



25<sup>th</sup> September 2020

MA Circular 05/2020

To: Chief Coordinators  
Intermediate Bodies  
Line Ministries  
Project Leaders

Cc: Audit Authority

**Re: SFD User Accounts Management**

Further to the release of the SFD Standard Operation Procedures 5 on *User Rights*<sup>1</sup> in April 2019, the Managing Authority is launching a pilot project to empower stakeholders by enhancing the user rights management of their respective data group. The pilot project will cover data group reconciliation which used to be done through emails.

Following feedback from auditors and stakeholders on such practice, the process will be overhauled to allow the data group reconciliation to be completed electronically through the information system. Within this context, the SFD Standard Operation Procedures 12 on *User Accounts Reconciliation* is being published today and is available on the EU Funds website<sup>2</sup>.

The first round of electronic reconciliations will be launched as follows:

- a) Managing Authority, Intermediate Bodies, Audit Authority, Certifying Authority, EU Payments Unit, and Line Ministries – October 2020
- b) Beneficiaries – November 2020

Following the initial pilot period, reconciliations will be conducted at regular intervals by the Managing Authority as indicated in the Standard Operation Procedures. In this regard, those data groups which have access to many operations, to other databases connected to the SFD, or which have many users linked to such data group, may be asked to have more than one reconciliation exercise carried out within a particular year.

The data group owner will also be able to use this facility to revoke access to users who no longer require access to the data, e.g. upon re-assignment to new duties.

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<sup>1</sup> Document available at  
<https://eufunds.gov.mt/en/Operational%20Programmes/Structural%20Funds%20Database/Pages/SFD-Standard-Operating-Procedures.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*

The Managing Authority reserves the right to revoke system access to data groups which are not reconciled by the respective organisation in a timely manner.

Finally, it is important to note that where the data group owner has not yet applied for system access, no further requests for user rights will be processed until the respective owner is granted a user account.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Vassallo', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jonathan Vassallo  
Head - Managing Authority

Annex

1. SFD Standard Operation Procedures 12 on *User Accounts Reconciliation*

SFD Standard Operation Procedures 12 on *User Accounts Reconciliation*

**Note: Always check the EU Funds website for any update of the SOP**

<https://eufunds.gov.mt/en/Operational%20Programmes/Structural%20Funds%20Database/Pages/SFD-Standard-Operating-Procedures.aspx>





Document <b>[PPCDSFDSOP012]</b>	Title: <b>SFD User Accounts Reconciliation</b>	
Revision <b>1.0</b>	Prepared By: <b>Mark Anthony Bezzina</b>	Date Prepared: <b>04.08.2020</b>
Effective Date: <b>25.09.2020</b>	Approved By: <b>Jonathan Vassallo</b>	Date Approved: <b>25.09.2020</b>

**Purpose:** The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to all stakeholders on the procedures related to user accounts reconciliation, and should be read in conjunction with SFD Standard Operation Procedures No 5 – SFD User Rights (Grant/Modify/Revoke/Review). In line with recommendations received from the auditors, the processes related to user accounts reconciliation will now be done electronically through the system.

**Scope:** This document explains the process of granting rights to data group owners to conduct reconciliation, and the process by which the owners are to perform the reconciliation. The SOP should be read in conjunction with MA Circular 05/2020 – *SFD User Rights Management*<sup>1</sup>.

**Background:** The Structural Funds Database 2014-2020 (SFD 1420) is the backbone information system used to manage Cohesion Policy in Malta. The system is accessed by users from different stakeholders.

**Responsibilities:**

- Head Managing Authority
- Chief Coordinators
- Heads of key stakeholder organisations
- Project Leaders
- Administrators of the information system<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Available at

<https://eufunds.gov.mt/en/Operational%20Programmes/Useful%20Links%20and%20Downloads/Pages/Reference%20Documents.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> Currently the Evaluation and Communications Unit within the Managing Authority



**Procedure:****1.0 ASSIGNMENT OF DATAGROUP OWNER**

- 1.1 Each system data group will be assigned **one owner**. The data group owner is responsible to ensure that a user who has access to the data is kept updated regularly in line with data protection and security obligations.
- 1.2 Information on data group owners may be provided to the auditors and the European Commission.
- 1.3 Data group owners are assigned as follows:
  - a) Managing Authority – Director General or Chief Coordinators;
  - b) Intermediate Body – Head of Intermediate Body;
  - c) Audit Authority – Director General;
  - d) Certifying Authority – Chief Coordinator;
  - e) EU Payments Unit – Chief Coordinator;
  - f) Line Ministry – Director Programme Implementation (or equivalent role within the Ministry); and
  - g) Beneficiary – Project Leader<sup>3</sup>.

**2.0 FREQUENCY OF THE RECONCILIATION EXERCISE**

- 2.1 The guidance of *SOP 5 – SFD User Rights (Grant/Modify/Revoke/Review)*, section 4.0 *Review of Accounts*, apply to the reconciliation exercise.
- 2.2 At least once a year, the Managing Authority will conduct a reconciliation exercise of all user accounts.
- 2.3 Data groups which have access to many operations, or have access to other databases through the SFD, or have many users linked to the data group, may have more than one reconciliation exercise carried out within a particular year<sup>4</sup>.
- 2.4 The Managing Authority reserves the right to revoke system access to data groups which are not reconciled by the respective organisation.

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<sup>3</sup> Where a Project Leader provides a general Delegation of Authority to other users, such Delegation of Authority is not applicable to the reconciliation exercise. In case a Project Leader would like to delegate this function, a specific Delegation of Authority would be required.

<sup>4</sup> This includes all data groups of the Managing Authority, Intermediate Bodies, Audit Authority, Certifying Authority, EU Payments Unit and Line Ministries.



### 3.0 RECONCILIATION PROCEDURE

- 3.1 At the start of the reconciliation procedure, the data group owner will receive a system generated **email** indicating the active users linked to the data group (refer to Figure 1 below).
- 3.2 The email will contain information on how to login the system and how to proceed to the Users Reconciliation page under the Administration menu.

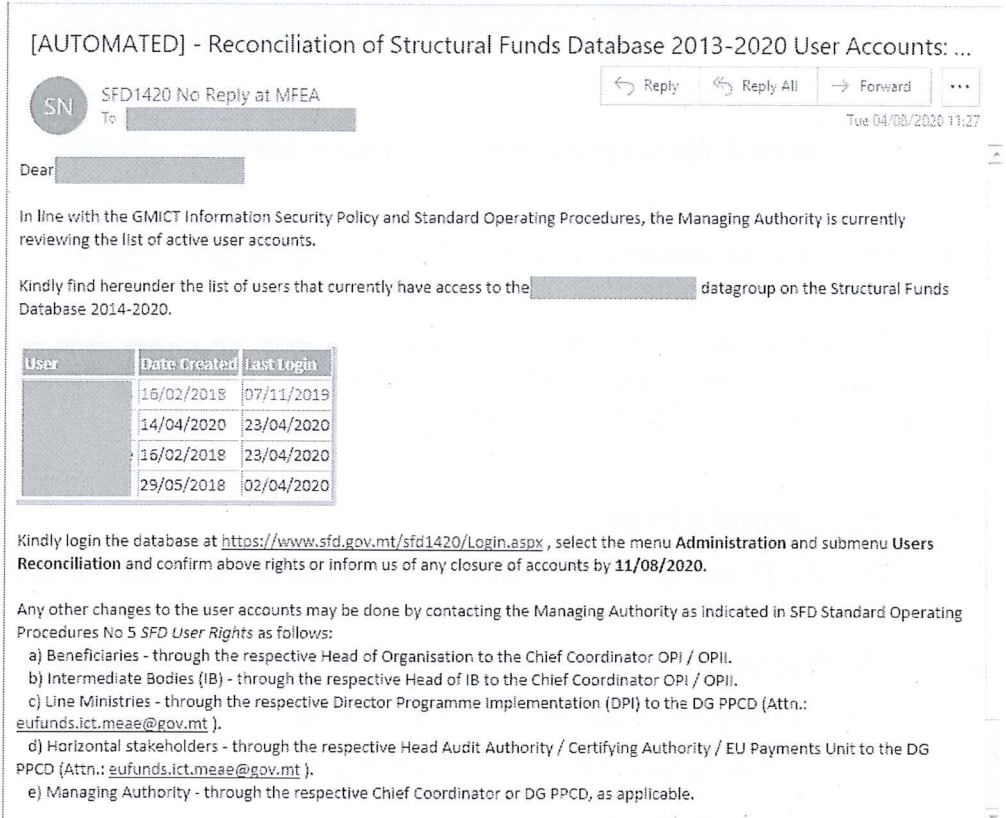


Figure 1: Example of an email that might be received by the data group owner

- 3.3 During reconciliation, the person responsible for each data group will either:
  - a) confirm that users linked to the data group still require access to the system, or
  - b) revoke accesses that are no longer required.

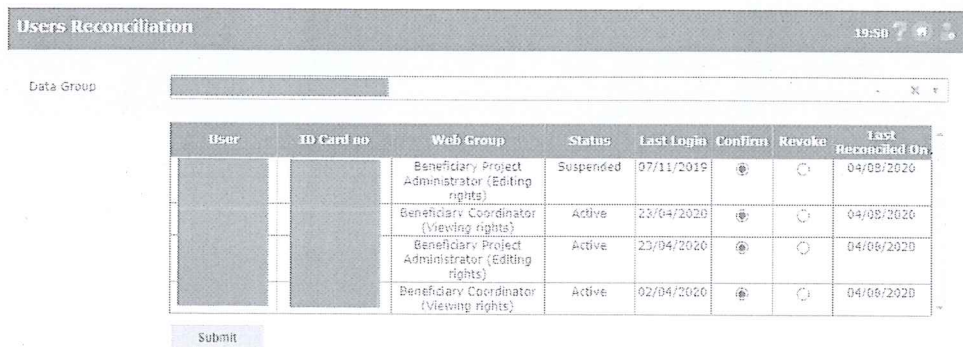


Figure 2: User reconciliation page



- 3.4 Suspended accounts, i.e. accounts which are Active but the user has not logged into for a long time, will be shown in red, thereby assisting the data group owner in deciding whether access is still required.
- 3.5 Once the data group owner presses the “**Submit**” button, the reconciliation exercise is automatically recorded. A message that the reconciliation has been saved is displayed to the user, and the table updated accordingly.



Figure 3: Message that the reconciliation has been submitted

- 3.6 Data group owners may use this facility at any time to check and update user rights.
- 3.7 Any other changes to the user accounts, e.g. changes in Web Groups, may be done as indicated in SFD Standard Operating Procedures No 5, section 2 – Modification of User Accounts.

#### 4.0 IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 This SOP will come into effect immediately, with the release of MA Circular 05/2020 – *SFD User Accounts Management*.
- 4.2 The first electronic reconciliations will be carried out as follows:
- a) Managing Authority – October 2020
  - b) Intermediate Body – October 2020
  - c) Audit Authority – October 2020
  - d) Certifying Authority – October 2020
  - e) EU Payments Unit – October 2020
  - f) Line Ministry – October 2020
  - g) Beneficiary – November 2020

#### Revision History:

Revision	Date	Description of changes	Requested By
1.0	25.09.2020	Circulated final version	DG PPCD