

- Q.1: How will time lapse data be entered into the SUN system?
 A.1: States may upload time lapse information by using ASCII files to transfer from their automated systems, or the data can be manually entered. Note that a partial ASCII upload for a report will not pass edits; data must be uploaded for all fields.
- Q.2: Will we be provided with extract file descriptions so that we know how to format our files for uploading to the SUN?
 A.2: Yes. This information was provided in ETA Handbook 402, 3rd Edition, Change 2, issued June 6, 1996.
- Q.3: What is meant by the statement in the first payment time lapse section of UIPL 10-96 that CWC should be reported in the appropriate category?
 A.3: For this answer, refer to ETA Handbook 401, Change 7, reporting instructions for ETA 9050, page V-1-5. Intrastate and Interstate are

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each broken down further into UI/UCFE/UCX. Therefore, each first payment should be reported in whichever of these categories is appropriate. CWC should be reported on the ETA 9050 as a part of the Intrastate or Interstate figures in the UI, UCFE, or UCX column, as appropriate depending on the nature of the base period wages.

- Q.4: What are the specific criteria for determining when a claim should be reported as UI, UCFE, or UCX?
- A.4: Claims are classified for reporting purposes according to the base period wages being used, as follows:
1. UI - all State UI wages, either alone or in combination with UCFE and/or UCX wages.
 2. UCFE - all UCFE wages, either alone or in combination with UCX wages.
 3. UCX claims involve only UCX wages.
- Q.5: Will payments resulting from appeal reversals of multiclaimant determinations be excluded from first payment time lapse?
- A.5: No. Payments resulting from appeal reversals of multiclaimant determinations will be **included** in first payment time lapse. Formerly, the ETA 5159 reporting instructions (revision 2/93, page I-2-6) stated "Payments resulting from the reversals of multiclaimant nonmonetary determinations may be excluded for purposes of this section." According to ETA Handbook 401, Change 7, first payment time lapse now resides in the new reporting form ETA 9050. On page V-1-5, the General Reporting Instructions state: "The First Payment Time Lapse measure requires that the State computer read the universe of **all** [emphasis added] first payment records," and the reference to excluding multiclaimant determinations was removed. Analysis of first payment results will take into account special circumstances such as multiclaimant reversals, which **should be documented in the comments section of the report.**
- Q.6: Time lapse during the field test was measured from the first week compensated. Has that changed?
- A.6: Yes. The time lapse measure being implemented begins with "first compensable week," which UIS has used for many years. It is referenced in 20 CFR Part 640, Standard for Benefit Payment Promptness - Unemployment Compensation. The first compensable week in the benefit year is the first possible week for which benefits could be paid, regardless of a claimant's nonmonetary eligibility. If the first compensable week in the benefit year is never paid due to a nonmonetary denial, the claim never appears in first payment time lapse. See ETA Handbook 401, Change 7, definitions for ETA 9050, page V-1-6.

- Q.7: How are partial/part-total payments defined?
A.7: A partial/part-total payment for reporting purposes is a payment for any week in which the weekly benefit amount is reduced by earnings from employment.
- Q.8: Are any other reduced payments considered partial or part-total by this definition? What about pension reductions and overpayment offsets?
A.8: Pension reductions and overpayment offsets, even when they result in a partial reduction of WBA, do not meet the definition of reduction in WBA due to earnings from employment, and therefore are not considered partial or part-total payments.
- Q.9: Will time lapse output reports be available through the SUN menus so that we can see our percentages?
A.9: This type of data analysis output report is currently under consideration. Comments about the usefulness of such reports and suggestions about possible formats are welcome.

Nonmonetary Determination Time Lapse

- Q.10: Have any States come up with a good method for capturing "First Week Affected" for the new nonmonetary time lapse reporting requirements?
A.10: Some States derive "First Week Affected" from other data elements in their automated systems. For example, for initial claims, if "Effective Date of Claim" is a data field and is a Sunday date, this date plus six days can yield the necessary date. For continued claims, the logic is similar.
- Q.11: Should the first week affected by a nonmonetary determination include the waiting week, even though it may not be paid?
A.11: Yes.
- Q.12: Time lapse for multiclaimant determinations is based on the issuance of the single determination which affects many claimants. Will this determination be included in the nonmonetary universe for quality?
A.12: Yes. If a single nonmonetary determination was made which affected 200 claimants, the single determination will be included in the universe, not the 200 individual determinations generated from it.
- Q.13: Will the total number of nonmonetary determinations reported on the ETA 9052 and ETA 9053 be different from the total number of State UI determinations reported on the ETA 207?

A.13: The total number reported on the ETA 9052 and ETA 9053 for Separation Issues (column 2) Intrastate plus Interstate plus Nonseparation Issues (column 2) Intrastate plus Interstate should equal the total in Line 101, column 2 on the ETA 207. Other columns on the two reports will not track because (1) the ETA 9052 and ETA 9053 do not include redeterminations, and (2) the ETA 207 has redeterminations broken out only for State UI. UCFE and UCX redeterminations are combined in the totals for those categories on the ETA 207 and cannot be broken out.

Q.14: One State indicated that as things stand now, the agency intends to continue with its current procedure to do a determination only when a week is claimed. They are concerned, however, about delayed determination impact on time lapse.

Example: IC effective date 3/3/96
VQ Separation indicated
Date Detected (claim filed) 3/5/96
No weeks claimed
A/C filed/effective 5/5/96

In cases like this one, can Date Detected be reset to the date the A/C is filed to prevent an excessively lengthy time lapse?

A.14: The short answer is "Yes." This situation is addressed specifically in Handbook 401 Change 7, in the definitions section of ETA 9052, Page V-3-6, a.

CWC Time Lapse

Q.15: Our State does not maintain the IB-4 receipt date. Once we respond to the IB-4, the receipt date is deleted. Do we have to transfer this info to a separate file?

A.15: Yes, it will be necessary to build a transaction file containing IB-4 receipt date and response date.

Q.16: What are "CWC adjustment payments" in the ETA 586 reporting instructions? The new ETA 401 Change 7 instructions have no definition.

A.16: CWC adjustment payments are additional benefits paid, subsequent to a monetary determination made based on employment and wages received from more than one State, for weeks previously paid based on employment and wages covered under the paying State's law.

Q.17: Does CWC reimbursement time lapse include partial payments?

A.17: No. Refer to ET Handbook 399, Appendix A, page A-8, (c), "Each transferring State shall, as soon as practicable after receipt of a quarterly statement of charges described herein, reimburse the paying State accordingly." Payment of any amount less than the amount billed must represent the total amount due after resolution of disputed amounts.

Q.18: Some States will be reimbursing through a clearinghouse arrangement. How will time lapse be measured in such instances?

A.18: The measure is of the number of days from the date the transferring State receives the reimbursement request to the date payment is mailed to the paying State. The ending parameter in the instance cited will be the date on which the agency authorizes payment through the clearinghouse arrangement.

Nonmonetary Determination Quality Universe

Q.19: Why is the nonmonetary quality universe taken from the ETA 9052 report and not the ETA 207? If it was taken from the ETA 207, redeterminations would not be excluded from the quality sample.

A.19: Redeterminations should be excluded from the quality sample. The field test identified definitional problems which preclude including redeterminations in the universe for time lapse and quality.

Q.20: Why is verification of a week claimed required as one of the BTQ quality review items if it is no longer part of the nonmonetary definition?

A.20: This field reflects differences in SESA operations, and monitors SESA adherence to its own policy. If State policy is to wait until a week is claimed before generating a nonmonetary determination on an issue, the entry in the nonmonetary determination skeleton field (cell 9) should be "Y." An "N" for "No" in the field would indicate activity outside the scope of State policy. In States where a nonmonetary determination may be made without a week claimed, the field allows for analysis of the comparative quality of the nonmonetary process under those circumstances.

Q.21: Is it a problem if no multclaimant determinations are chosen for quality review?

A.21: No, not if a genuinely random sample of the universe of nonmonetary determinations has been obtained.

Q.22: What are the "skeleton" fields for, and why do they have to be entered before the cases are reviewed?

A.22: The skeleton fields identify the particular nonmonetary determinations in the sample for the review quarter. They must be entered into the SUN data entry screens **before** the quality reviews are done, and **all** of the skeleton fields must be completed, because the information is used to check that each of the cases selected from the universe met the initial sample specifications for quality assurance. A program built into the SESA UI software will verify that all of the sampled determinations are nonmonetary determinations dated within the review quarter, and that the sample contains the minimum number of separation and nonseparation issues. If the sample passes the checks, the skeleton fields are "locked" to establish that this sample has met validation criteria and cannot be changed. If the sample does *not* pass:

! manually entered skeleton fields can be edited to make corrections for typographical errors or blank fields. If the sample still does not pass the edits after these corrections, the skeleton fields will not lock and allow for entry of evaluation scores. The skeleton fields must pass edits before quality evaluation begins. The State must check its sampling program for errors and make the necessary corrections, then run the sample selection routine again.

! skeleton fields loaded from a file (automated uploading) cannot be manually corrected. The State must check its sampling program for errors and make the necessary corrections, then run the sample selection routine again and upload a new sample.

Q.23: Some States do not currently have issue codes that allow them to separate out every issue listed on page 38 of Attachment A to UIPL 10-96. Is it necessary for these States to develop codes to cover all of these possibilities?

A.23: If States do not use all of the issue codes listed, it is not necessary for them to develop further codes. For example, if their policy requires that to be A&A as required in any week the claimant must have been actively registered with Job Service, then the issue code "A&A" will be correct for Job Service registration, and the State need not add a specific code for Job Service registration issues. For review purposes, the State must provide reviewers with its list of issue codes and indicate the types of situations when each would be used.

Q.24: Our State has developed hundreds of extremely specific issue codes, and we don't understand how we can limit the number to the short list allowed in the skeleton field for issue code.

A.24: Many States have multiple issue codes with which they can identify issues much more specifically than would be possible using the rather broad codes provided for the issue code skeleton field. However, it is anticipated that all of the codes will fit under one or another of the issues listed. For example, a State may identify ten or more VQ issues, depending on circumstances. State ADP staff will need to insert "if" statements to roll all specific codes into the broader category. (If State codes 100 through 199 are all VQ codes, then codes 100-199 = 10 when the quality sample program runs.)

Q.25: "Week claimed" is a skeleton field, and our State cannot provide it during automated uploading. Will our skeleton fields fail to pass edits?

A.25: Yes. If the information cannot be obtained through any combination of file checks, the SESA sampling program will need to include an instruction to default this field to either "Yes" or "No," depending on State policy. If, after quality review, the default in this field is incorrect, use the comment section to identify the element and note the change. Workload validation has required "week claimed" in the past, but if your automated system no longer contains the information, use a default entry and enter a comment on any record where the default is incorrect.

Nonmonetary Quality Scoring

Q.26: Is it necessary to have a monetary determination in order to have a nonmonetary determination?

A.26: Yes, a claimant must have monetary eligibility before a reportable nonmonetary determination can be done. If a SESA issues a nonmonetary determination before monetary eligibility has been established, that nonmonetary determination must be reported at the time the claimant's monetary eligibility is established.

Q.27: If monetary ineligibility has been established, yet a State issues a nonmonetary determination on the claim, is this determination reportable?

A.27: No. The claimant has no benefit rights to be affected.

Q.28: Our automated nonmonetary determinations are pre-worded with standard text, thereby eliminating or limiting the amount of specific facts which can be included in the determination. If we cannot modify our

"generic" nonmonetary statements, what will happen to our quality score under the new requirements?

A.28: Regardless of the level of automation, determination notices should adhere to the claims determination standard, which requires that notices provide a summary of material facts, the reason for the determination, application of appropriate law, etc. States that have limited ability to provide the affected parties with information required by the claims determination standards run the risk of being scored down on quality. States should re-examine their automated texts to ensure that the claims determination standard is being met.

Q.29: Will automated determinations invariably fail quality reviews?

A.29: No. A quality nonmonetary determination is defined as one which meets the claims determination standard, whether it is produced by an automated system or created manually.

Q.30: How will cases be scored if the issue was identified incorrectly?

A.30: The reviewer will enter "N" in Number 4 on the data collection instrument (DCI), "Correct Issue Code?," and will enter the correct code in Number 5. The revised ETA Handbook 301 directs the reviewer to then complete the entire DCI, failing the case for quality of each item from Number 18, Claimant Information, through Number 23, Written Determination. The case will still be subject to tripartite review, but if the reviewers agree that the issue was identified incorrectly, the outcome will be failure on all quality elements.

Q.31: Will there be an issuance describing the decisions about how the written determination would affect the pass/fail scoring of a case?

A.31: A full description of the scoring elements, including the effect of the written determination, will be provided in the revision to Handbook 301, which will be published in July 1996.

Q.32: UIPL 10-96 indicates that to have a nonmonetary determination which can be scored for quality, (a) the SESA must have detected an issue which had the potential to affect the claimant's past, present, or future benefit rights, and (b) the SESA must have made a determination regarding that issue. Does this mean that nonmonetary determinations lacking documentation of facts, reasoning, and even a copy of the determination itself can be scored?

A.32: If there is sufficient documentation to indicate that the agency issued a nonmonetary determination, the reviewers will score the case, and will fail elements as appropriate. If **all** case material is missing, the reviewer

will enter "N" for "Case Material Found?." This will exclude the case from calculation of the quality score. Reviewers will refer to the revised ETA Handbook 301 for details.

- Q.33: Under the new scoring, what happens if upon review it is found that no issue with the potential to affect the claimant's past, present or future benefit rights existed? This could happen with so-called "charge-back" determinations.
- A.33: These determinations are not reportable nonmonetary determinations. To score such a case, reviewers will select **"N"** for Correct Issue Code? (Number 4 on the DCI/data entry screen), and **"00"** for the **correct issue code** (Number 5). When total scores for quality are computed, cases in which correct issue code = "00" will be excluded from consideration, because these cases are failing for reasons other than the quality criteria (fact finding, rebuttal opportunity, etc.).
- Q.34: At what point does a sample for nonmonetary determination quality become unusable because cases were not found or did not meet the definition of a reportable nonmonetary?
- A.34: If the percentage of cases which are excluded from the quality score exceeds 16.67% of the sample in small States or 25% of the sample in large States, a footnote will indicate that the resulting score may not be reliable. Furthermore, if more than 10% of the total sample for either small or large States are identified as "N" for case material found, the resulting score will also be footnoted.
- Q.35: The adjudication universe includes "BPC generated nonmonetary determinations." Is that saying that fraud and false statement determinations will be reviewed for quality?
- A.35: Fraud and false statement determinations will be in the universe, and will be reviewed for quality if included in the sample.
- Q.36: Will travel money be available for the quality review teams to accomplish the tripartite review?
- A.36: Within the FY 1997 planning targets, a total of \$127,000 was included for the nonmonetary determinations tripartite reviews. The funding will be distributed using the same process as was used to distribute State Quality Appraisal QPI travel money. States should submit requests to their Regional Offices.

Q.37: Will the scores for separation and nonseparation issues be reported separately?

A.37: Scores for separations and nonseparations will be calculated separately, then weighted to reflect the ratio of separations to nonseparations in the universe in the quarter being sampled to produce a single overall quality score.

Nonmonetary Determination Implementation Time Lapse

Q.38: All of our nonmonetary determinations are automatically implemented as soon as they are entered into the system. Will our implementation time lapse always be zero?

A.38: Yes, it will be in the 0 - 1 day interval, if the SESA mail date for payments or removal of a stop in the system is the same as the date on the determination allowing benefits.

Q.39: We figure determination date as system date plus one, two or three to arrive at actual mail date on determinations. But many of our determinations, especially denials, are implemented by simply adding a stop code to the automated system. The two dates that result in this situation seem to compute to a negative time lapse value. How will this be handled?

A.39: "Negative" time lapse caused by the circumstances you describe will default to the 0 - 1 day time lapse category if programmed correctly by the SESA.

Lower Authority Appeals Time Lapse

Q.40: The difficulty we have with the time lapse measure is that our automated system cannot distinguish between appeals which are disposed of by decision and those which are disposed of otherwise.

A.40: ADP units will need to discover ways to code the disposition by type. Without this, appeals time lapse will not be accurate, and will create problems in deriving a sample for quality review. The current ETA 5130 makes the distinction of disposition by decision and other than decision, so the information should be available.

Lower Authority Appeals Case Aging

Q.41: Are UCFE and UCX appeals to be reported separately on either of the Lower Authority Appeals Case Aging tables?

A.41: No. These program types are included in the total figure for case aging purposes.

Lower Authority Appeals Quality

Q.42: Our automated system cannot distinguish between appeals disposed of by decision and "no shows" or "withdrawn" appeals. How do we cope with these when doing the quality sample?

A.42: If an automated system cannot distinguish between disposal types, it will be necessary for the SESA to deliberately over-sample. This does not simply mean drawing a sample larger than required and choosing the cases which meet the criteria, because that compromises the random sample. There is a way to over-sample which retains statistical validity; refer to Appendix A to ETA Handbook 401, page A-6 for details.

Appeals Time Lapse/Case Aging

Q.43: Are any appeals besides claimant appeals, i.e., tax/employer appeals to be included in the appeals times lapse or case aging measures?

A.43: All appeals of determinations on **benefits** are to be included, whether filed by claimant or employer. Tax appeals are not to be included.

Higher Authority Appeals Case Aging

Q.44: What happens when a case is remanded to Lower Authority for further facts?

A.44: When a case is remanded for further hearing and a decision by Lower Authority Appeals, it is removed from the Higher Authority case aging universe. When a case is remanded for additional evidence but will return to Higher Authority for a decision, the case remains in Higher Authority Case Aging throughout.

Benchmarking

Q.45: Will nonmonetary determination quality be benchmarked separately for separation and nonseparation issues?

A.45: Benchmarking decisions will be made only after data have been collected under the new reporting requirements for some time. As UIPL 10-96 states on page 6, "When sufficient data are available for performance analysis, UIS will ask State program administrators to contribute to discussions regarding benchmarking."

Q.46: Will first payment time lapse continue to be benchmarked separately for intra- and interstate payments?

A.46: Until decisions about benchmarking are made based on the data collected under the new reporting requirements, existing Secretary's Standards and established DLAs will be used. Refer to UIPL 10-96, page 7.

Q.47: Will the new measures be reported in a publication like QA?

A.47: There will be a periodic publication of UI Performs performance results.
The format, content, and timing are in development.