



NEWS FLASH

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Sircon for Carriers Sircon for Agencies/Brokerages Version 5.7

Production Release Notes

This production release of Sircon for Carriers and Sircon for Agencies/Brokerages features numerous enhancements, technical/security updates, and bug fixes. It will be released to the production environment on February 5, 2011.

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

TRAINING

On January 18, 2011, Sircon presented a training webinar on many of the features of this release. Click here to view a recording of this webinar:

<https://sircon.webex.com/sircon/ldr.php?AT=pb&SP=MC&rID=56377947&rKey=766e02bdcf7895da>

If you want training on Sircon for Carriers or Sircon for Agencies/Brokerages, please ask your Sircon sales representative about Sircon's training services.

OVERVIEW

The following are highlights of the changes Sircon has made in this production release:

- New option for tracking billing and costs associated with your producers
- New way to track an individual producer's department and location information
- "Sircon Example" annuity education credential programs now are available in Iowa and Wisconsin

- License renewal and expired license notification emails now are maintained on a producer's record
- A warning message when a producer record is undergoing an automated data reconciliation
- New onboard, pre-built reports

ENHANCEMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

This section contains detailed descriptions of the specific changes Sircon has made in this production release.

DATA RECONCILIATION

- **Data Reconciliation in Progress Warning Message:** When a producer record is undergoing an automated data reconciliation, a warning message now displays above the Record Summary box at the top of the Review/Update Individual or Review/Update Firm pages, as well as maintenance pages that are used to update producer information (such as Maintain Comments).

The new message reads as follows: "Reconciliation in Progress - This producer's data is being reconciled with the PDB. To avoid data corruption, please wait for this process to complete before modifying data on this producer's record. This message will update when the reconciliation process has completed."

When the data reconciliation is completed, the message will update to display the following message: "Sync Completed - This producer's data has finished reconciling with the PDB. You may now make changes safely." The message will disappear when the record is re-opened or refreshed in the browser window. [\[MKT-7187\]](#)

- **Wisconsin Course Completions:** Producer Manager now can be configured to retrieve course completion information from the Wisconsin insurance department's database during an automated data reconciliation. The information is added automatically to the Course Completions section of the producer's record.

To enable Wisconsin course completion information retrieval, contact your Sircon support representative. [\[MKT-7167\]](#)

- **Allow Multiple Resident States:** During an automated data reconciliation, when the system encounters multiple resident states for a producer listed on the PDB, all resident states now will display separated by commas in the PDB Entry Found section of the Quick Add Producer page (when you are adding a new producer record) or the Quick Sync Producer page (when you are updating a producer record with PDB data). [\[MKT-7495\]](#)

- **Exclude States from Data Reconciliation:** Sircon now can configure Producer Manager for all customers to ignore the data from a specific state during an automated data reconciliation. Typically Sircon would set this configuration only while a particular state is undergoing a regulatory database migration or a code conversion. During this period of time, the configuration would prevent invalid or outdated data from the state from corrupting customers' producer data in Producer Manager.

When a state is excluded, the Quick Add Producer, Quick Load Producers, and Quick Sync Producers pages will display the following message: “Limited Reconciliation Services - Reconciliation of all producer data has been temporarily disabled in the following states: [StateName]. All other states will continue to be reconciled according to your system settings. Please contact Sircon client services with any questions.” Also, the Data Reconciliation Details page will display the following message: “Reconciliations during this time did not have [StateName] data.”

Once Sircon has verified the integrity of an excluded state’s data, Sircon will reset the configuration, and automated data reconciliations with the state will be restored.

Note: Sircon will notify customers prior to setting a state to be excluded from data reconciliation operations. [\[MKT-1521\]](#)

BILLING AND COST MANAGEMENT

- **Producer Cost Tracking:** Now you can review transaction costs that are tied to a producer directly on the producer’s record. The new Costs section on the Review/Update Individual and Review/Update Firm pages maintains for a given producer an ongoing list of transactions your organization has submitted through Producer Manager and their corresponding fees. Costs information includes license applications, license renewals, appointments, appointment terminations, PDB inquiries (for data reconciliations), and background investigations.

For each transaction listed, the Costs section displays the following data fields:

- ⇒ Transaction ID
- ⇒ Transaction Date
- ⇒ State
- ⇒ Service Type
- ⇒ Residency
- ⇒ Sircon Fee
- ⇒ State Fee

This feature must be enabled with user security settings prior to use. To turn on this feature, go to *Administration menu>User Security>Maintain Security Role>select the security role you wish to modify>checkmark the “View Individual Costs” checkbox.*

[\[MKT-7521\]](#)

- **Cost Information for Multiple Firms:** When encountering cost information for a firm that shares an identical Employer Identification Number (EIN) with other firms, Producer Manager will not load the information to the Costs section of the firm record(s). Instead it will generate an email containing the detailed transaction and cost information to Sircon enterprise customer support. [\[MKT-7609\]](#)

- **Producer Costs Inquiry:** The new Producer Costs Inquiry allows you to generate a report of historical cost information in Producer Manager. The report includes producer compliance transactional costs as well as costs that are not tied to a specific producer, such as subscription fees and account adjustments.

By default, the Producer Costs Inquiry will report all cost information from the previous month. You may narrow the report by setting one or more of the following filter criteria:

- ⇒ Transaction Date Range

- ⇒ States
- ⇒ Service Types
- ⇒ Business Units
- ⇒ Locations
- ⇒ Departments

As an input option, you may select to mask Social Security Numbers (SSNs) in the report output. SSNs will be masked by default for users whose security role has the Mask Social Security Numbers (SSNs) permission enabled.

The results of a Producer Costs Inquiry are tabular (spreadsheet view) and sorted alphabetically by state code. Other output fields include service type, service type, residency (where applicable), transaction date, transaction ID (confirmation ID), state fee, Sircon fee, producer SSN/EIN, producer name, business unit, and location/department. [\[MKT-7289, MKT-7290\]](#)

CORRESPONDENCE AND NOTIFICATIONS

- **Optionally Send License Renewal/Expiration Notifications to Producers:** When configuring License Renewal Notifications or Expired License Notifications in Producer Manager, now you can choose whether to send the reminder email to the producer. Previously, these notifications always would be sent to the producer.

When adding or editing Step 3 of a Scheduled Notification, now you can choose to checkmark or uncheckmark the Send to Producer checkbox. By default, the checkbox will be checkmarked. [\[MKT- 2003\]](#)

- **New Email Messages Section:** Now directly on an individual producer's record you can review all license renewal and expired license notifications sent on behalf of the producer by Producer Manager. The new Email Messages section on the Review/Update Individual page displays the Sent Date, Notification Type, and the email address of all recipients for each email message listed.

Also, the Actions column includes two controls for each listed email message: Show Message Content and Show Group Notification Configuration. Click the Show Message Content button to open a popup window displaying the text of a selected email notification. Click the Show Group Notification Configuration button to open the Notification Configuration page, which displays the specific email notification settings that triggered the email. (You must have security permission to view the Notification Configuration page.)

Note: The Email Messages section will store notification emails for three years.

This feature must be enabled with user security settings prior to use. To turn on this feature, go to *Administration menu>User Security>Maintain Security Role>select the security role you wish to modify>checkmark the "View Individual Email Messages" checkbox.* [\[MKT-7127\]](#)

EDUCATION CREDENTIALS

- **New "Sircon Example" Annuity Programs:** All individual producers who sell annuity products in the state of Iowa or Wisconsin must take an additional four hours of annuity

education courses. This new requirement is effective on January 1, 2011 in Iowa and on May 1, 2011 in Wisconsin. Producer Manager now provides two new “Sircon Example” annuity credential programs that allow you to track these education requirements for your producers. Similar “Sircon Example” annuity programs are already available in California, Texas, and Oklahoma.

- **Iowa Annuity Program:** An individual producer will be considered eligible for the “Sircon Example” Iowa annuity program if he or she holds an active resident or non-resident license in the state of Iowa with either a Variable Life & Annuities or a Life line of authority. An eligible producer will receive an Iowa annuity education credential if he or she has taken 4.0 hours of course work within the “Annuity Training – Initial” category with a regulatory body of Iowa.
- **Wisconsin Annuity Program:** An individual producer will be considered eligible for the “Sircon Example” Wisconsin annuity program if he or she holds an active resident or non-resident license in the state of Wisconsin with either a Variable Life/Variable Annuity or a Life line of authority. An eligible producer will receive a Wisconsin annuity education credential if he or she has taken 4.0 hours of course work within the “Annuity Training – Initial” category with a regulatory body of Wisconsin.

In both Iowa and Wisconsin, individuals are required to take this additional course work only once. Once earned, a producer’s Iowa or Wisconsin annuity education credential will remain active as long as the producer’s associated license stays active. Additionally, both states will accept course work taken in another state, provided the course work includes at least 4.0 credit hours of annuity education and is certified by the state. [MKT-7167, MKT-7168]

LICENSING

- **License Comments:** Producer Manager now allows you to add comments to a producer’s licenses directly on the producer’s record.

License comments are displayed with other license details in the License/Qualifications section of Review/Update Individual or Review/Update Firm pages. Click the “plus box” node to the left of a license state to display license details. All comments recorded to the selected license will display, along with the name of the commenting staff member and the comment’s last-updated date.

To add a new comment, click the Add Comment link. The page will expand the section and display a text field for you to enter your comment. Comments can be up to 4000 characters. Click the Save button to save the comment to the license.

To edit a comment that you made previously, click the Edit link to open it in an edit field. Update the comment, and then click the Save button. The updated comment will display with an “edited” flag. You can only edit your own comments.

Note: You cannot delete a comment or save an edited comment with an empty value.

This feature must be enabled with user security settings prior to use. To turn on this feature, go to *Administration menu>User Security>Maintain Security Role>select the security role you wish to modify>checkmark the “View Individual Licenses/Qualifications” checkbox and select the Modifiable radio button for “Comments”*. [MKT-7228, MKT-7499]

- **Licenses and Qualifications Display:** To speed up record-loading time -- especially for producer records with a large volume of license and line of authority information -- only “top-level” or summary information will load initially in the Licenses/Qualifications section of the Review/Update Individual or Review/Update Firm pages in Producer Manager. To view the qualifications, history, or comments related to a specific license in the Licenses subsection, click its corresponding “plus box” node. Similarly, to view the history related to a specific line of authority displaying in the Qualifications subsection, click its corresponding “plus box” node. [MKT-7532]

LOCATIONS AND DEPARTMENTS

- **Tracking Producer Locations and Departments:** To help group individual producers according to the structure of your company’s organization chart, now you can track producer location and department assignments. The Locations and Departments section in a producer’s record displays all of the producer’s active location and department assignments. To add a new assignment, click the Add New Locations and Departments link to expand the section and display additional controls. Click to select an assignment, and then click the Add Selected Locations and Departments button. You can select multiple assignments at once by pressing the CTRL key while clicking to select the desired rows. The begin date of a Location and Department assignment also can be edited by clicking the ‘Edit Dates’ icon in the Actions column. To remove a Location and Department, click the Inactivate icon in the Actions column.

This feature must be enabled with user security settings prior to use. To turn on this feature, go to *Administration menu>User Security>Maintain Security Role>select the security role you wish to modify>checkmark the “Maintain Individual Locations and Departments” checkbox*. [MKT-7278, MKT-7280, MKT-7733]

- **Configure Locations and Departments:** To use the Locations and Departments feature, valid combinations of locations and departments first must be configured by a user with administrative permissions.

To configure locations and departments, go to *Administration>Configure System>Locations and Departments*. On the Locations and Departments page you can add new locations and new departments by entering a name and a code for the location or department you wish to add. Once added, the location or department will appear in the list of Current Locations or Current Departments below.

When adding Locations and Departments to a producer’s record, users will be able to add only Locations and Departments that are connected to one another. To define which combinations of departments and locations are valid, click the Connect Locations and Departments link at the top of the page. On the Connect Locations and Departments page, you can select any of the previously-defined locations and/or departments and connect them. To allow the recording of a location independent of department, define a location connected to a blank department. Similarly, you can define a department independent of location in the same manner. [MKT-7279]

- **Locations and Departments via Bulk Business Data Updates:** You can add location and department information to your producers in bulk using Bulk Business Data Updates. A new optional column for Locations and Departments is defined for the Bulk Business Data Updates spreadsheet. Simply specify the codes of the location and

department that should be assigned to the producer. The codes specified must match a valid combination of locations and departments as defined on the Locations and Departments page in Producer Manager.

Note: To add Locations and Departments to your Bulk Business Data Updates configuration, contact your Sircon support representative. [\[MKT-7283\]](#)

- **Locations and Departments via the Producer Management Web Service:** Integrated systems now can add Location and Department information to a producer's record using the Producer Management Web Service. Location and department codes specified in the request must match a valid combination of locations and departments as defined on the Locations and Departments page in Producer Manager.

Note: To start taking advantage of integration through the Producer Management Web Service, contact your Sircon support representative. [\[MKT-7284\]](#)

PRODUCT AUTHORIZATIONS

- **Carrier Requests Inquiry:** If you are a Sircon for Agencies/Brokerages user, now you can generate a report of outstanding producer product authorization requests made to a selected carrier, so that you can follow up on the requests.

By default, the new Carrier Requests Inquiry will report all product authorization requests. You may narrow the report by setting one or more of the following filter criteria:

- ⇒ Follow-Up Date
- ⇒ Request Date
- ⇒ Carrier
- ⇒ Writing Companies
- ⇒ Products
- ⇒ States
- ⇒ Status
- ⇒ Business Units
- ⇒ Staff Members
- ⇒ Producer Type

As an input option, you may select to mask Social Security Numbers (SSNs) in the report output. SSNs will be masked by default for users whose security role has the Mask Social Security Numbers (SSNs) permission enabled. [\[MKT-7340\]](#)

USE INDICATORS

- **View Use Indicators:** Administrative users of Producer Manager now can view the current or historical "use indicators" for their account. Use indicators determine per client the availability in Producer Manager and Producer Express of specific license classes, qualifications (lines of authority), and appointment types.

By default, the Use Indicators page will display all use indicators. You may narrow the results by setting one or more of the following filter criteria:

- ⇒ State
- ⇒ Type
- ⇒ Description

- ⇒ Use Indicator Status
- ⇒ Begin Date
- ⇒ Producer Type

If you choose to include historical use indicators, you can filter the results by End Date, which is the date the use indicator became historical. If you choose to search by description, you can search by partial description (e.g., enter “Life” to return results that include “Life & Health,” “Variable Life,” etc.)

Search results are returned in order of closest match to furthest match. You can also sort the results by Status, Begin Date, End Date, State, Type, Description, and/or whether the use indicator is enabled.

Use indicators with a Begin Date within the last month will have a status of New. All historical use indicators will have an End Date and a Status of Historical.

Note: To enable a use indicator that currently is not turned on in your account, please contact your Sircon support representative.

This feature must be enabled with user security settings prior to use. To turn on this feature, go to *Administration > User Security > Maintain Security Role > select the security role you wish to modify > checkmark the “View Use Indicators” checkbox.* [\[MKT-7526\]](#)

MISCELLANEOUS

- **Recently Viewed Producers Dropdown:** For easier navigation to producer records, now you can view the list of your 10 most recently viewed producers on any page in Producer Manager.

To open the Recently Viewed Producers list, click the clock-face button to the left of the Producer Quick Search field below the menu bar. The dropdown list displays the same summary information about each record as the Producer Quick Search results, including when the record was last opened. Click a name in the list to open the corresponding producer’s record in the Review/Update Individual or Review/Update Firm page.

Note: The Recently Viewed Producers dropdown list is available only to users whose security role includes the Producer Quick Search, Review/Update Individual, Review/Update Firm, and Recently Viewed Producers permissions enabled. [\[MKT-7602\]](#)

- **“Default” vs. “Preferred” Business Units and Cost Centers:** All references to “Preferred” business units and cost centers within Producer Manager and Producer Express have been changed to “Default.” [\[MKT-7731\]](#)
- **Company Appointment List Inquiry:** The Company Appointment List Inquiry page now displays the following message: “Please note, if you choose to “View/Refresh Report” the date range selected must be less than or equal to 31 days.” [\[MKT-6892\]](#)
- **Submit Background Investigation:** The former Save button at the bottom of the Submit Background Investigation page now is renamed Submit. [\[MKT-7458\]](#)
- **Contact Us:** The former Self-Portal link on the Contact Us page in Producer Manager now is renamed Self-Service Portal. In addition, the Self-Service Portal page now opens in a new window. [\[MKT-7875\]](#)

- **Search by SSN/EIN in Producer Express:** The Producer Express workspace now has the option to search by a producer's SSN or EIN. This will allow you to distinguish between two producers with the same name. [\[MKT-6533\]](#)
- **Candidate Management Workspace:** The Workspace page in the Producer Express Candidate Management (Lead) module now is configurable to display custom columns. [\[MKT-7564\]](#)
- **Producer Express Workspace Performance:** Initial loading time of the Producer Express Workspace page now is faster, as the navigation and the Content Pane now load independently. [\[MKT-7646\]](#)

INTEGRATION

This section contains summary descriptions of specific changes Sircon has made to points of integration between Sircon applications and client internal systems. For an updated schema and technical documentation of the changes, please ask your Sircon support representative.

PRODUCER MANAGEMENT WEB SERVICE

- **Location and Department Ties:** Now you can pass a producer's location and department assignment information in a call to the Producer Management Web Service. To add a Location and Department assignment to a producer, specify the Begin Date, Department, and Location elements. If they Location and Department are not connected in Producer Manager, the request generated in Producer Express by the web service call will be routed to the Error Queue for manual resolution. [\[MKT-7284\]](#)
- **Business Units:** Now you can pass a producer's business unit information in a call to the Producer Management Web Service. To add Business Units to a producer, specify the Business Unit short name, Begin Date, and the Default indicator elements. If the business unit specified in the call is inactive or not configured in Producer Manager, the request generated in Producer Express by the web service call will be routed to the Error Queue for manual resolution. [\[MKT-4936\]](#)

BUG FIXES

The following is a list of bugs that were fixed in this release:

- In Producer Express, the Available Tasks dropdown in the Licensing Specialist Workspace now will correctly be hidden when a task is selected. [\[MKT-7782\]](#)
- The value in the Suffix field (e.g., Jr., III, etc.) of a Producer Express appointment form now will be submitted to a background investigation vendor as part of an automated background investigation request. [\[MKT-7502\]](#)
- When address information is updated during a data reconciliation, Producer Manager will no longer attempt to merge invalid addresses from the PDB. If the PDB report does not contain a valid address for a specific address type, the affected address type on the

producer's record will not be updated, and Producer Manager will display a processing message on the Data Reconciliation Details page. [\[MKT-5572\]](#)

- Previously a non-resident Florida appointment request initiated in Producer Express via the Producer Management Web Service would be routed to the error queue if it did not contain any Florida county appointment requests. Now the system will assume that such a request intended no county appointment and proceed with submission of the state appointment. [\[MKT-2074\]](#)
- Leaving the last column of the bulk upload data file blank when doing a bulk appointment, bulk termination or bulk business data update from Producer Express caused invalid file format errors. [\[MKT-6615\]](#)
- Attempting to search on either the Leads or Packets tab in the Recruiter module of Producer Express with an End Date without the correct formatting caused an error. [\[MKT-7776\]](#)
- The workflow steps supporting a Producer Express DTCC LNA AA transaction were out of order if the affected producer had the "Suppress Correspondence Copies to Producer" producer business rule enabled. [\[MKT-7771\]](#)
- Producer Express support for DTCC LNA did not generate an automated AA or AI request after the affiliation check requirement was manually waived. [\[MKT-7712\]](#)
- The Review/Update Company - Search Company page in Producer Manager will no longer display an error message before a search is conducted. [\[MKT-7710\]](#)
- The help links on the Maintain Company External System IDs, Maintain Company Aliases, and Maintain Company Addresses pages in Producer Manager opened the wrong online help. [\[MKT-7706, MKT-7705, MKT-7704\]](#)
- When processing license application results, Producer Manager failed to retrieve a state status if the system could not determine the residency of the license. [\[MKT-7692\]](#)
- A producer record in the Review/Update Individual page displayed an error when Producer Manager attempted to recalculate education credentials after the supporting license was inactivated. [\[MKT-7673\]](#)
- A request was sent to the Producer Express Error Queue if there were multiple packets attempting to access the same information at the same time. [\[MKT-7619\]](#)
- Mousing over a "plus box" node on the Review/Update Individual or Review/Update Firm pages in Producer Manager would not change the user's mouse pointer to a hand with an outstretched index finger, the web convention for interacting with a clickable object. [\[MKT-7605\]](#)
- The Producer Background Questions box in the onboarding interview in Producer Express was displaying confusing error messages, depending on the number of characters the user entered. [\[MKT-7472\]](#)
- When a user added a record only appointment in Producer Manager for a producer holding certain license types and qualifications, the Appointment Results For State page

would display “Electronic Processing,” when the actual submission method was “Record Only.” [MKT-7461]

- The Calendar date picker buttons on the Add/Activate Licenses/Qualifications page in Producer Manager were not aligned with their respective date fields. [MKT-7455]
- Duplicate Florida county appointment records in Producer Manager created by a data reconciliation were displaying inappropriately in the Appointments section of producer records and occasionally caused appointment and termination requests to error. [MKT-7425, MKT-7256]
- The welcome and thank you letters as part of Producer Express support for DTCC LNA PX automated appointments were not automatically generating and being sent to producers. [MKT-7404]
- Calendar date picker buttons were not available with date fields on the Approve/Deny Appointments page in Producer Manager. [MKT-7364]
- A selected template ID on the Select Hierarchy Template section of the Agreements tab in Producer Express would become unselected when the Select Template button became enabled. [MKT-7288]
- A link to Producer Express was available inappropriately in the Producer Manager Express Services menu in User Acceptance Testing environments. [MKT-7260]
- The Bulk Reassign utility in Producer Express was not correctly filtering packets available for reassignment. [MKT-7147]
- When Producer Express attempted to look up a particular producer record in Producer Manager based on name and tax ID search criteria and found multiple matches, Producer Manager returned one of the matching records at random instead of issuing an error message. [MKT-7022]
- When a Producer Express packet was returned to the recruiter for additional information, certain fields were not pre-populated with the correct information. [MKT-6602]
- The Individual Licensee and Firm radio buttons were not proximal to the Producer Type field label on all Search pages in Producer Manager. [MKT-7876]
- In the Producer Express Recruiter Workspace, none of the By Milestone Filter Options was working. [MKT-7847]
- Unicode symbols, such as registered trademarks (®), were not rendering legibly on correspondence and email notifications in Producer Express. [MKT-7770]
- The Data Reconciliation Details page in Producer Manager was indicating erroneously that Louisiana LOA Expiration Date data normalizers had been applied to an automated data reconciliation when they had not. [MKT-7691]
- When a user requested only a subset of available background investigation types in Producer Express, the affected producer record in Producer Manager was indicating erroneously that requests had been submitted for all available background investigation types. [MKT-7500]



- Producer Express under certain conditions would not send an evite to a producer when AutoPilot discovered that the producer's record already exists in Producer Manager.
[MKT-1454]