CHAPTER 7   USE OF FORMS/CPD DATA AS A MANAGEMENT TOOL

7-1.   Preface. In order for FORMS/CPD to be utilized to its maximum potential, the Data Base must contribute to the administration of CPD's Block Grant and Action Grant programs in each Regional and Area Office. The Data Base today processes virtually every name, date, number and amount which affects these programs. However, a common misconception of Field Office staff is that the data entered into FORMS/CPD satisfies only the informational requirements of Headquarters CPD Management and the only responsibility of Field Office CPD staff is to insure that the data entered is complete, accurate and timely. This statement actually describes only one half of Headquarters view of the potential for FORMS/CPD. Field Offices must develop the capability of utilizing FORMS/CPD data to address problems and potential problems concerning the administration of their own Block Grant programs. Each Field Office must develop the capability of transforming data into useful information for decision-making. This Chapter suggests a step by step routine for becoming familiar with the types of information which can be provided by FORMS/CPD and how to apply this information to the administration of the Block Grant program. Essentially his routine breaks down into:

a.   Understanding the Data Base structure
b.   Understanding the types of analysis reporting which can be provided by the Data Base
c.   Requesting computer support from the Regional MID staff or Headquarters Data Base Coordinator.

7-2.   Understanding the Data Base Structure. Each Regional System Coordinator and Data Base Manager must comprehend the types of data available on the Data Base and the relationship, if any, between the various (repeating) groups of data. The FORMS/CPD Data Base structure consists of groups of data elements tied together (connected) by a logical relationship. "Groups of data elements are usually referred to as repeating groups. There are currently 17 repeating groups of data which comprise the structure of FORMS/ CPD. Each repeating group contains data element values which are directed toward a specific type or theme of information i.e., against unit of government, audit finding, etc. Refer to Figure 7-1 on the following page. In the diagram each Repeating Group (of similar data) is represented by a circle. The straight lines indicate the presence of a relationship between any two repeating groups. If there is no connector, there is no relationship. Note also how the diagram of FORMS/CPD resembles a "tree" structure. The highest level repeating group is the Regional Office. Remember that FORMS/CPD is actually comprised of ten Regional Data Bases. Below the Region Repeating Group is Area Office. Below the Area

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FORMS/CPD

DATA BASE STRUCTURE
(SYSTEM 2000)

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Office is the Unit of Government. The repeating Groups are
obviously set up as "building blocks" of data from the highest
level (Region) to the lowest level (monitoring conclusion).
Note also situation where there is no logical relationship.
For example, there is no connecting line between Audit Findings
(RG 516) and Grant Data (RG 508). This is an indication that
CPD audits Units of Government and monitors grants. Figure 7-1
depicts the logical structure of the Data Base. Each FORMS/CPD
Repeating Group consists of a separate set of data elements for
each occurrence of the repeating group. (Refer to paragraph 5-2
for a complete list of data elements by repeating group). For
example, grant data (RG 508), consists of Date Application

Approved, Grant Amount Awarded, Date Grant Closed, etc. each occurrence of the grant Data Repeating Group. The Type of Governmental Unit (RG 502) could have any number of Grant Data occurrences.

7-3.   Types of Analysis. The second step for each Regional Systems Coordinator and Data Base Manager to understand for effective utilization of FORMS/CPD data concerns the types of analysis or reports to which the Data Base lends itself. There are basically two types of reporting which can aid in the administration of the Block Grant program. Essentially the RSC/DBM may 1) require a standard report of each grantee, grant, CPD representative, etc which meets specified criteria or 2) require an exception report of grantee, grant, CPD Representative, etc. which does not meet a specified criteria.

   a. Standard Reports. The former report type would be used when a detailed list of accomplishments (grants approved, Units of Government monitored, etc.) is required for a specific purpose. Generally this type report is based upon values present in the Data Base. The report is often referred to as an "ad hoc query" because the information provided generally has a predetermined purpose, i.e. to plan or allocate workload among staff. The following list has a few examples of reports which can be produced from FORMS/CPD that provides information for a predefined purpose:

   (1)   A report listing each Entitlement Unit of Government closed during the current fiscal year to insure proper credit in HUD Operating Plan.

   (2)   A report listing the name and address of each Unit of Government which submitted an application for CDBG funds during the past seven years for the purpose of disseminating information regarding new HUD programs.

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   (3)   A report listing each active CDBG Unit of Government including the respective CPD representative (an optional data element) to evaluate the current workload distribution within the Regional/Area Office.

   (4)   A list of each grant awarded to a county government to respond to a request from a local lobbying organization.

   (5)   A list of each monitoring finding (including Unit of Government name, grant number, etc.) in the area of PROGRESS (PRP) for Entitlement Cities in response to a GAO investigation.

b. Exception Reports. The complement to the standard report described above is the exception report which is primarily based on data element values not present on the Data Base. Generally, the absence of these data element values indicates a problem or a potential problem in the administering of the Block Grant program. The following list has a few examples of exception reports which can be generated from FORMS/CPD.

(1) A list of Small Cities program applications which have been received but neither approved nor disapproved.

(2) A list of active CDBG grantees which have not been audited during the previous two years.

(3) A list of monitoring findings with delinquent responses from the grantee.

(4) A list of Units of Government to whom a monitoring visit has been made, no monitoring letter has been written and 25 days has elapsed since the visit.

7-4. Requesting computer support. The staff of the Management Information Division in each Regional/Area Office is available to provide the information to all offices involved with the management or administration of CPD and related program activities. Each request for computer support must provide a complete description of your data requirements. The following is a suggested checklist for a report request to be submitted to the MID Office.

Purpose and justification for the report.

Data element repeating group, "C" number, and name.

Criteria for producing report, i.e., data element values which must be present/absent.

Sequence of report, i.e,, by grantee name, date of monitoring visit etc.

Description of any special processing, i.e., calculation of percents, totals, etc.

Often a need arises for information regarding the Block Grant program which is currently not available on FORMS/CPD. In this situation, a written request for additional data element capability should be submitted to the Headquarters coordinator, (Data Systems and Statistics Division). An analysis of the request will be conducted to determine what significance, if

any, the additional data would have for the other Regions and
Headquarters CPD Program Management. If the analysis indicates
that Headquarters CPD Program Management would utilize the data,
the requested data elements would be added to Headquarters
mandated portion of FORMS/CPD at the new scheduled implementation.
If the requested data elements would have significance
for only Field Office CPD staff and not Headquarters,
they are added to the Data Base as Field Office optional data
elements. Note that Headquarters provides the same data element
support for optional data elements as Headquarters mandated,
except for the official definition and production reports.
Data entry sheets, input terminal screens, and automated
editing will be provided. Requests for data elements which
are significant for only the requesting Field Office will be
added to the Data Base on a case by case basis, depending
greatly on FORMS/CPD's allocated resources, i.e., staff
and budgeted dollars. Each Regional Data Base has the same
structure, including the optional data elements. The
decision to utilize optional data elements is generally
made by the respective Regional CPD Program Management.

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