

MARS User Guide

MARS Overview

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Overview

Introduction to User's Guide

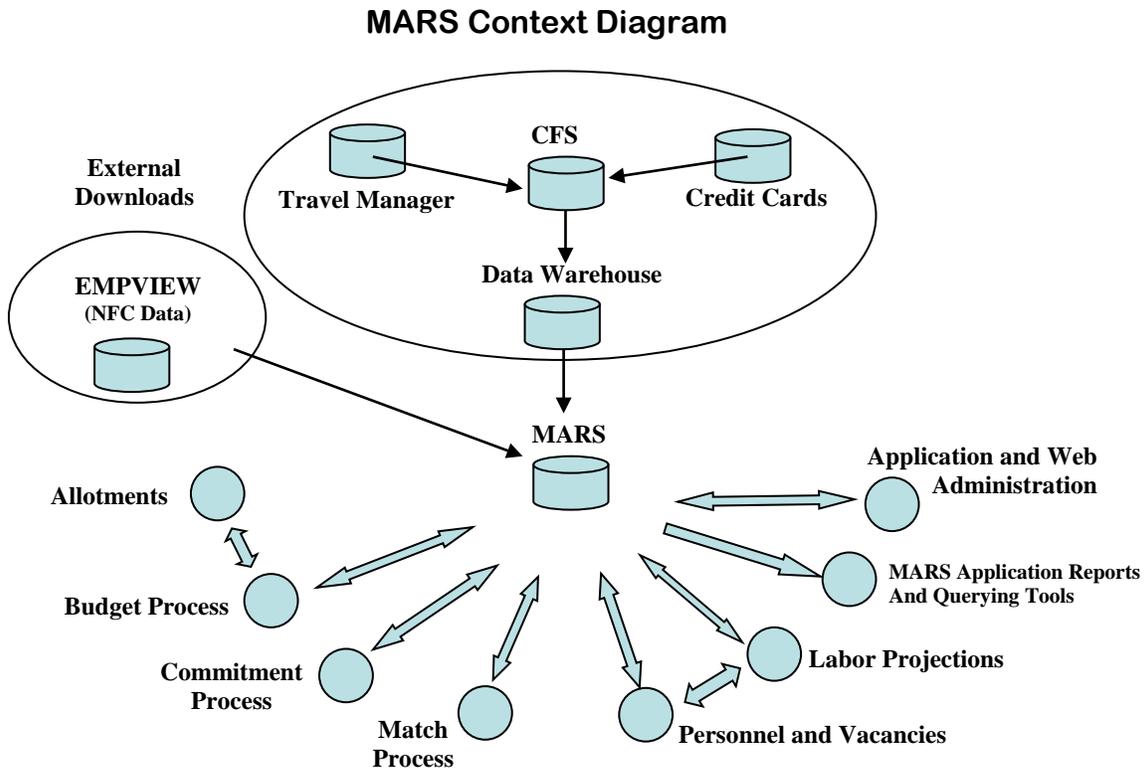
These guidelines are intended to be the primary reference for usage of the Management Analysis and Reporting System (MARS). MARS is a web-based financial management system and was created to serve all financial components of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

System Description

MARS is an automated system for collecting, storing, and retrieving information concerning the financial activities of the Financial Management Centers (FMC's) in NOAA. NOAA financial information is entered into the MARS system through various sources where it is processed and stored. Management and administrative personnel then retrieve this information in the form of reports for analysis.

Scope of the System

The figure below illustrates the context of the MARS system and provides the user with an understanding of the type of information processed.



The Commerce Business System (CBS) is the official NOAA accounting system of record. CBS provides the allotment and obligation data (all labor and non-labor transactions) to MARS. MARS is intended to supplement CBS to facilitate a timelier tracking and recording of Line Office allocations and expenditures. MARS users are both administrative personnel responsible for the accuracy of CBS labor and non-labor costs and managers concerned with the allocation and control of financial resources.

Allowance Advice / Funds Control Process

Allotments are downloaded daily from CBS and used for funds control. The funds control process is tightly coupled with the MARS spending plan process with respect to the validation of data. The allotment data is used to generate daily Allowance Advice reports as well as set parameters for spending plans (org., project, available funds, and quarterly allotments).

Budget Process

Detailed spending plans are based on the Initial Target and subsequent allowance advice adjustments throughout the fiscal year. The budgets are entered into MARS via the budget data entry form and are entered at the organization, project, task level, by month and object class. Each plan relates to a corresponding item from their Line Office Allowance Advice. These spending plans must reconcile with the funds control Allowance Advice.

Commitment Process

Commitments are funds that have been designated or promised for a specific purpose. Business rules dictate mandatory document/item types that require commitments. The individual FMCs can then decide which other types of documents and items to track as commitments in MARS. The information on transactions with these selected document and item types is then entered into MARS via the commitment entry screen using the document for reference. In some cases, the commitment is automatically generated by MARS. All commitments are verified for a valid organization, project, and task code.

Personnel Processing

The personnel process provides the MARS user with the capability to track current employees, be informed of personnel changes, and monitor vacancies. Also, the user can create labor projections from this personnel data. By doing this locally, users can customize the personnel data so that it will accurately reflect a true labor projection when created.

Labor Projection Processing

The labor projection process provides the capability to project the estimated labor costs for the year. For reports that use labor projection dollars, projected labor dollars are replaced with actual labor dollars for each new pay period downloaded from CBS. This process helps to provide a consistent annual labor status.

External Downloads / CBS

Downloading is the process of moving CBS data to the MARS server. When new CBS transaction data is available, these records are copied to the server and then are used to update the MARS database. The following tables are presently being downloaded and are either stored for historical purposes or used within the application:

NDW_AP_TRANS (Transaction records for all labor and non-labor)

NDW_LABOR_DETAIL (All detail labor transactions)

NDW_BOPS_SUMMARY (All detail budget allotments)

NDW_BOPS_DETAIL (All detail budget allotments)

ALLOT_DETAIL (CBS Allotments)

ALLOT SUMMARY (CBS Allotments)

NDW_FINCAT_SUMMARY (Summary of all labor and non-labor transactions),

NDW_RESERV_TRANS (All approved travel authorizations until 5/21/2017)

NDW_E2_AUTH_MARS_V (All approved travel authorizations starting 5/22/2017)

NMFS_EMPVIEW (Employee data, current roster)

Administration

The Administration section of MARS maintains the standard support tables as well as the capability to set up security access to individual users.

Match Process

The "Match Process" is an automated process that reconciles CBS data with MARS commitment data. This helps build traceability and validity into MARS commitment records when reconciling MARS with CBS. The MARS commitment data may be matched with CBS automatically or manually.

The Automatic Obligations/Match is a process that allows CBS transactions to be placed directly into the MARS commitment table when criteria for certain documents, document types, item types, org codes, project codes, and task codes are met. The match process is run on a daily basis, Monday through Friday, whenever transaction data is downloaded. If the Automatic Obligation/Match is executed and a transaction is not reconciled, records in the CBS transaction table are rejected and placed on the Match Error report. The user will have to then perform some analysis in order to identify the correct course of action for each transaction.

Web Reports

There are a suite of MARS reports available for all users located in the *Data Entry Module* and the *Reporting and Querying Tool*. For more information, please visit the following website.

<https://mars.rdc.noaa.gov>

Training

Training can be provided on an as needed basis. To request training please contact the MARS Manager or your local MARS Administrator.

Reference Manuals

These guidelines are not intended to replace existing NOAA financial manuals. For NOAA financial information and terminology please refer to the NOAA Finance Handbook and the NOAA Budget Handbook.