Update: Defense Security Assistance Management System (DSAMS)

By

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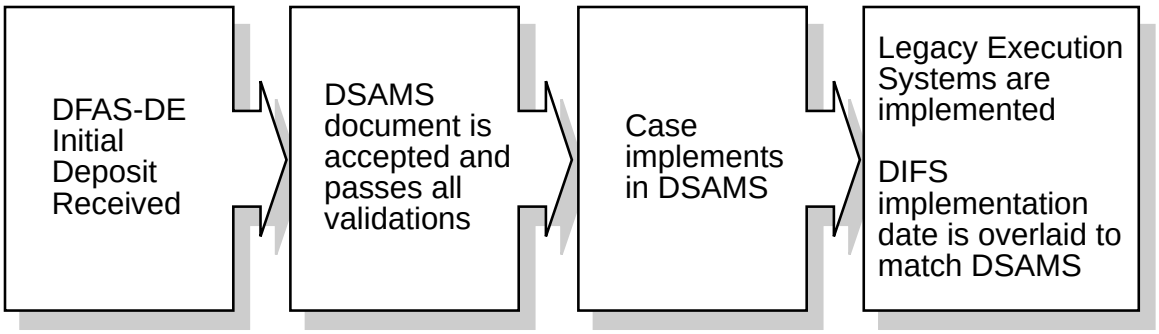
The feature article of the summer *DISAM Journal* of 1998 discussed the background and development methodology of the Defense Security Assistance Management System (DSAMS). This article describes some of the new features of DSAMS and also provides an update on changes to case processing that were delivered when Release 6 was deployed to all DSAMS sites in August 2000.



DSAMS was first used by some Navy activities to write foreign military sales (FMS) cases in February of 1998. This first module was called the Case Development Module or CDM and is represented by DSAMS Releases 1 through 5. Army went live with DSAMS CDM in December of 1998, and Air Force began use of DSAMS CDM in July of 1999. The initial use of DSAMS presented a number of challenges for both users and developers. Case data had to be converted from the old systems, some business processes (and jobs) had to be redesigned, software installation problems had to be resolved, and the initial group of users had to be trained. Since the implementing agencies moved into DSAMS over a period of time, there were adequate resources to address and solve problems. Release 6 deployment, however, was the first deployment of significant new functionality to all users at one time. Release 6 represents the Case Implementation Module or CIM, although it also builds considerably on CDM.

The DSAMS team tested and deployed DSAMS Release 6 (R6) in August 2000 following a year of intensive programming, testing, program fixes, and training. Implementing agencies, the development team at the Defense Security Assistance Development Center in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, the DSAMS Program Management Office, and DSAMS contract personnel all contributed to a successful launch of Release 6. Because of the nature of Release 6 functionality, the Defense Finance Accounting Service (DFAS) also became actively engaged in Release 6 deployment. Defense Finance Accounting Service-Denver users received training and the software is now part of the DFAS software environment.

Release 6 - New Functionality

Leases

New DSAMS functionality deployed with Release 6 includes the ability to write leases. Leases can now be developed, tracked, and printed using DSAMS. A link can be made between

the lease and the related support FMS cases. Leases may be authorized under the AECA, Chapter 6, when it is determined that there are compelling foreign policy and national security reasons for providing such articles on a lease, rather than a sale, basis and that the articles are not currently needed for public use.

Processing of leases in DSAMS is similar to the processing of an FMS case in terms of recording milestones and changing document status. The lease detail window is similar to the case detail window in structure, and is linked to a DSAMS customer request. Lease lines are alpha characters, and all line information including pricing is entered into a single lease line window.

Both leases and lease amendments can now be produced in DSAMS, in addition to:

- Lease Certificate of Determination - The certificate of determination is included with the draft lease when it is forwarded for Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) coordination and countersignature. The certificate provides the detailed rationale for leasing the proposed items versus selling them.

- Lease Certificate of Delivery - The certificate of delivery is often included with leased items when they are delivered to a foreign customer. The certificate lists the name and quantity of items being delivered for the specified lease.

- Summary Lease Report - This report lists the number of all leases by country.

- Summary of Leases Expiring in (..) Days - This report lists all leases (by country) that are scheduled to expire in the number of days specified by the user. Only implemented leases are included in this report. Any leases where the material has been returned or the lease renewed will not be included.

- Summary of Expired Leases - This report will list the summary of all leases (by country) that have expired as of the date entered by the user.

- DSCA Quarterly Lease Report - This report lists significant information about all open leases (including expired leases that have not been closed). This report is submitted to the DSCA Operations Directorate Management Division (with a copy to DFAS-DE) no later than thirty days after the end of each quarter. The leases printed will be selected based on a date entered by the user upon initiating report generation from the menu. Only leases that have not been closed out by this date will be printed.

Before R6 deployment, these documents (lease, lease amendments and required lease reports) were prepared “off line” and tracked manually or with manual input to a spreadsheet. Each implementing agency with open leases indicated an intent to “retrofit” open leases to DSAMS to consolidate and simplify the tracking and reporting of leases.

Letters of Intent

DSAMS now provides for the development and tracking of Letters of Intent (LOI). Letters of Intent are used on an exceptional basis to authorize expenditures for a relatively small portion of a major Letter of Acceptance (LOA), which has not yet been implemented. Examples of use

might include early purchase of castings or start of training to allow a program to proceed on schedule.

The process of developing an LOI within DSAMS is similar to the process of developing and processing a normal case. The LOI will be linked with the corresponding LOA so that validations can occur between the two.

DSAMS can be used to create both the LOI and an amendment to the LOI. There are two versions of the LOI:

- If the LOI is offered to the customer prior to the LOA offer, the first page will indicate when the LOA is expected to be offered to the customer.

- If the LOI is offered to the customer after the LOA is offered to the customer, the first page will indicate when the LOA was offered to the customer.

Implementation

With Release 6 deployment, most implementation of documents is now performed in DSAMS using an overnight batch process, although the manual change case status process is still available.

Upon determining that financial requirements have been met, DFAS-DE sends a CG transaction to DSAMS. DSAMS posts a milestone (FINIMP) indicating that the initial deposit requirements for the case have been met and the case is subsequently implemented based on a set of implementation requirements, which vary by implementing agency.

Validations to ensure the case is ready for implementation are performed prior to implementing a case via the change case status window (manual method) or through the nightly batch processing. If the validations fail during the nightly batch processing, the case will not be automatically implemented.

Functionality has also been added to DSAMS to permit DSCA to direct emergency implementation, use one document to fund another (concurrent document funding), and to limit obligation authority.

Management Flags

Management flag is a new DSAMS feature designed to assist designated users in monitoring case progression or case events in DSAMS. Management flags are triggered based on the recording of certain milestones. Each night, a batch program is run to look for cases in certain conditions, e.g., the presence or absence of a specified milestone. A DSAMS-generated management flag is created to notify pre-defined sets of users about case conditions that may require intervention/action.

A generic e-mail notification is then sent to the appropriate recipient indicating they have management flags. When user logs into DSAMS, they are presented with a list of the specific cases that have management flags. One example of the use of the management flag functionality is to notify case managers when a case fails the batch implementation process.

Waivers and Suspensions

New waiver functionality has been added to DSAMS that provides the ability to waive initial deposit requirements of a document at country or case level. Waiver functionality is also used to approve no-cost leases at the case level and to approve concurrent document funding at country or case level.

DSAMS now provides the ability to hold or suspend a case. When a hold or suspend milestone is recorded, the case manger (or designated user) will be notified that the case is in hold status via a notification and a message on the case detail document tab.

When a case hold milestone has been posted, the user may continue with normal processes but may not change the status of that case version. If a suspend milestone is recorded, the system will prevent edit capability on all windows related to that case version. Remove hold and remove suspend milestones must be recorded by an authorized user to release the hold or suspend on the case.

Enhancements

Several technical changes were made in Release 6 of DSAMS to improve processing times and speed up data retrieval. There also have been numerous functional changes that previous users of DSAMS will find helpful. My favorites are the automatic generation of default (required) milestones and the linkage of certain milestones to the change case status window. The expired note feature will be popular with case writers, as it greatly simplifies replacing an expired standard note. Logisticians will appreciate the ability to record separate freight/forwarder or mark For codes at the line or subline level, not to mention having ready access to the MAPAD addresses. Financial types will like the year-end roll over and revision (Navy) functionality. Who could not fall in love with the ability to re-calculate all line pricing from the line list window with a single click? Then again, two new reverse pricing options give pricing personnel more flexibility than ever before. And if the improved assign task functionality doesn't get your RAM heated up, then the 100+ management reports will simply make your day! It is great to see so many of the recommendations made by DSAMS users come to life in DSAMS Release 6.

More Information

More information about the DSAMS project is available on the DSAMS project web site: http://dsams.dsca.osd.mil. Current and back issues of the *DSAMS Dialogue*, a monthly project update, are posted on this page. The DSAMS dialogue provides timely and meaningful information for DSAMS users at all organizational levels.

About the Author

Nels E. Berdahl, has been employed by Information Spectrum, Inc. since December 1998 to provide DSAMS training and field support under contract to the DSAMS PMO. He is a former DISAM professor and has been involved in the DSAMS project since the fall of 1996. You can contact Nels at DSN 430-9041 or (717) 604-9041 or by e-mail to nels.berdahl@dsadc.dsca.osd.mil