



# OTCnet Connect

A publication of the Bureau of the Fiscal Service Over the Counter Revenue Collection Division

## The New Historical Reporting Feature in OTCnet

### When will batches be archived?

On June 7, 2014, the OTCnet Team began archiving batches with Received Dates older than 18 months from the current system date. To date, all batches with Received Dates prior to 2008 have been archived. Currently, OTCnet Batch Archiving has been temporarily placed on hold and is expected to resume shortly. Additional notice will be given, and a revised *OTCnet Batch Archiving Schedule* made available, when we resume batch archiving.

### What is Historical Reporting (Archiving)?

OTCnet users can use the Historical Reporting function to efficiently search for archived check records and to generate a CIRA CSV Historical Report.

### How can agencies access the Historical Reporting function?

Users assigned the role of Agency Manager, Check Capture Administrator, MVD Editor, MVD Viewer, or FMS Viewer can access the Historical Reporting function. To access the Historical Reporting function in OTCnet, log into the **OTCnet application**, click the **Reports tab**, select **Historical Reports**, and click **Generate Historical Reports**, as illustrated in the figure below.



## Quick Links

- **OTCnet Website:** <http://www.fms.treas.gov/otcnet/index.html>
- **OTCnet Application:** <https://otcnet.fms.treas.gov/>
- **OTCnet System Requirements:** [http://fms.treas.gov/otcnet/related.html#sys\\_req\\_1](http://fms.treas.gov/otcnet/related.html#sys_req_1)
- **OTCnet Training:** <http://www.fms.treas.gov/otcnet/training.html>
- **OTCnet Contacts:** <http://www.fms.treas.gov/otcnet/contacts.html>

## Install Security Certificate 1.2.1

All agencies using OTCnet Offline must run the OTCnet Security Update — 1.2.1 or upgrade to OTCnet Offline Release 1.5 to ensure continued functionality of OTCnet Offline. This security update is necessary to use any OTCnet Offline release prior to Release 1.5, because a certificate that is required to use these offline releases expired on June 14, 2014. For detailed instructions on how to install this security update, please reference the following link: [http://www.fms.treas.gov/otcnet/pja\\_download\\_install\\_OTCnet\\_Security\\_Update.pdf](http://www.fms.treas.gov/otcnet/pja_download_install_OTCnet_Security_Update.pdf)

Prior to taking any action, please reference your agency's internal operating procedures.

## Preparing for OTCnet Batch Archiving

To prepare for OTCnet Batch Archiving to resume shortly, the OTCnet Team recommends that you clean-up outstanding batches in OTCnet. Outstanding batches are all batches in OTCnet that have not been sent for settlement. To clean-up batches, please:

1. **Review** any outstanding batches that have not been approved
2. **Void and deactivate** or **review and approve** any outstanding batches, regardless of their status such as Open or Closed

**Note:** For the purpose of this maintenance activity, these batches should not be reactivated once they are deactivated.

Once the batches are archived, users cannot change the batch status or modify checks within the batch. For additional instructions on the following topics, please refer to:

- **Voiding a Check:** [http://www.fms.treas.gov/otcnet/training/wbt/content/lsn544HTML2004/M/sims/pja\\_void\\_ck.pdf](http://www.fms.treas.gov/otcnet/training/wbt/content/lsn544HTML2004/M/sims/pja_void_ck.pdf)
- **Deactivating a Batch:** [http://www.fms.treas.gov/otcnet/training/wbt/content/lsn544HTML2004/M/sims/pja\\_act\\_deact\\_bat.pdf](http://www.fms.treas.gov/otcnet/training/wbt/content/lsn544HTML2004/M/sims/pja_act_deact_bat.pdf)
- **Approving and Closing a Batch:** [http://www.fms.treas.gov/otcnet/training/wbt/content/lsn544HTML2004/M/sims/pja\\_approve\\_singbat.pdf](http://www.fms.treas.gov/otcnet/training/wbt/content/lsn544HTML2004/M/sims/pja_approve_singbat.pdf)  
and  
[http://www.fms.treas.gov/otcnet/training/wbt/content/lsn544HTML2004/M/sims/pja\\_close\\_singbat.pdf](http://www.fms.treas.gov/otcnet/training/wbt/content/lsn544HTML2004/M/sims/pja_close_singbat.pdf)

## Become a CARS Reporter



All OTCnet agencies must be Central Accounting and Reporting System (CARS) Reporters by October 1, 2014.

The United States Department of Treasury has mandated that all agencies become CARS Reporters to comply with the Treasury's modernization efforts. Once an agency becomes a CARS Reporter in OTCnet, the agency must enter the appropriate accounting information, such as a Classification key (C-Key), when scanning a check.

For more information on how to become a CARS reporter, please contact Katy Borys at [Katy.Borys@fms.treas.gov](mailto:Katy.Borys@fms.treas.gov).

## OTCnet Release 2.0

We are delighted to announce the scheduled Spring 2015 release of OTCnet 2.0.

OTCnet Release 2.0 will introduce new features, including a new functionality for agencies to report multiple Classification Keys (C-Keys) to a single check under the Check Capture component. Although the classification functionality is optional in OTCnet until you become a CARS Reporter, all agencies must transition to a CARS reporter by October 1, 2014. For more information on how to become a CARS reporter, please contact Katy Borys at [Katy.Borys@fms.treas.gov](mailto:Katy.Borys@fms.treas.gov).

We look forward to sharing more details with you regarding this upcoming release as we get closer to the implementation date.

## Duplicate Check Scanning

It is important for OTCnet Check Capture agencies to **avoid scanning and processing the same check item multiple times**. This action can have severe financial repercussions for the check writer. For example, the check writer's bank account may be debited twice and the check writer may have insufficient funds to pay other check items written on the account.

To avoid scanning items multiple times, please complete the following:

- **Review your agency's check scanning procedures**
- **Search for the check using the CIRA Record**, if you believe it may have already been scanned and processed.

To access CIRA Record in OTCnet, log into the OTCnet application, click the **Check Processing** tab, select **CIRA Query**, and click **View** as illustrated in the image below.



Note: Detailed instructions on how to view a CIRA Record can be found here: [http://www.fms.treas.gov/otcnet/training/wbt/content/lsn546HTML2004/M/sims/pja\\_view\\_cira\\_record.pdf](http://www.fms.treas.gov/otcnet/training/wbt/content/lsn546HTML2004/M/sims/pja_view_cira_record.pdf)

When your agency scans items, please:

- **Return the check to the customer**, if your agency scans items in-person.
- **Have safeguards that ensure scanned items are kept separate from unscanned items**, if your agency collects checks when the customer is not present or through back office operations

Additionally, checks may be **hand stamped** after the transaction is complete and the check has been scanned. Many OTCnet scanners can also be setup to automatically stamp the front of the check.

Note: To view scanner options that support automatic stamping of checks, please click the following link: <http://www.fms.treas.gov/otcnet/releaseinfo.html>.

Treasury OTC Support Team:  
866.945.7920 or  
[FMS.OTCChannel@citi.com](mailto:FMS.OTCChannel@citi.com)



OTCnet Deployment Team:  
703.377.5586 or  
[FMS.OTCDeployment@citi.com](mailto:FMS.OTCDeployment@citi.com)

## Handling Sensitive Data

OTCnet agencies must protect sensitive information. If possible, please do not email this type of data. Here is some information to help you identify sensitive data:

### What kind of data is considered sensitive?

This data includes personally identifiable information (PII), and any other information that can be used to access the financial status, security posture, or proprietary information belonging to a person or an agency.



### What is PII and what are some examples of PII?

PII is any information about an individual maintained by an agency, including (1) any information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as name, SSN, date and place of birth; and (2) any other information that is linkable to an individual, such as educational, financial, and employment information.

If you must email sensitive information, please use WinZIP, SecureZIP, or use another archive utility that supports password-based encryption to encrypt sensitive information within a ZIP file before sending via email. You may have to rename the ZIP file as a TXT file for the file to pass through your mail server. The ZIP file password must be provided to the recipient via phone or a separate email.

## Prepare for the Upcoming Disaster Recovery Exercise (DRE)

The Disaster Recovery Exercise (DRE) allows the OTCnet Team to ensure that the OTCnet application is available to agencies in the unlikely event there is an interruption to the Production Environment. During this maintenance window, OTCnet will be moved to our secondary production site (EROC) to validate functionality.

Add the Treasury link of [treas.gov](http://treas.gov) to your Trusted Sites Zone to prevent any potential issues with logging into the OTCnet Online application during the DRE that will start in August 2014 and conclude in September 2014.

For detailed instructions on how to add the Treasury website to your Trusted Sites Zone, please refer to the email communication sent to the OTCnet community on June 23, 2014 or call the OTCnet Customer service Team at 866-945-7920.

## Featured Customer Service Representative: Kim Vaughn

### Q: What is your favorite feature of OTCnet and why?



A: The reports function is my favorite feature, particularly the CIRA CSV Report. This report allows you to export data based on your specific search criteria. This data can then be sorted and used for your specific agency needs.

### Q: What do you like most about being a Customer Service representative?

A: I like interacting with the different Agencies and Financial Institutions, hearing their needs and helping them utilize OTCnet to its fullest capacity.

### Q: What is a helpful tip for OTCnet users?

A: The approve batch process was updated in OTCnet Release 1.5. You must now click "Print PDF Report" or "Export", and then click "Confirm" to approve the batch. The "Confirm" button will remain grayed out until either of these buttons are clicked.

## Contingency Planning

The OTCnet team encourages agencies to establish and periodically review their internal contingency plans for the OTCnet application. For agencies that use the OTCnet Check Capture online functionality it is recommended to install the OTCnet Check Capture Offline client as an alternative check processing option.

Agencies also have the option to use the Deposit Reporting functionality within OTCnet, if needed, as a contingency option to both the Online and Offline Check Capture functionality. The Deposit Reporting function in OTCnet allows agencies to deposit checks, cash and coins at their financial institution. It is highly recommended that agencies setup their deposit reporting profile in advance for use during a contingency situation.

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