

GSCCCA Update

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September 2005

An update on the activities of the Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority

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"PT-61 Save & Retrieve" available

Since the inception of the PT-61 E-Filing Project, many users have requested the ability to save their "pending" PT-61 filings so they can be retrieved later for editing. In response to those many user requests, this feature is now available. Effective August 1, 2005, any filing party that has a GSCCCA subscriber account

is able to open their pending PT-61 form and make changes and corrections. This new feature will not only save users' time but will also increase the accuracy of the data on the forms at the time they are filed with the deed.

Below are some important aspects of the "PT-61 Save & Retrieve" feature:

- "PT-61 Save & Retrieve" is only available to paid subscribers. A user will not be required to have an account to file a PT-61 but will need an account if he wishes to save and retrieve his PT-61 filings. This is required for security reasons.

- Once a user files a PT-61 filing at the courthouse, it will no longer be available for retrieval.

- If a user chooses to edit a PT-61 filing, the system will create a new filing with a new document number and mark the old filing as no longer valid. It is the user's (filing party's) responsibility to discard the old paper copy and file the new filing with the new document at the courthouse. If a user submits the original

filing that is no longer valid, it will be rejected by the clerk's office and the user will have to re-file with the correct PT-61 filing.

- If a user chooses to create a new filing based upon the existing filing, the system will create a new filing with a new document number and will NOT mark the old

filing invalid. Using the "create a new filing" method allows a user to easily create new filings with subtle differences. This will be helpful when the user must file multiple PT-61 filings where the only difference is the sub lot and block.

For more information on this convenient new feature, visit the "Save & Retrieve Help" section on the Authority website. If you have questions or feedback, contact John Myers at 770.653.9736 (john.myers@edi.gatech.edu) or Richard McPhaul at 404.327.7327 (richard.mcphaul@gsccca.org). ■

"This new feature will not only save the users' time but will also increase the accuracy of the data on the forms at the time they are filed with the deed."

Other program changes

The Authority has made several other programming changes/enhancements. Details are listed below.

1) PT-61 “Wrong County” Filings Change

Because of a Microsoft scrolling feature that we cannot control, it is possible for filing parties to move the wheel of a “wheel mouse” and change the name of the county before they exit that field. The chance for this error to get into the system is increased because most vendors “pre-load” the PT-61 reference number into local indexing systems so that indexers only have to key in the last six digits of the reference number. In such cases, it is easy to overlook the incorrect county number at the top of the form.

In an effort to reduce this error, we have emphasized the county name during the entry of the form, and we have added a statement at the end of the e-filing process that requires the filer to read and check off the following statement: “This property is located in _____ County. Check if correct.” These changes have reduced the occurrence of the problem and counties are getting far fewer PT-61 forms with the wrong county.

To completely eliminate the problem of bad data entering the database, we have changed the error type to a “critical error” for any filing that comes in with the wrong county name. The form will not be activated and the county will receive an error message explaining the problem. Our hope is that this will happen very rarely since we have significantly reduced the number of these errors, but this step is necessary to prevent such records from being activated. If they are allowed in the system, they can overwrite a valid PT-61 form from another county and trigger the need for changes in two counties.

2) New Version of Indexing Standards Release

The release of the new GSCCCA Indexing

PT-61 kudos

The PT-61 Project was launched on September 1, 2004, to provide a more efficient process for filing a property tax transfer form. During the program's first year, from September 1, 2004 to August 31, 2005, a total of 607,966 PT-61 filings were entered online. Of that total, 473,288 were accepted by the counties. The Authority continues to make enhancements to this successful program to make it more effective and user-friendly. See article on Page 1 for more details.

Standards has now been posted on line at www.gsccca.org in the “Files and Forms” section under “Deed, Lien and Plat Documents.” All clerks and indexers are encouraged to download and use the latest version of the Standards.

To make it easier and faster to see the areas that have changed, there is also a companion document that only identifies the changes in the Standards. Questions or comments should be directed to Phil Kobierowski at 404.894.2552 or phil@edi.gatech.edu.

3) Program Status Report Modification

Previously, the Program Status Report contained two columns for reporting the status of Civil – SB 176 transmits. To simplify, we have now reduced the display to a single column, and as long as it is not red, you are in compliance. This should be less confusing and easier to read. Feel free to provide feedback on the Program Status Report to Will Dunn at will.dunn@gsccca.org.

Please note: If you are electronically transmitting your Civil - 176 data, as most counties are, there is no need to scan or fax the civil forms. Scanning or faxing is only an option for counties that have not been able to get their electronic transmits working. ■

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Customer Support:

1.800.304.5174
or
help@gsccca.org

Training classes offered

The Authority is offering training classes for clerks and their staff throughout the state of Georgia on UCCs, Notary Public, Real Estate Indexing Standards, and Fines & Fees. Classes began on June 8th and will continue until October 27th. (See schedule for remaining dates.) Training on the following subjects is included:

- UCCs – This session provides an overview of Georgia’s Uniform Commercial Code statute, discusses Revised Article 9 and how it relates to processing and indexing UCC financing statements, and reviews filing requirements as well as reasons to reject.
- Notary Public – This session covers the responsibilities of the Superior Court clerk’s office as the commissioning office, a notary’s foremost responsibility, and takes an in-depth look at Georgia’s notary law.
- Real Estate Indexing Standards – This session will review the statewide standards for indexing real estate, lien, and plat records. The discussion will also include information on the upcoming online training for Indexing Standards.
- Fines & Fees – This session provides information on the remitting and reporting requirements under HB 1EX, the Board-approved Rules and Regulations, and SB 226, the new five-percent surcharge imposed on traffic violations.

In the remaining three locations, UCC & Notary Public training will be conducted in Waycross and Albany, while Real Estate Indexing Standards training will be offered in Augusta. Fines & Fees training will be offered at all locations. Space is still available for the remaining classes, so sign up today! To get a synopsis of the courses or to register for a class, visit www.gsccca.org/training/. ■

Rate limiting

A few subscribers have asked why they now see a page that says “You have exceeded the rate for individual subscribers” and their searching is momentarily paused. This message may occur during the *rapid paging through of images*. The Authority found it necessary to elevate the level of security and system monitoring after much system abuse by a few subscribers in violation of the Terms and Conditions to which all subscribers agree. These violators have used many techniques to capture massive amounts of system data for commercial use.

In addition to violating the terms and conditions, this unauthorized use impacts all of our valued subscribers. Such activity exploits large amounts of internet bandwidth and computer search time. If you have ever been frustrated by slow searches on the system, much of your frustration is due to the impact of system abusers. The Authority has an obligation to its community of subscribers to eliminate system abuse that harms the vast majority of legitimate subscribers and takes that obligation seriously.

Fortunately our new system and security upgrades allow us to identify and manage abusive users. Their accounts are being terminated and referred to the State Attorney General for review. These actions combined with new processors and software changes have already resulted in consistently faster search times and more improvements will continue to be made. ■

Fall Training Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Topic</u>
Sept. 28	Waycross	UCC, Notary, Fines & Fees
Sept. 29	Waycross	UCC, Notary, Fines & Fees
Oct. 12	Albany	UCC, Notary, Fines & Fees
Oct. 13	Albany	UCC, Notary, Fines & Fees
Oct. 26	Augusta	Deeds, Fines & Fees
Oct. 27	Augusta	Deeds, Fines & Fees

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Board Meeting Review

The Authority Board of Directors convened on July 13 for their quarterly meeting. Following is a summary of their actions and discussions:

- **General Business** - The minutes of the April 13, 2005, board meeting were approved unanimously, and Greg Morgan, of the accounting firm Mauldin & Jenkins, presented the Auditor's Report.
- **UCC Project** – David Williams gave a detailed report providing filings per month for this calendar year compared to the previous years. The total number of UCCs filed is consistent with the totals from the last few years.
- **Historical Deed Project** – Williams also reported on the Historical Deed Project and noted that seventy-four counties have their historical deed data online back to 1993, an increase of ten counties since the April board meeting. A discussion was held on the vendor change form, the vendor change policy and disaster recovery procedures for data and image retrieval for counties. Following the discussion, Chairman Lawler appointed a committee to review the vendor change policy and form, and to develop a policy for the Authority on how to help a clerk in a disaster recovery scenario.
- **Fines and Fees Division** - John Earle presented a report on the status of the Fines and Fees Division and noted that only one court remains outstanding in their remittances. Mr. Earle presented a report on the remittable funds collected for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005 and a report on remittable funds compliance by court type. He reported that \$27,712,870 had been collected to fund the Indigent Defense Program.

At the end of the meeting, the board adjourned to Executive Session to discuss a personnel issue. The next scheduled meeting of the Authority board is October 12, 2005. ■

What are "Good-Thru" & "Good-From Dates"?

The Authority continues to receive questions regarding the definition of "Good-Thru Dates" and "Good-From Dates." Users who search an index need to know if all records are on file for the date range on which they are searching. They also need to know how up-to-date the complete set of records is. To provide this kind of benchmark data to subscribers, the Authority uses "Good-Thru" and "Good-From Dates."

A county's "Good-Thru Date" means that all of the documents filed in the county through that specified date have been submitted to the Authority and are in the statewide index. At the point where the records begin, the county's "Good-From Date" means that all documents filed *from* that date through the "Good-Thru Date" have been successfully submitted and are on file.

The "Good-Thru" and "Good-From Dates" are manually set by each clerk via his or her daily transmit file for deeds, liens and plats. The dates are typically different for each county and the statewide "Good-Thru Date" is only as good as the least current county. ■

