Sircon
A Vertafore Business

Sircon for Carriers
Sircon for Agencies/Brokerages
Production Release Notes
Version 5.6

The Version 5.6 release of Sircon for Carriers™ and Sircon for Agencies/Brokerages™ features several enhancements and bug fixes. It will be released to the production environment on Saturday, November 13, 2010.

Comments or suggestions? Contact us at feedback@sircon.com. We value your input.

Sircon Training

On November 9, 2010, Sircon presented a release training webinar. Visit the following website to view a recording of this webinar:
https://sircon.webex.com/sircon/lsr.php?AT=pb&SP=EC&rID=55353372&rKey=c086c677be308e90.

If your company wants customized training on Sircon for Carriers or Sircon for Agencies/Brokerages, please ask your Sircon account representative about Sircon's training services.

Overview

This section provides a high-level overview of the types of changes that were made as a part of this release. The detailed breakdown of each specific change is included in the remainder of the document.

Highlights of this release include the following:

- The fundamental architecture for tighter integration between distributors and carriers, called Product Authorizations.
- Improved support for automated DTCC LNA AI and AA transactions.

Enhancements and Improvements

Product Authorizations

Version 5.6 includes the basic architecture for a new class of capabilities, called Product Authorizations, which is geared toward tighter integration between agencies, distributors, independent agents and their carrier partners.

The premise behind Product Authorizations is to further automate the complexities of licensing and other regulatory compliance details while focusing on the fundamental question: "Is this producer authorized to sell this product in this state?" If the answer is "no," then the Product Authorizations engine can automatically take the necessary steps to change the answer to "yes."

Product Authorizations enhancements made in this release are not available to clients until the full capability is ready in Sircon for Carriers and Sircon for Agencies/Brokerages.

DTCC Transactions

NOTE: With this release, Sircon continues to upgrade its integration capabilities with DTCC LNA. If your company is interested in learning more about Sircon's DTCC transaction support, please contact your Sircon sales representative.

Version 5.6 includes several enhancements to the automated DTCC Initial Appointment (AI) and Additional Appointment (AA) transaction process. The automated process always begins when a broker/dealer submits a DTCC LNA AI or AA transaction request for a producer to a carrier, and the carrier fields the request in Producer Express. System enhancements on the carrier side include the following:

- The system already can check the producer's record in Producer Manager to verify that the producer is properly authorized and returning an AC (Appointment Confirmation) response to the broker/dealer via DTCC. Now, in addition, the system automatically can insert information in the Required Items section of the producer's record, such as an indication that the producer is "OK to Sell" in a requested appointment state. The Required Items information then can be passed to a client's downstream systems through the Producer Manager Outbound Data Feed. **[MKT-7005]**

- The system now uses enhanced logic for determining whether record-only appointments and required items artifacts are inserted in a producer's record, based on the producer's resident state and client business rules that define "just-in-time" or "restricted" appointment states. **[MKT-7008]**

- To authorize a producer, the system first must verify the producer's primary resident state information. Now when the system checks an individual producer's record in Producer Manager and finds multiple resident states, the system can derive the state identified in the producer's residential address type information as the producer's primary resident state. Also, in cases where a derived primary resident state is not supported by an active resident license, the system can regard the state identified in the business location address type information as the primary resident state.

    When checking firm producer records and encountering multiple resident states, the system will regard the state identified in the business location address type information as the primary resident state. **[MKT-7032]**

- If a single AI or AA request triggers an appointment request to New York and to any other state, in the producer's record in Producer Manager the system can create separate writing numbers, separate writing company agreements, and separate firm associations, each distinguishing between the New York and non-New York relationships. The system also can generate separate appointment letters, one referencing the New York writing number and the other referencing the non-New York writing number. Distinctive relationship information also can be fed to other systems

through the Transaction Data Web Service (formerly the Contract Data Extract). **[MKT-7263]**

- When an AI or AA request is for a Florida non-resident producer, the system now can check the producer's record in Producer Manager to verify the status of an existing Florida state appointment, as well as Florida county appointments. **[MKT-6997]**

- When processing an AI or AA request, the system now can verify if the producer has an existing relationship with the requesting broker/dealer. If not, the system automatically can record the termination of any appointments and/or record the cancellation of any licenses and qualifications on the producer's record in Producer Manager in any states other than the states in the AI or AA request. (License, qualification, and appointment information in the producer's resident state is preserved.)

  The purpose of such an action is to remove artifacts in Producer Manager of any previous relationship the producer had with a different broker/dealer and to signify that the producer is not authorized to solicit or sell in states related to the previous broker/dealer relationship. **[MKT-6736]**

- If an AI or AA request does not include general securities examination information, the system now can automatically insert default securities exam information in the FINRA Information section of the producer's record in Producer Manager. Inserted data includes Current Jurisdiction State of the producer's primary resident state and Current Jurisdiction Series of "General Securities Rep." Formerly such requests were routed to the Producer Express error queue for manual processing. **[MKT-6733]**

- The producer's birth date on an AI or AA request now is prevented from overwriting the value of the Birth Date field in the producer's record in Producer Manager. The system now preserves the birth date information obtained from the national Producer Database (PDB) during an automated data reconciliation. **[MKT-6732]**

- Producer Express now can update one or more AI or AA requests with the ongoing status of a preceding request. This can be useful when the processing of a request is dependent on a state response to a preceding request, such as in certain client configurations that require a producer to be appointed in a resident state prior to being appointed in non-resident states. **[MKT-7269]**

Data Reconciliation

- **Louisiana LOA Expiration Dates**: A new Producer Manager data normalizer is available to smooth out the complicated rules in Louisiana concerning the expiration dates of licenses and lines of authority (LOA). Once activated, when you perform an automated data reconciliation of a producer record with an active Louisiana license and LOA, the system updates the Licenses/Qualifications section of the record applying the following logic:

  o The expiration date of a Property and Casualty LOA will be set as the last day of the producer's birth month in the next odd-numbered year.

  o The expiration date of a Life, Health, and Accident LOA will be set as the last day of the producer's birth month in the next even-numbered year.

  o Until April 30, 2011, the expiration date of a Variable Annuity LOA will be set as 4/30/2011; after April 30, 2011, it will be set as the last day of the producer's birth month in the next even-numbered year.

o The expiration date of the license that supports the LOA will be set as the earliest LOA expiration date.

To enable the license expiration date processing message, please contact your Sircon account representative. **[MKT-6735]**

- **License Expiration Date Processing Message**: After a producer record is updated through an automated data reconciliation, if a license or qualification Expiration Date field is not populated, Producer Manager now can display an optional processing message. The message on the Data Reconciliation Details page reads: "The *[LicenseDescription]* license in *[LicenseState]* is missing an expiration date."

To enable this processing message in your company's system configuration, contact your Sircon account representative. **[MKT-7357]**

Business System Integration

- **Producer Data Web Service Includes LOA**: Now responses from the Producer Data Web Service (formerly Producer Query Web Service) can include a producer's license lines of authority (LOA). Based on the client web service call, the response file can include all LOA information or only active LOA information. If a requested producer has neither active nor inactive LOA, then the LOA section is omitted from the response file. **[MKT-6860]**

- **Improved Address Compression in OBDF**: To comply with United States Postal Service guidelines, Sircon can configure a business rule in the Producer Manager Outbound Data Feed (OBDF) to abbreviate or compress lines in an address that exceed 34 characters. Occasionally the application of this business rule left special characters in the address information, such as asterisks, commas, apostrophes, parentheses, ampersands, @ symbols, and more, which also violate USPS guidelines.

Now when the address compression business rule is enabled for the OBDF, the system automatically will convert all special characters to spaces. When the conversion results in double spaces, the system will remove one space. **[MKT-6734]**

Miscellaneous

- **Virginia Continuances**: Some states have perpetual licenses, but still require producers to update their license information (and pay a continuance fee) each continuing education (CE) review period to verify that the producer is compliant with the CE requirements in that state. Now, using Producer Manager, you can submit a producer's CE continuance information and remit the continuance fee. (Currently the CE continuances service is available only for Virginia.)

To access the continuances service, select VA Continuances from the Express Services menu. The Continuance page will open, where you can search for a continuance, answer background questions, attach supporting documentation, and pay the continuance fee by credit card or electronic check. **[MKT-1864]**

- **Carrier Requests**: Sircon for Agencies/Brokerages now can help your agency track requests to get a producer authorized to sell a carrier's products.

A new section of information, Carrier Requests, now is available in producer records. To add a new Carrier Request, click the Add/Update/Delete Carrier Requests link in the Carrier Requests section of the record. Or, select Carrier Requests from the Licensing menu, and then search for the producer whose carrier requests you want to track.

The Carrier Requests section includes the following data fields:

- o Carrier Group
- o Carrier Writing Company (optional)
- o Product
- o State(s)
- o Status
- o Requested Date
- o Follow Up Date (optional)
- o Received Date (optional)
- o Business Unit (optional)
- o Comment (optional)

Note: This feature is available only for agency installations of Producer Manager. By default, the Carrier Requests security permission is disabled in all security roles and must be enabled in Producer Manager before it is available to a user. Values for the Product field are client-specific and must be configured by Sircon. Contact Sircon Client Services for assistance. **[MKT-7011]**

- **Quick Load Firms Special Characters**: When entering firm data into an upload file for use with the Quick Load Producers utility in Producer Manager, now you can include special characters in the firm name. Any special character is allowed, except for <, >, or double-quotes ("). **[MKT-7018]**

- **Clearer Error Messages**: If you set the Status field of a required item to Requested or Received in the Required Items section of a producer record in Producer Manager but leave the Requested Date or Received Date fields unpopulated, the system validates the condition and returns easier-to-understand error messages. **[MKT-7094]**

- **Producer Business Rule Removed**: The Suppress Intermediate Responses business rule has been removed from the Administer Producer Business Rules page in Producer Manager. The business rule became obsolete with Sircon's updated support for DTCC LNA AI and AA automation. **[MKT-7241]**

- **Easier Carrier Search**: Now you can view all carrier group information in Producer Manager without entering search criteria. From the Companies menu, select Carrier and then select Review/Update Carrier. All carrier groups loaded in your company's instance of Producer Manager will load automatically in the Search Results section of the Review/Update Carrier page (by default in groups of 10 per page). **[MKT-7000]**

- **Selective Email and Letter Generation**: Producer Express can send an automated email with a letter attachment to a producer or other interested party when triggered by a workflow event. Such emails and letter types can include an appointment letter when a carrier has submitted an appointment request on behalf of a producer or a welcome letter to the producer when the carrier has received a state approval response to the appointment request.

Now, Sircon can configure Producer Express to stop automated emails with letter attachments from being generated and sent, based on state criteria. For example, the

system can generate and send to a producer an email and a Maryland appointment letter but not generate and send emails and letters concerning appointment requests to other states. **[MKT-7017]**

- **Non-Outsourced Transaction Requests**: For clients not using Sircon Outsourcing Services, Producer Express now can route to the error queue all appointment or appointment termination transaction requests for states with proprietary regulatory management systems (i.e., states to which Sircon cannot submit electronic requests). Such requests will bear customized error messages. For clients using Sircon Outsourcing Services, such requests will continue through the normal workflow and be retrieved by Sircon for outsourced processing. **[MKT-7252]**

Resolved Issues

- Hyperlinks to Producer Express in Producer Manager will no longer be available for users without access to Producer Express. Formerly such a user could click hyperlinks in Producer Manager to open the Producer Express login page. **[MKT-1444]**

- When creating a new individual producer record using the Add Licensed Individual page, the system will now validate that the user has not entered both Birth State and Birth Province. **[MKT-4967]**

- Field validation error messages for users using Producer Express in a Mozilla Firefox 3.6 browser window now are displayed nearer to the corresponding fields. **[MKT-6597]**

- Licenses in Maryland have a prefix and include a space in their license numbers. This was causing an error in when trying to submit license applications. Users would see the following error: "Resident License Number may only contain letters, numbers, and hyphens." This issue has been fixed. **[MKT-6943]**

- The Producer Data Web Service (formerly Producer Query Web Service) now will return from Producer Manager information on a firm producer, even when the request criteria does not specify a firm entity type. **[MKT-6944]**

- If no education credential information exists in any producer records in a client's instance of Producer Manager, when a user attempts to run the Credential Expiration Inquiry an error message now displays. **[MKT-6947]**

- When a user clicks the Sircon Request ID hyperlink in the Appointments section of a Producer Express request record, the Appointment Activity Inquiry page in Compliance Express now opens, displaying details of the specific appointment request. Formerly this hyperlink was broken. **[MKT-6966]**

- The results displayed on Producers With Missing Information is now paged correctly when the user searches for firms with missing information. **[MKT-7047]**

- A user who logs into Producer Manager with a user name in all capital letters now can run a report in the Inquiries menu. Formerly a case conflict problem between Producer Manager and its built-in reporting server caused the report to fail. **[MKT-7049]**

- A user now can attempt to save information on the Maintain Producer Required Items page in Producer Manager with improved field-entry validation. Formerly the system displayed confusing error messages after validating data entry. **[MKT-7060]**

- Producer Manager now will always pass the value of the Birth Date field from a producer record to a Producer Express bulk transaction or bulk business update request that involves the producer. Formerly producer birth date was not passed reliably, causing a request dependent on birth date data to fail. **[MKT-7062]**

- A user using an agency instance of Producer Manager now can update writing company information and save the changes. Formerly user updates to company data would not persist in the system, even after saving the changes. **[MKT-7149]**

- A user updating qualifications for a license application on the Maintain License Applications page in Producer Manager now can select a value from the Status dropdown menu that is unique to qualifications. Formerly the dropdown menu looked up values for the license application itself. **[MKT-7176]**

- A user now can update Current Jurisdiction States information on the Maintain FINRA Information page in Producer Manager without encountering an error. **[MKT-7232]**

- Producer Express now will wait indefinitely for a response to an automated background investigation request before releasing the related onboarding request record to AutoPilot processing. Formerly, it was possible for Producer Express to resume AutoPilot processing, regardless of the nature of the response. **[MKT-6893]**

- A producer appointment or appointment termination request submitted through Producer Manager or Producer Express that fails validation on the Sircon side now will display an error message advising the user to contact Sircon customer support. Also, in the Appointments section of the producer's record, the requested transaction will display a status of "Denied." Formerly, such requests displayed a "Pending" status, and it was necessary for the user to review the Express Services/Compliance Express Appointment Activity Inquiry to view the error message. **[MKT-7548]**