TRS Reporting via TRAQS

What is TRAQS?

TRAQS is an acronym for **T**RS **R**eporting **a**nd **Q**uery **S**ystem. It is a web based, on-line application developed to provide TRS reporting entities with an innovative and streamlined method for submitting required information to TRS via the Internet. Member institutions of the A&M System converted to the new reporting methodology with the April 2002 reporting period (due to TRS in May 2002). The address for this web site is:

http://www.trs.state.tx.us/traqs/traqs.htm

Not only does TRAQS allow reporting entities to submit data to TRS, but it also permits them to view the results of processing that data. Through the query function of the application, reporting officials or their designated representatives can see the status of the reports that they have submitted and view details concerning any problems that exist which may require their attention. This lets them readily make necessary corrections and resubmit data to speed completion of report processing.

TRAQS puts control where it should be - in the hands of the reporting entities. They are able to submit reports, review results, and make necessary modifications; generally with no intervention required by TRS staff. One of the goals of TRAQS is faster completion of report processing. Faster report completion in turn permits TRS to distribute benefits to its members in a more timely fashion, thus providing reporting entities an opportunity to indirectly provide greater service to their employees.

Several additional benefits are also realized through the use of TRAQS.

- Elimination of paper reports and forms
- Elimination of magnetic media
- Electronic signatures
- Reduction in postage, handling, and supply costs
- Reduction in the number of report categories
- Reduction in the number of member data errors

TRAQS Reports

TRAQS allows reporting entities to submit four categories of reports.

1. Member Data Report
2. Regular Payroll Report
3. Employment of Retired Members Report
4. Miscellaneous Reports

The Member Data Report contains the following information:

- Member biographical information previously reported through the member enrollment form TRS 5, *Personal Data*
- Member termination information
- Member position information previously reported through the annual *Member Position Report*, form TRS 557
- Employment information previously reported through the *Certification of Contract/ Work Agreement Report*, form TRS 355

The Regular Payroll Report contains the following information:

- Member monthly salary and deposit amounts previously reported on the *Summary of Payroll Report*, form TRS 4
- Member monthly TRS-Care contribution amounts previously reported on the *Insurance Report*, form TRS 374
- Member monthly payroll deduction for the purchase of special service, if applicable, previously reported on *Summary of Payroll Deduction for the Purchase of Special Service*, form TRS 565

The Employment of Retired Members Report contains data similar to that previously required in the Employment of Retired Members Report, form TRS 118.

The Miscellaneous Reports will continue to consist of only total salaries and deposits and include the following individual reports.

- Statutory Minimum Report (form TRS 372)
- Federal Fund/Private Grant Report (form TRS 2)
- Federal Grant TRS-Care Report (form TRS 488)
- Educational/General Local Funds Report (form TRS 553)
- Non-educational/General Funds Report (form TRS 370)

Month-End Processing and Procedures

As a part of normal month-end processing, files will be built for all of the member institutions and agencies in the A&M System. These files will be used to report the **M**ember **D**ata (MD) information, the **R**egular **P**ayroll (RP) deposit information, and the **E**mployment of **R**etired members (ER) information to the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) through their **T**RS **R**eporting **a**nd **Q**uery **S**ystem (TRAQS) system.

The TRAQS TRS Reporting File Depot, under Single Sign On, will be used as a repository for all files being transmitted to TRS. This will include the Member Data (MD) file, the Regular Payroll (RP) file and the Employment of Retired Members (ER) data.

Each report type (RP, MD, ER) must be submitted via TRAQS as a separate file. The file can include multiple record types. The processes will be independent of each other and payroll offices (TRS reporting districts or entities) may submit the information to TRS as the files are made available and according to their individual work flow processes.

The Regular Payroll Report (RP), Member Data (MD) and Employment of Retired Members (ER) data must be submitted every month.

Report Status

A report status is returned for each file submitted through TRAQS detailing the processing that has taken place based on the data supplied. The 'Report Status' can be Failed, Over-Due, Pending, Incomplete or Complete. The goal for Regular Payroll (RP), Federal Fund/Private Grant, Federal Grant TRS-Care Report, Statutory Minimum Report, Member Data (MD) and Employment of Retired Members (ER) is to have a "Complete" status.

The **RP** and **ER** files must reach a 'Completed' status in order for any records to be posted to the TRS data base. Records will be posted from the **MD** file upon reaching a 'Complete' or 'Incomplete' status. An 'Incomplete' status will produce warning messages. These warnings will detail records that were not processed or posted to the TRS data base. The warning messages have a 2 character code. The remedy for the warning messages can be found on the TRAQS website.

If the remedy action instructs that a correction record should be re-submitted, and the processor is not able to make the correction through the TRAQS online correction system, the B/P/P Operations Center (please notify BPP-Prod@tamus.edu) should be notified so that a manual record can be constructed to be submitted to TRAQS. The B/P/P Operations Center will either take care of the problem on the next month's submission or will create a special file consisting of only the problem records to be submitted for the current month. Some Member Data (MD) warnings:

DV 000 xx xxxx Demographic Member ID Number 000 xx xxxx is not valid.
A temporary B/P/P SSN has been used to submit information to TRS. This is not allowed by TRS. Please be sure to review the error report from program BP8609 to identify temporary SSNs prior to the submission of MD information so that these items can be corrected prior to submission.

RO xxx xx xxxx Demographic for Closed Account - Possible Ineligible Withdrawal
This member previously withdrew their IRS contributions and has returned to work in a TRS eligible position within 30 days of their previous termination. The employee may not have been eligible to withdraw their contribution. This message is for information only and requires no corrective action to correct the file submitted.

RS xxx xx xxxx Address Reported Last Name Discrepancy
The last name reported on the MD file does not match the information that is currently stored on the TRS data base. The B/P/P Operations Center will have to manually generate an MD25 record to report the name change.

ZR xxx xx xxxx Contract/Pos Record Already Exist. Use an Adjustment.
A contract/position record will be created for all new employees. This warning message may be the result when an employee is terminated and the TRS Deduct Code is set to **N**, but no termination date is entered. Without the termination date, no MD90 (termination) record will be generated. The employee then returns to work and the TRS Deduct Code is again set to **Y**, causing the B/P/P System to generate new employee records for TRAQS.

ZS xxx xx xxxx Contract/Position Adj ORP Electee Reported by Junior/Senior College or Medical School
This individual should have been an error when submitting the Regular Payroll (RP) file. This person has been identified to TRS as an ORP participant. It must be determined if the employee is a TRS member or eligible for ORP. If the individual is a TRS member, an MD40 record will have to be manually generated and submitted by the B/P/P Operations Center.

ZQ xxx xx xxxx Termination No Contract/Position Record Exists
This warning message is generated when a change is requested to an employee record, but no record has been set up for the current fiscal year. This situation could result if the employee had a TRS Deduct Code of **N** and a blank Termination Date in September. At this time each fiscal year, a file is generated for TRAQS defining all current employees. When a termination date is subsequently

entered into the B/P/P System, the system will generate a termination record, but there is not a corresponding contract or position record to update. The B/P/P Operations Center will have to manually generate a MD40 (appointment) record and a MD90 (termination) record.

ZU xxx xx xxxx Termination Reported for Retired Members
This message is generated when a retired person returns to work and he is incorrectly reported as a current active TRS member. The individual should be reported on the Employment of Retired Members (ER) report.

Member Data (MD) Processing

The program BP8609 in the month-end job MONTRS02 builds a file detailing employee member data information to be transmitted to the Teacher Retirement System. This information includes such items as the employee's name, citizenship, gender, birth date, job position information and address information. While it is technically possible for a payroll office not to have a file generated for a particular reporting month, it would be highly unlikely that there would not be some change in this information over the course of a month. The employment of one new employee would result in this file being built.

At the same time the MD file is built, a copy of the file is loaded to the TRAQS TRS Reporting File Depot. Following the load of the file, the payroll office personnel must then logon to the web site and download their final file to a site of their choosing. This could be their individual work station or a file server that they can access. The payroll office personnel will then have to sign on to the TRAQS web site and transmit the file to TRS.

Very Important: ** Only one Complete MD file may be transmitted for each month to TRS for each work station or district. A separate correction or patch file of individuals with previous warning messages may be transmitted.

The key to minimizing problems in member data reporting is to maintain accurate data in the B/P/P System with respect to actual TRS enrollment and activity.

A report is also generated when the member data file is built. The report gives the number of Member Data records generated - part of the information you need to "sign" for the Member Data report submission. In addition, the following error messages may appear on the report should you have data that needs to be corrected.

TERMINATION/RETIRE DATE IS BLANK -
The program has detected that the TRS deduction code has been changed to **N**, but we cannot generate a complete termination record for TRAQS. Fill in either the Termination Data or Retire Date on the Personnel Maintenance screen 101 before the next month's run. A termination record cannot be sent to TRS until a termination date or retirement date is present, even if the TRS deduct code is set to **N**.

NOTIFY B/P/P IF SSN HAS BEEN SENT TO TRS-
This message is printed if the program encounters a change on a record with a last name starting with **QQ**. This should mean that the SSN for this employee has been changed. If the SSN has changed, notify BPP-Prod@tamus.edu so that an **MD25** record can be created to change the old SSN to the new SSN. Certain instances will not require a change, i.e. if the person was found to have an invalid SSN prior to any data being sent to TRS. In this case and in all cases where TRS coverage is being stopped, the deduct code should be set to **N** for the old SSN, along with a termination or retirement date. This message will be displayed for SSNs with a TRS deduct code of **Y** for the current reporting month or for the previous month. These records should ultimately have a TRS deduct code of an **N** with a termination or retirement date, as they are flagged as being incorrect SSNs. Once this is done, the record will stop being reported. The employee may be reported at most twice on your report if you are timely in informing the B/P/P Operations Center of the valid SSN so that the proper MD25 record can be generated and you change the TRS deduct

code to **N**, along with a termination or retirement date. The message can be ignored if the change has already been reported to TRS (MD25 record was sent in the previous month and the change to the TRS deduct code (to **N**) is occurring this month.)

Warning: ** The workstation should not transmit their MD file until the manual change has been made and the file has been rebuilt. **

NOTIFY B/P/P IF FOREIGN NATIONAL-

The program will pick up any employee enrolling in TRS that has an SSN starting with **000**. These are the temporary SSNs used in the B/P/P System for foreign nationals without a valid SSN. In order to report these individuals via TRAQS, the B/P/P Operations Center will have to obtain a temporary ID number from TRS and modify the program that reports these individuals under a TRS assigned number.

Should an employee with a temporary SSN obtain a 'real' SSN and the employee has been participating in TRS, the procedures in #2 above apply. Once the record has been QQ'd in the B/P/P System and you will have to notify the B/P/P Operations Center so that the appropriate **MD** change record can be built to move the previous TRS deposits to the new SSN. You must provide a copy of the SS card to TRS

Warning: ** The workstation should not transmit their MD file until the manual change has been made and the file has been rebuilt. **

Regular Payroll (RP) Processing

The program BP8503 in the month-end job MONPAY04 builds a file and a work copy report of all of the payroll deposit activity for the month. The information is generated by employee within each of the TRS reporting districts. The reporting districts correspond to the payroll offices.

Payroll office personnel use the report produced by BP8503 to reconcile any changes or adjustments that need to be made. Such items might include the late notification of the termination of an employee, employees who did not have earnings through the end of the payroll processing period, or an additional deduction for an employee who was not paid in the previous month due to employment at the end of the month. Corrections to the file to be transmitted to the TRS may be made by using the BPP screens 316 or 317, respectively, for the example situations outlined.

The various payroll offices may need to enter corrections to modify cancellations or corrections processed through the payroll system for previous month's activity. These corrections are entered into the BPP System through screens 316 (TRAQS - Modify BPP Work File) or 317 (TRAQS - Modify TRS DB). Screen 316 is used to correct an entry being sent for the current reporting month. Screen 317 is generally used to add a record to update information for a previous reporting period. Frequently, both screens will be required to accurately report information to the Teacher Retirement System.

Once the reconciliation is completed and the payroll office has entered payroll correction(s), if necessary, they notify the B/P/P Operations Center (BPPOC) that they are ready for their final file. The BPPOC will then process the job MONTRS01 and generate a file incorporating the corrections entered by the payroll office on screens 316 and 317. This job also loads the final production file to the TRAQS TRS Reporting File Depot.

Following the load of the file, the payroll office personnel must then logon to the web site and download their final file to a site of their choosing. This could be their individual work station or a file server that they can access. The payroll office personnel will then sign on to the TRAQS web site and transmit the files to TRS.

When a Regular Payroll report is submitted, the TRAQS system will validate the contents of each record and verify that the totals of the employee deductions and covered wages of all detail records equal the totals of these values on the Lead Record. If the report passes these validations, it will be marked with a status of "Pending". If the report fails validation, it will be marked with a status of "Rejected" and the payroll office (reporting entity) will have to resubmit the report. If a report has a status of "Pending," the system will check each day to see if a signature/total has been submitted and if the State Comptroller's Office has reported enough money deposited to cover TRS contributions. Once all three items match, the report will be marked as "Complete" and the details from the report will be posted to member accounts. If all three items exist but do not match, the report will remain in a "Failed" status until the payroll office (reporting entity) resubmits the report, resubmits the signature/totals, or deposits enough money with the State Comptroller's Office to create a match. The sequence of the component's submission of the data, signatures and funds does not matter.

Employment of Retired Member (ER) Processing

TRS requires special reporting for individuals who are employed but who have also retired and are drawing TRS benefits. There are two reporting sections (Areas) for these types of employees.

- Area 1 is used to report retirees who retired on or after January 1, 2001 and all disability retirees, regardless of when they retired.

- Area 2 is used to report the number of retirees by position code that retired BEFORE January 1, 2001.

The B/P/P program BP8048 is processed each month-end. It scans for employees who appear to meet the reporting criteria for Area 1 reporting and will build a record for each individual. These records may be accessed via the B/P/P System Screen 318. Payroll Offices will then be required to enter the hours worked and other detail information on this screen. Once the data entry has been completed, the B/P/P Operations Center Production Control section should be contacted to generate the ER file. The ER file will then be transmitted by the payroll office just as the MD and RP files are submitted via TRAQS. Detail information is only generated for Area 1 employees.

Area 2 employees are entered on the signature page of TRAQS. The submission must have a 'Completed' status before it will be considered a valid submission for the reporting month.

If no working retirees are to be reported for a month, the payroll office should still contact the B/P/P Operations Center production Control section to request their ER report. The file will only have a header record and will inform TRS that there are no employees to be reported that month.

Additional TRAQS Considerations and processing requirements

Be aware, TRS employees have very limited ability to adjust information once it is sent to their system. The goal of TRAQS is to not have the data touched by TRS employees. Therefore, almost all corrections must take place at the originating agency or institution (i.e., us). This means there may be issues that come up as a warning on one month's member data report that will have to be corrected on subsequent member data reports or the warnings will continue to be produced. It is imperative that data in the B/P/P System be as clean as possible.

There are a couple of other reporting issues that will require special handling and manual intervention by the agency or the institution, TRS personnel and/or B/P/P Operations Center personnel.

- Issue 1: Loss of ORP Eligibility.

Should an employee who is initially reported to TRAQS as eligible and enrolled in the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP), move or elect to enroll in TRS prior to his vesting in ORP, the agency or institution will have to notify TRS that the employees is no longer enrolled in ORP and will not be eligible for the program in the future. This will have to be done prior to the submission of the regular payroll (**RP**) file containing the member deposit for the employee making the change.

The TRS data files will have the employee coded as participating in ORP. As a result, TRAQS will force an error and reject the entire **RP** file that contains the deposit for this employee. The agency or institution will have to submit an e-mail to TRS stating that the employee is not vested in any ORP program and that he is not eligible to participate in the future in ORP. TRS staff members will then change the ORP participation flag in TRAQS. Following this change, the A&M System member will have to RESUBMIT their **RP** file for processing. Unless there is also a change required in the **RP** file, the file already on the TRAQS TRS Reporting File Depot web site is ready to be sent again and there is no need to contact the B/P/P Operations Center.

- Issue 2: Temporary or Incorrect Social Security Numbers (SSN)

Occasionally, a foreign national employee is employed who does not have a valid SSN, or an employee has an invalid SSN entered into the B/P/P System for him. The process of changing the reporting of information under the correct SSN will require manual manipulation to correct the information between the B/P/P and TRAQS systems.

There are currently many foreign national employees who have a temporary SSN assigned to them in the B/P/P System. TRS identified these SSNs as being invalid (the numbers started with 000-) and assigned their own temporary TRS SSN (starting with ID1-) when these employees started to work. When these employees receive a valid SSN, they will require manual intervention to report them under their valid SSN. Currently, the existing temporary TAMU SSNs are being intercepted and changed to the appropriate TRS temporary SSN. As long as there is no change to a valid SSN for these employees, this situation can continue until these employees retire. New foreign national employees will require this conversion process be set up for them per the instruction in the Member Data (MD) section of this document outlined previously.

Should you discover an employee has made deposits under an incorrect SSN or a foreign national employed under a temporary SSN receive a valid SSN, the agency or institution will have to notify the B/P/P Operations Center of the change. The B/P/P Operations Center will have to manually update the member's member data (**MD**) file to include a **25** record which move the information in TRAQS from one SSN to another. The agency or institution must also supply a copy of the employees SS card to TRS.

TRAQS TRS File Depot

Data from both MONTRS01 and MONTRS02 are loaded to the TRAQS TRS Reporting File Depot. This site serves as a common repository for all of the payroll offices (TRS reporting entities or districts) for the information once it is completed and ready for transmission to the Teacher Retirement System (TRS). Payroll office personnel will go to the web site and retrieve the data files they need to submit to TRS via TRAQS.

The BPP TRAQS web site is a secured site and a logon is required. The Logon ID for each payroll office is given in the table below. The password will have to be changed after the initial logon. If the personnel in the payroll office forget the password used in this process; the password will be e-mailed to the e-mail address identified as the responsible party at each payroll office.

The following are user-ids and e-mail addresses for the payroll offices:

WRK STN	USERID	TRS Dstr	E-MAIL
A	TAES	0028	jzhao@ag.tamu.edu
C	TTI	0034	r-shirley1@tamu..edu
D	TEEX	0033	r-shirley1@tamu.edu
E	TEES	0031	r-shirley1@tamu.edu
F	TFS	0030	wlf@tfs.tamu.edu
G	TAMG	0032	kaa@tamu.edu
H	HSC	2204	payroll@tamhsc.edu
I	TACC	1866	melissa.wright@tamucc.edu
J	TAMK	0020	kaclg00@tamuk.edu
K	TAMU-CT	2301	mhearne@ct.tamus.edu
L	TAMI	1871	nora@tamiu.edu
M	TAMU	0001	kaa@tamu.edu
N	TAMT	2024	jerry.henry@tamut.edu
O	TAMU-SA	2302	lloyd.butler@tamusa.tamus.edu
P	PVAM	0007	egwade@pvamu.edu
R	TAMC	0003	pat_kroppe@tamu-commerce.edu
S	SAGO	2021	kaa@tamu.edu
T	TARL	0004	goodman@tarleton.edu
V	TVMDL	2296	plbuckhaults@ag.tamu.edu
W	WTAM	0026	lstevenson@mail.wtam.edu
X	TCE	0029	plbuckhaults@ag.tamu.edu

All of the files currently residing on the TRAQS TRS Reporting File Depot will be displayed to the user when they log onto the web site. The user will then need to identify the particular file he wishes to download to transmit to TRS.

The BPP Operations Center will also have access to the files on this web site. They serve as the site administrators. All files located on the web site are available to the BPP Administrator. Periodically, files will be deleted by the BPP Production Services staff to maintain about 3-6 months of files on the web site. The number of files may be adjusted over time as experience is gained using the system.

Teacher Retirement System TRAQS Web Site

A separate user-id and password is required by TRS to access TRAQS for each person in each agency and institution in the A&M System. These user-ids and passwords are assigned by the Teacher Retirement System. The format for the user-id is xxxxnnnn, where xxxx is the TRS district number for your agency or institution and nnnn is a sequential number, starting with 0001. Various levels of access and/or processing options are associated with each user-id. Some employees may only be able to view reports transmitted to TRS, others can transmit files via TRAQS, while other employees are 'signers' once data has been transmitted. Contact TRS for additional information and assistance with these user-ids.

Personnel in the BPP Operations Center do NOT have access to the TRS TRAQS web site. Therefore, while we might generally know of the requirements of the site from training and testing, we have not used the site in a production mode. However, we will offer as much support as possible to the personnel in the payroll offices.