocate this amount in addition to the leave taken amount.

If leave is charged when earned, the system calculates the total current liability by multiplying the balance of unused leave hours for each employee times the hourly rate. These amounts are subtotaled by class. The opening leave liability for each class is subtracted from the current liability for the class to calculate the current year leave liability change. The dollar amount of the change in leave liability is

added to the total leave taken charges to determine the total leave cost during the current fiscal year for each class. This amount is divided by the base for allocating leave (usually RT salaries) and the leave rate is calculated.

To allocate leave costs to each element, the system multiplies the regular time charges for all employees in each element times the leave rate to determine the amount of leave to be allocated to each grant or contract. These calculations are done by class.

If the agency is required to report Salary costs by employee, Supplement #354, Salary Leave and Fringe Detail may be used to produce this information.

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### ***Proof that Good Backups are a Must!***

An unfortunate incidence happened to a GMS accounting client due to improper backup procedures. Their database became corrupted. When service staff asked about their backups, they said they do a complete tape backup every night and then periodically just backup their database. However, in this situation it turned out that something went wrong with their complete tape backup and was not recoverable. They always reuse the same tape backup which means the night before got wiped out also. They had done a backup of just their database to an external drive the day before, but when looking at the external drive, they were unable to find it. When the service staff got off the phone with them, their IT staff were going to search the external drive to see if they could find it. We also suggested that they could go to the Microsoft website and find a recovery service that may be able to restore their database from the corrupted one.

The end result was that if they could not find the backup from yesterday, the only other backup they could find was from two weeks ago, which they said they would then rebuild all of their data for the last two weeks. It was a hard lesson for them to learn and we at GMS feel so bad when good backup procedures are not in place for our clients. We include reminders in our newsletter several times a year, give recommended backup procedures in our Help Manual under the Operating Information, during on-site training and any other time it is convenient and appropriate.

**So don't forget, back up your database regularly and confirm that the backup is actually there!**