Revised 12/7/2004

Contact Recording

Questions and Answers from Contact Recording Briefings with Employees in Accounts Management and Compliance

The following is in response to the Contact Recording employee briefings previously conducted by Accounts Management and Compliance. The unanswered questions from each of the sessions have been consolidated and listed below. NTEU Chapter 247 has had the opportunity to review these questions and answers and provided the following statement:

> "NTEU Chapter 247 appreciates efforts made by Accounts Management and Compliance management to provide answers to the many questions generated by the introduction of Contact Recording to the Austin Campus. We acknowledge the cooperation of management in consulting and working with the chapter to address employee concerns. Chapter 247 believes that these responses conform to the Letter of Understanding negotiated between the Agency and national NTEU, dated April 8, 2002. If further concerns arise due to the implementation of Contact Recording, Chapter 247 urges employees to bring those concerns to management or/and NTEU."

1. Q. What is the actual script that is played for the taxpayer? Is the announcement repeated?

   A. Customers will hear "Your call may be monitored or recorded for quality purposes". This message is not repeated.

2. Q. Is the announcement in both English and Spanish?

   A. Yes, the caller will hear the announcement in English when the call is initially answered. Once the customer selects the option to speak to someone in Spanish, the announcement is played in Spanish.

3. Q. Statement # 17 of the LOU dated 4/08/02 – Was the legal opinion ever received and was National NTEU provided with this?

   A. Yes, the legal opinion was received and shared with National NTEU.

4. Q. Is the announcement "Your call may be monitored or recorded for quality purposes." on the CI line or the other toll free lines?

   A. Yes, it is on all toll free lines.

5. Q. Statement# 5 - Where are the calls that are not selected for review stored?

   A. They are "stored" on the Contact Recording server.

6. Q. Are the calls not selected for review accessible to the manager or employee upon request?

   Q. If the need arose concerning listening to a non-selected call due to a positive comment, legal issue, etc., can it be retrieved for review with the manager?

   A. This answer is applicable to both questions. Managers will be able to access calls not selected if they know the specific start time and date the call was received and the CSR who took the call. For additional information please see paragraph #5 of the April 8, 2002 LOU.

7. Q. Who has access to calls captured through Contact Recording?

   A. Managers, Reviewers, Leads, designated Systems Analysts and designated P&A staff.

8. Q. During the recording of the call, will there be a continuous "beep" on the line?

   A. No.

9. Q. If the TP asks that the call not be recorded, how will he/she know that the recording was terminated other than CSR oral confirmation?

   A. The only confirmation a caller will receive is the statement from the CSR that the recording has been stopped. If a caller is uncomfortable with this information alone, he/she may either request to speak with a manager or terminate the call, and submit the question in writing.

10. Q. If a CSR has 4 calls in the review queue for an employee, what measures are being taken to ensure managers do not prescreen the calls and select only the "defective" ones? There is concern that managers will be able to pick only the calls with defects. If calls selected show total length of time, wouldn't the manager choose the shortest call to review?

    Q. Is there a fairness issue if some calls in the Manager's inbox have the screen capture while others do not?

    Q. Can a Manager pick and choose calls to select for review? Will managers ever opt to listen to the long, complicated calls? Will they select a 30 minute call if a 5 minute call is available?

    A. This answer applies to all three questions above since they all concern manager's selection of calls. If a CSR is concerned with the manager's selection of calls evaluated, they may raise this issue with their Department Manager or NTEU representative.

11. Q. Will the call be hand-written by the manager on the Call Detail Sheet while listening to the call?

    A. Managers will capture enough detail to describe the call as well as the CSRs performance. Since the employee will be able to listen to the call, they will be able to discuss the assigned rating with the Manager. If the manager and employee do not reach an agreement on the assigned rating, the employee will be able to write a rebuttal.

12. Q. If the manager writes out the call, do they write the entire call verbatim?

    A. Managers are not expected to write out the entire call verbatim.

13. Q. What happens when a suicide/threatening call is received during the call? Since the call is recorded, does the CSR have to push the "emergency" button?

    A. Yes, CSRs must press the emergency button when this type of call is received. It is very important that the current procedures for handling a suicide or threatening call be followed. When the emergency button is pressed, the Systems Office is notified that a sensitive situation is occurring. The Systems Office will contact management to provide assistance to the CSR.

14. Q. What are the procedures if the taxpayer requests to record the call?

    A. The procedures can be found in IRM 21.1.11(8) and 21.1.3.17.2. The taxpayer may record the conversation. After the call is completed, the CSR must provide the time and date of the call to their manager. These calls are retained indefinitely.

UPDATE 12/8/04: IRM 21.1.11 has changed and the above response is no longer correct.

The revised procedures can be found in IRM 21.1.11(9). The taxpayer may <u>not</u> record the conversation but may request a copy of the recorded call under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Refer to the IRM for additional procedures.

15. Q. What are the procedures if the taxpayer conferences in a third party? Is there any requirement to inform the third party that the call is being recorded?

    A. Disclosure requirements remain the same. It is the taxpayer's responsibility to notify the third party.

16. Q. What if the taxpayer requests a script of the recorded call and/or voice copy of call? Can the taxpayer request a copy of the call to check for a discrepancy? Does Contact Recording generate a transcript?

    A. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) the taxpayer has a right to secure a copy of the recording. The Disclosure Office processes all FOIA requests. The taxpayer would need to provide enough information so the call could be located. If the recording is locatable and available, we would provide a copy of the recording. A written transcript (voice converted to text) is not a function of the system.

17. Q. Why are we instructed not to confirm with the taxpayer at the beginning of the call if they want to be recorded?

    A. The recording of calls for review is the current customer service industry standard and our customers have been properly advised prior to the CSR receiving the call.

18. Q. Will all evaluated calls contain "screen capture"?

    A. No. Only a percentage of calls will contain "screen capture".

19. Q. Will there also be the need for "live" monitoring or selection of calls for review that are not in the inbox?

    A. Contact Recording is an excellent tool for conducting effective reviews. The functionality of the Aspect phone system for monitoring live calls has not changed. There may be instances when live calls are needed. Examples of these instances include but are not limited to, return from extended leave and new hires.

20. Q. How long can the call be held for review past the 45 days in the event of a dispute and/or disciplinary action?

    A. Calls can be retained as long as necessary in accordance with the maintenance and retention of records.

21. Q. Can a CSR request their calls not be recorded?

    A. The use of Contact Recording has been approved at the national level by both IRS and NTEU and CSRs do not have the option to make this request.

22. Q. How will a CSR know if the call was selected from the inbox or some other method?

    A. The manager will be playing the call for the CSR from contact recording software and the EQ review form will indicate a "Y" in the Contact Recorded field. If it was a live call, the manager will have a completed call detail sheet and the EQ review form will indicate "N" in the Contact Recorded field.

23. Q. Describe the information that will be available through the "Screen Capture".

    A. Each screen and active window/desktop that an employee accesses will be captured and synchronized with the voice recording. The reviewer will be able to follow the research path and actions taken by the CSR used to respond to the call.

24. Q. When will CQRS be utilizing contact recording, specifically the screen capture function?

    A. CQRS will utilize contact recording when it has been rolled out nation-wide.

25. Q. How will a reviewer or manager know if they are selecting a call that was reviewed by CQRS?

    A. Until CQRS moves to using contact recording there will be no identification on the recorded call that CQRS has reviewed it. Once CQRS moves to contact recording, it is our understanding that each call reviewed by CQRS should have the DCI number indicating it has been previously reviewed.

26. Q. Can the stop on demand icon be put on the taskbar?

    A. This would require it to be part of the COE image and that impacts employees other than those who would need it. Due to the projected infrequency of the need to use the icon, it does not warrant adding to the taskbar at this time. It can be placed on the Microsoft office tool bar/short cut bar if needed.

27. Q. When the review process identifies incorrect information was given to the taxpayer, can the CSR call the customer to correct the erroneous information?

    A. This will be dependent on the issue and taxpayer impact. Managers will use their discretion regarding calls to customers to correct erroneous information and also determine who will return the call, the CSR, Lead or Manager.

28. Q. Have they had any experience with bilingual calls? Will it help improve bilingual quality?

    A. With Contact Recording, the projection is that we should see an improvement in quality in all calls including bilingual.

29. Q. Can the CSR be heard while hold?

    A. Yes, however the taxpayer can not be heard.

30. Q. Can the CSR be heard when the mic is turned off or the headset is unplugged?

    A. No, however the taxpayer can be heard.

31. Q. Did quality statistics at other sites go up or down after start of contact recording?

    A. Since CQRS has not implemented contact recording, there is no quality data for this comparison.

32. Q. Is there a time limit to how much time a CSR can spend listening to the call?

    A. The CSR and manager will spend a reasonable amount of time reviewing calls used for evaluative purposes. The provisions of Article 12 of the National Agreement regarding evaluative recordation have not changed.

33. Q. If, during the middle or end of a call a customer asks us to stop recording, will the conversation up to that point be recorded by the system, or is the conversation up to that point deleted?

    A. The conversation is recorded up to the point the stop-on-demand button is engaged.

34. Q. Will each segment of a transfer be recorded; which manager can review it; can the transfers be seen?

    A. Once Contact Recording is nation-wide, each segment will be recorded. Managers can review only the segment of the call that is attributable to the employees in their team. Analysts at the National level will have the ability to review all segments of a call.

35. Q. Items 5 and 10 of the April 8, 2002 LOU state that calls to be reviewed will be randomly selected, but we have been told 100% of the calls will be recorded. Please explain how 100% is random and meets the guidelines of the LOU.

    Q. How is the random sample determined? What is the formula?

    A. The process for "random selection" is based on a predetermined algorithm applied to all incoming calls on the Aspect system. The application of the algorithm results in a random selection of calls sent to each manager's inbox. The system is structured to deliver calls evenly throughout the week. This process was agreed to at the national level.

36. Q. Will contact recording eliminate the "echo" heard by CSRs when someone is monitoring their call?

    A. We are not aware of an echo heard by a CSR during a live monitoring. We anticipate there will not be an echo heard while a call is recording. If CSRs hear an echo they should hit "bad line" on their Aspect teleset and/or report the issue to their manager.

37. Q. From April 8, 2002 LOU, #7, what is an entire call? How does it start recording and when does it stop? How would a manager know if the call was recorded in its entirety? If the employee never identifies themselves, how would this be determined as a call recorded in its entirety? If the employee places the taxpayer on hold, how is this identified? Would it only state how long was the taxpayer on hold or will it record the hold period?

    A. Contact recording captures the call from the point the call is directed to a CSR until wrap time is completed, or when the stop recording button is pushed. All audio is captured, so the reviewer will be able to determine if the CSR provided the required identification to the customer. There will be an indicator on the voice display showing hold time and the hold period is recorded.

38. Q. Do TIGTA and other areas have access to these calls? Can a manager refer a CSR to TIGTA based upon these recorded calls?

    A. TIGTA is not designated to access contact recording calls. Managers will follow normal procedures for referring issues and providing supporting information to TIGTA.

39. Q. If the minimum required to review per month is 2 calls, can the system be set up to only pull (2) calls, and or, what is needed by the manager?

    A. The system is used by more than one function and is set to accommodate the needs of all functions. It is designed so that managers will have calls in the queue when they begin review of an employee.

40. Q. Are the Customer Survey calls (X4444) recorded?

    A. When the initial transfer takes place within our site, the portion of the call where PAS states, "thank you for agreeing to take our survey, are you calling from a touch-tone phone?" is recorded along with the additional instructions given by PAS. However, when the customer goes to the automated system, which is a private contracting company, the call would no longer be recorded. The manager and employee would have access to only the portion of the call taking place with the CSR.

41. Q. What is the time between a "live call" and the ability to access a recorded call? For example, if the taxpayer requests to speak to a supervisor, will the supervisor be able to review the recorded call before talking to the taxpayer?

    A. A call segment can be reviewed as soon as the call is transferred to the manager. Calls are recorded up to the point the call is transferred. If the taxpayer is on hold with the CSR awaiting transfer to a supervisor, then the call is still being recorded. If the need exists to review the customer/CSR dialogue before responding to a customer, a return call to the customer may be appropriate.

42. Q. How will overall calls through the entire Aspect system be monitored by National Office? Will they track and review calls that were transferred from one function to another?

    A. Once contact recording is implemented nation-wide, the entire customer experience will be available for review. This will be utilized to identify ways to improve our customer service, i.e., phone scripting, backup applications given popularity of related calls.

43. Q. Is this through XP?

    A. Contact recording works with both Windows XP and Windows NT.