Table of Contents

I. BACKGROUND  
WHAT IS THE DOCUMENTS TO FOLLOW (DTF) ARCHIVE?  
HOW DOES THE IMAGING/ARCHIVING PROCESS WORK?  
IS PAPER A THING OF THE PAST NOW?  
DOES THE FEDERAL RESERVE IMAGE/ARCHIVE DOCUMENTATION AS WELL?  

II. DTF COVER SHEETS  
THE ROLE OF THE DTF COVER SHEET  
GENERATING THE DTF COVER SHEET  
COVER SHEETS GENERATED AUTOMATICALLY THROUGH FedLine  
GENERATING THE DTF COVER SHEET MANUALLY USING THE INTERACTIVE ONLINE FORM  
VERIFYING THE DTF COVER SHEET IS ‘fax ready’  

III. GATHERING DOCUMENTATION TO FAX  

IV. VERIFYING FAX MACHINE SETTINGS  

V. FAXING DOCUMENTATION  

VI. HOW THE IMAGING PROCESS WORKS  
INTERPRETING THE Fax TRANSMISSION  
MULTIPLE DOCUMENTATION SETS IN A SINGLE TRANSMISSION  

VII. VERIFYING SUCCESSFUL DOCUMENTATION ARCHIVING  
REVIEW THE FedLine OUTBOX  

VIII. TROUBLESHOOTING DTF ARCHIVE ISSUES  
WAS THE DTF COVER SHEET GENERATED CORRECTLY?  
WAS THE DTF COVER SHEET INFORMATION CORRECT?  
WAS THE DTF COVER SHEET “fax ready”?  
DID YOU FAX ONLY THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION?  
ARE THE FAX MACHINE SETTINGS CORRECT AND WAS THE FAX TRANSMITTED CORRECTLY?  
DID THE FAX TRANSMISSION COMPLETE SMOOTHLY?  
DID YOU WAIT AMPLE TIME FOR THE DTF IMAGE TO ATTACH?  

IX. RECAP OF COMMON REASONS DTFS DO NOT IMAGE/ARCHIVE SUCCESSFULLY  

X. FACT OR FICTION EXERCISE  

XI. FACT OR FICTION ANSWER KEY
I. BACKGROUND

What is the Documents to Follow (DTF) Archive?
The DTF Archive is a central repository where institutions and Federal Reserve Banks house documentation, electronically, related to check adjustments cases. Documentation is submitted to the DTF Archive via a fax transmission and is made available through link references on the case created in FedLine® Solutions (FedLine).

Upon careful review of this guide, it is our hope that your knowledge of the process has been improved and you will be able to participate in a short exercise.

How Does the Imaging/Archiving Process Work?
The process for imaging/archiving supporting documentation is as simple as sending a fax. A specially formatted DTF Cover Sheet(s), which is populated with specific data related to its associated adjustment request, is generated. That Cover Sheet, along with supporting documentation, is faxed to a special fax number, where imaging software reads and images the pages.

The software is able to ‘read’ the case attributes on the DTF Cover Sheet and is also able to image the documentation. The case attributes on the DTF Cover Sheet are used to create a unique file name for the associated DTF(s). This unique file name is used to ‘link’ the DTF(s) to the Check Adjustments (CA) message in FedLine. From within FedLine, you are able to view the imaged documentation associated with the corresponding case for one year from the date the message was created.

Once the CA message is received in our case management system, the same case attributes are used to associate or ‘link’ the DTF(s) to the CA message (request).

Is Paper a Thing of the Past Now?
Not quite. There are two primary reasons why paper is still around:

- Not all documentation can be submitted to the Federal Reserve in image form. Although the DTF Archive can be used to house working copies, “live items” (such as original/substitute checks or Photos in Lieu (PIL)) must be physically delivered to the Federal Reserve. The Check Adjustments Quick Reference Guide provides information on original documentation requirements and frbservices.org provides information on where they should be delivered\(^1\).

- The Federal Reserve still allows for non-electronic (paper) adjustment requests. Customers submitting their adjustment request using the paper based Standard Adjustment Request Form should provide the required

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supporting documentation along with the adjustment request form. Upon receipt of such documentation, the Federal Reserve will image the documents, fax and house them in the DTF archive.

**Does the Federal Reserve Image/Archive Documentation as Well?**

Yes. Like financial institutions, the Federal Reserve is required to supply supporting documentation on adjustment cases that “require” supporting documentation. The Federal Reserve uses the same imaging/archiving system to provide supporting documentation.

The Federal Reserve is able to provide DTFs to all recipients of adjustment cases. FedLine customers view the DTF by viewing its associated adjustment message. Paper-based customers receive their DTF(s) via email.

### II. DTF COVER SHEETS

**The Role of the DTF Cover Sheet**

When a normal fax transmission is sent, the fax Cover Sheet often describes the destination of the fax. The person receiving this fax uses that information to route the facsimile to the appropriate party. In a similar way, the DTF Cover Sheet does the same thing. **Unlike a regular Cover Sheet, the DTF Cover Sheet is not received by a person, but by imaging software.** Imaging software reads the DTF Cover Sheet information to route the converted pages of the fax (images) to the appropriate party (adjustment case).

Since the imaging software’s ability to read the information on the DTF Cover Sheet is critical to the process, requirements have been established to help institutions ensure that their DTF Cover Sheets are of the highest quality.

**Generating the DTF Cover Sheet**

DTF Cover Sheets are generated in one of two ways:

- **Automatically** - FedLine cases which have supporting documentation will automatically generate a pre-populated DTF Cover Sheet(s) once the case has been submitted.

- **Manually** - An Interactive DTF Cover Sheet template is available for use and can be populated manually and printed directly from the browser to a local printer in your area.

**Note:** You should avoid using any other Cover Sheet, for example, your institution’s Cover Sheet, letter head, or print screens of the Federal Reserve’s DTF Cover Sheets, when faxing supporting documentation to the DTF Archive.
Cover Sheets Generated Automatically through FedLine

Documentation requirements for adjustment requests submitted to the Federal Reserve vary depending on the nature of the investigation type (ITYP). DTF Cover Sheets are generated only for ITYPs which require or allow optional documentation.

The DTF Field, which has three options, should be populated based on the kind of documentation the ITYP calls for. The default option is N/A (not applicable). M (mail) and F (fax) are the other options. The DTF Cover Sheet(s) is generated based on the ITYP documentation requirements and the DTF field should be populated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DTF Field</th>
<th>Use When</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| M (mail)  | The ITYP requires the **live** item (i.e. original /substitute check or PIL) | **Two** DTF Cover Sheets will automatically be generated.  
- One DTF Cover Sheet is used to send along with the live item to the Federal Reserve’s central site for receipt of all paper including live item attachments. Refer to the frbservices.org for information on the Federal Reserve’s [central site](http://frbservices.org).  
- The other DTF Cover Sheet is used to fax a working copy of the documentation to the DTF Archive (for informational purposes only). |
<p>| F (fax)   | The ITYP requires a <strong>copy</strong> of the documentation <strong>or</strong> a copy of the documentation is optional and is being provided | <strong>One</strong> DTF Cover Sheet will automatically be generated and should be used to fax the necessary documentation to the DTF Archive. |
| N/A (not) | The ITYP does not require | <strong>No</strong> DTF Cover Sheet will be generated. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DTF Field</th>
<th>Use When</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>applicable)</td>
<td>documentation or documentation is optional and is not being provided</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the adjustment request is successfully sent, the DTF Cover Sheet(s) will automatically appear on your screen. You should print the DTF Cover Sheet(s) using the Print option of your print browser. You should **avoid** using the print screen feature to print the DTF Cover Sheet(s).

**Generating the DTF Cover Sheet Manually Using the Interactive Online Form**

You should use the DTF Cover Sheet(s) that is automatically generated from within FedLine; however, they may also be generated manually using the Interactive form available at frbservices.org. Typical users of the Interactive form are Respondent institutions who have their adjustment requests submitted via FedLine by a third party but fax the DTFs to the DTF Archive. You may also use the Interactive form to send DTFs if you are unable to reprint the DTF Cover Sheet(s) from the Sent message created within FedLine.

The Interactive form is launched in .pdf format. The form contains the same fields as the DTF Cover Sheet automatically generated from within FedLine. The fields, however, are blank and the data for each field must be **manually** keyed online. You should **avoid** printing a blank form and populating the fields through some other means, such as by handwriting or typing the data.

It is important for the person keying the data, in the highlighted sections on the form, to ensure that all fields match those of the actual case being submitted. This information will be used later in the process as the documentation and the case attempt to locate one
another to complete the Archive process. Small differences such as using dashes in the SREF field (Sender’s Reference) of the case, but not on the DTF Cover Sheet, may cause the Imaging/Archiving Process to be unsuccessful.

Requirements by field are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABA #:</td>
<td>Required: Routing and transit number of the sending institution used on the request in the SNDR (Sender) field. <strong>Avoid</strong> the use of dashes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMOUNT:</td>
<td><strong>Required</strong>: Amount of the request. <strong>Avoid</strong> manually keying the $ symbol when entering the amount. This symbol is automatically populated in this field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SREF:</td>
<td><strong>Required</strong>: The sending institution’s unique reference number assigned to the request by the Sender. Maximum 14 characters. As a best practice, avoid using spaces and lower case letters in the SREF field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITYP:</td>
<td><strong>Required</strong>: Investigation type of the request. Use the abbreviated alpha code of the ITYP in ALL CAPS (for example: ENC, NCH etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DATE:</td>
<td><strong>Required</strong>: The cash letter or entry date used on the adjustment request in the CLED field. MM/DD/YYYY is the required format.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RREF:</td>
<td><strong>Optional</strong>: Reference number of the receiving Federal Reserve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EWA CASE NO:</td>
<td>N/A: This field is used only by the Federal Reserve.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once all of the fields have been populated, print the DTF Cover Sheet using the Print option of Adobe or your print browser. You should **avoid using the print screen** feature to print the DTF Cover Sheet.

**Verifying the DTF Cover Sheet is ‘Fax Ready’**

When the DTF Cover Sheet has been generated, it is important that it is in ‘fax ready’ condition. As you will see, in the Imaging Process section, the information supplied on the DTF Cover Sheet is a critical component of the matching process. If the information is illegible or incorrect, the Imaging/Archiving Process may not be successful.

To verify the DTF Cover Sheet is ‘fax ready’, review it to ensure:

- The information is printed clearly. If the printer toner is low and creating a ‘light’ copy, or heavy and creating a ‘bold’ copy, correct the toner and reprint the DTF Cover Sheet from within the Sent Message in FedLine’s Outbox or create a new DTF Cover Sheet using the Interactive form.

- No additional information is included beyond the fields provided.
  - Handwriting on the DTF Cover Sheet (either in the fields or in the margins of the page) negatively impacts the imaging software’s ability to properly image the documentation.
  - Departmental stamps and/or margin headers and footers are also considered ‘additional information’, and may impact the software’s ability to determine which information to read and which information to ignore.
You should also check the Header and/or Footer of your browser to ensure it does not contain additional information, for example:

https://www.federalreserve.org/flwadjustment-j/CheckAdjustments/submitCreateMessage.do

To check for additional information in your browser:
- Launch your browser
- Select File
- Select Page Set Up
  - View the Header and Footer fields and remove any unnecessary information, i.e. the words check adjustments.
III. GATHERING DOCUMENTATION TO FAX

Documentation requirements are based on the ITYP for which the request is being submitted. Since each page of the documentation is used in researching and resolving the adjustment request, it is important that only necessary documentation be included. The Check Adjustments Quick Reference Guide outlines which documentation should be submitted. In addition, the documentation must be submitted using 8.5 x 11 inch size white paper.

Certain unnecessary documentation, such as copies of CA messages, has been known to cause the DTF Cover Sheet to reject, as the attributes of the CA message are similar to those included on the DTF Cover Sheet (for example, SREF and ITYP). If the imaging software attempts to read this documentation as a DTF Cover Sheet, pages following the CA message will result in rejected DTF images. When this occurs, the adjustment request received by the Federal Reserve may contain incomplete or no documentation.

IV. VERIFYING FAX MACHINE SETTINGS

The fax transmission to the DTF Archive is sending pages which will be imaged and stored by the receiving software. This special process is a key component of the Imaging Process and requires that you understand how your fax machine is set to transmit.

Fax transmissions must be received by the imaging software right side up. This means the front of the page needs to be read. If the fax is not received right side up, the back ‘blank’ side of the page will transmit, but will not supply the receiving side (software) with any information to image.

Fax transmissions must be received right edge up. This means the ‘top’ of the page is expected by the imaging software. It will search the DTF Cover Sheet for the first section and work down the page. As with the previous requirements, the page may appear to be transmitting fine from the sending side, but will not successfully image on the receiving side.

Fax transmissions should not include certain header/footer information with the fax. Header/footer information may append to the DTF Cover Sheet on the receiving end. Certain information has been known to interfere with the Imaging Process. We highly recommend that the fax machine used for faxing DTFs not include any header/footer information. If your institution must include a header/footer, we suggest refraining from using words like ‘check adjustments’.

Fax resolution must be set to ‘Fine’. Since the fax being sent often contains very small type (for example the back of an item), it is important that the image being transmitted is of fine quality. Please ensure the Fine resolution setting is used each time you fax to the DTF Archive. You may want to consider making it the default for your fax machine.
Fax machine may produce error reports. It is a good idea to develop a process by which error reports from your fax machine are reviewed to ensure all pages were transmitted successfully. This is particularly important for use in diagnosing imaging/archiving issues. **It should be noted that while all pages may transmit successfully according to the fax transmission report, it does not mean they have archived successfully.**

V. FAXING DOCUMENTATION

Once the DTF Cover Sheet is generated, documentation is collected, and the fax machine particulars are verified, the documentation can be faxed.

The DTF Cover Sheet and supporting documentation should be faxed to the number located at the top of the DTF Cover Sheet, (866) 333-6633 and may be faxed the same day the adjustment request was submitted even if the adjustment request was submitted after 5:00 p.m. ET. Remember, the DTF(s) must be received by the Federal Reserve within five business days to avoid the case being returned and any provisional entry being reversed.

**Note:** It is important to keep in mind electronic requests received after 5:00 p.m. ET will not flow into the Federal Reserve’s case management system until the next business day. Although the electronic request may not be received in the Federal Reserve’s case management system until the next business day, if the documentation has been faxed successfully, you will be able to view the DTF within Fedline (attached to the associated adjustment request) on the same day it was faxed.

When faxing, the Sender should pay close attention to the transmission to ensure the documentation is feeding correctly and not skewed. Faxes containing a large number of pages may pull to one side or the other, creating transmissions that are more difficult for the imaging software to read. As a reminder, documentation must be faxed using 8.5 x 11 inch size white paper.

If applicable, fax transmission error reports should be reviewed to determine if any documentation needs to be resubmitted. If there is an error, you must refax the documentation using the DTF Cover Sheet associated with that documentation.
VI. HOW THE IMAGING PROCESS WORKS

The Imaging Process begins when the fax transmission is received. The process requires specially optimized software to interpret the documentation received in the fax transmission.

Interpreting the Fax Transmission

Once the fax transmission is received, imaging software on the receiving end of the transmission reads and interprets the characters on the DTF Cover Sheet using a process called Optical Character Recognition (OCR). As the DTF Cover Sheet is read, the software sees characters it recognizes, such as the ABA number, and knows that the characters following should be read as the Sender’s routing number. After reading all of the data (ABA, AMOUNT SREF, ITYP and DATE) on the DTF Cover Sheet, the software then combines the five data elements to create a unique file name.

The software then reads the pages following the DTF Cover Sheet, and recognizes the pages as something other than a DTF Cover Sheet. The software creates an image of those pages. By using the unique file name derived from the DTF Cover Sheet attributes, and using the image scans of the pages following the DTF Cover Sheet, the software is able to create an image file.

Multiple Documentation Sets in a Single Transmission

The software’s ability to differentiate DTF Cover Sheets from the documentation which follows allows customers to transmit multiple sets of documentation in a single transmission. Fax transmissions of up to 50 pages can be sent at one time. As the image software reads these pages, it will create image files in the order of the transmission. Each time the imaging software recognizes a new DTF Cover Sheet, a new image file name is created, and the pages following that DTF Cover Sheet will be the images of the supporting documentations. The process repeats until the end of the fax transmission is reached.
VII. VERIFYING SUCCESSFUL DOCUMENTATION ARCHIVING

It is imperative that the Sender monitors the Imaging Process for adjustment requests which require attachments. If the Imaging Process failed, and the documentation has not matched, the documentation may need to be re-faxed to the DTF Archive.

The Archiving (matching) Process is generally completed within 20 - 40 minutes from successful fax transmission time. To verify the DTF has successfully archived, review the adjustment request in the FedLine Outbox (Sent link).

Review the FedLine Outbox

The Outbox (Sent link) contains all of the successfully sent adjustment requests submitted to the Federal Reserve for processing. Initially, the DTF column in the Outbox is not populated. However, after the documentation has been imaged and archived, it will associate with the related adjustment case. The successful association will trigger a “Y” to be populated in the DTF Column next to the corresponding sent message. After the allotted time has passed (20 - 40 minutes) you should select and view the message (even in the absence of a Y) to verify and view the Archived DTF.
VIII. TROUBLESHOOTING DTF ARCHIVE ISSUES

When the Imaging/Archiving process does not provide the results expected, you may need to troubleshoot to see where the issue(s) might be originating from. Answering the following questions will often help to pinpoint where the issue(s) might be:

Was the DTF Cover Sheet Generated Correctly?
When the DTF Cover Sheet is generated automatically (FedLine), or manually (using the Interactive DTF Cover Sheet form), what is produced is a clean, consistently formatted DTF Cover Sheet. The imaging software reads the attributes of the DTF Cover Sheet, and is programmed to expect particular characters of a specific font type (Arial) and size (16) (the default settings within the application).

DTF Cover Sheets that are not generated from FedLine or the Interactive DTF Cover Sheet, or DTF Cover Sheets that do not meet software specifications will generally result in a rejected image.

Was the DTF Cover Sheet Information Correct?
Information provided in the fields of the DTF Cover Sheet must be identical to that of the corresponding adjustment request in order for the Imaging/Archiving process to find the associated request. As a best practice, avoid using spaces and lower case letters in the SREF field.

Common errors found when the Interactive DTF Cover Sheet is used result from:
- Dashes in the ABA field of the DTF Cover Sheet
- SREF, ITYP, or DATE, being different on the adjustment request from the SREF, ITYP, or DATE on the DTF Cover Sheet
- SREF was not unique
- Date entered on the DTF Cover Sheet as the ‘current’ date and not the required cash letter or entry date (CLED) from the CA1000 (case open) message
- Handwritten data in the fields
- Missing data in one or more of the designated fields

Was the DTF Cover Sheet Fax Ready?
The DTF Cover Sheet must be clean and free of marks. Streaks and smudges may interfere with the imaging software’s ability to read the DTF Cover Sheet. Avoid placing stamps or handwritten notes on the DTF Cover Sheet. Keep in mind you are not faxing the documentation to a person in the Federal Reserve’s Check Adjustments area.
**Did You Fax Only the Required Documentation?**

Certain unnecessary documentation has been found to be misinterpreted by the imaging software as a DTF Cover Sheet, subsequently resulting in failure of the actual DTF to match to the adjustment request. This issue primarily occurs when CA messages are included as documentation. **CA messages are not required as documentation and should not be faxed (i.e. CA1000, CA1100, etc.).** If you are referring to a prior adjustment request, the SREF from the CA message should be provided in the RREF (Receiver’s Reference) field of the current request. Refer to the [Check Adjustments Quick Reference Guide](#) for information on documentation requirements.

**Are the Fax Machine Settings Correct and was the Fax Transmitted Correctly?**

Ensure that the fax machine settings are set to ‘Fine’ resolution. Often with new fax machines, this setting is not verified. Additionally, the particulars of the fax machine (how the paper feeds – right side up, right edge up) should be understood by the person transmitting the fax. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with the fax machine settings. When faxing for normal business reasons, it may not matter how the fax is transmitted but the way the DTF Cover Sheet is faxed and transmitted does matter. If you are using a computer to transmit the fax, you should verify the DTF Cover Sheet scanned and transmitted correctly.

When the DTF Cover Sheet is received wrong-side up, it will transmit as a blank page. The Sender may not immediately be aware that the Imaging Process was not successful. Sometimes the problem can go undetected for several days. It is important that you verify the DTFs have archived successfully and begin troubleshooting to determine and resolve any issues within **five business days** of the Federal Reserve’s receipt of the request to avoid reversal of any provisional entry.

Refer to the [Check Adjustments Automated Status Report](#) for information on the status of request pending with the Federal Reserve which includes cases for which the DTF was not received.

**Did the Fax Transmission Complete Smoothly?**

Fax transmissions to the DTF Archive should be monitored to ensure transmissions feed in straight (not skewed) and the transmissions are complete. This is particularly an issue with larger fax transmissions which may pull to one side as they feed. This can result in the DTF Cover Sheet being too skewed to read. Incomplete or interrupted fax transmissions will require the Sender to refax documentation known to have failed.

**Did You Wait Ample Time for the DTF Image to Attach?**

After the fax transmission has successfully completed, the images should Archive and attach to their associated case within 20 - 40 minutes. If a full hour has passed and the images have not archived, an error may have occurred. Monitor and review the Check Adjustments Automated Status report to verify the DTFs are not pending with the Federal Reserve. If they are pending, you should investigate/troubleshoot to resolve the issue within five business days.
IX. RECAP OF COMMON REASONS DTFs DO NOT IMAGE/ARCHIVE SUCCESSFULLY

It has been our experience that DTFs do not Image/Archive due to one or more common reasons. As you troubleshoot, include a review of the following to determine if:

- The DTF Cover Sheet was faxed upside down
- Unnecessary documentation, for example CA messages, was faxed
- Unnecessary information in the header/footer, such as the words ‘check adjustments’, was included
- The SREF was not unique, it was previously used; as a best practice, avoid using spaces and lower case letters in the SREF field
- Typed, stamped or handwritten information was on the DTF Cover Sheet
- Streaks from the printer/fax machine appeared on the DTF Cover Sheet

X. FACT OR FICTION EXERCISE

We hope this guide was able to assist you in understanding how the DTF Archive process works. This short exercise is intended to further assist you in ensuring your DTFs Archive successfully. After reading the statement, mark your response, Fact or Fiction. The answer key follows this exercise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Fact or Fiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DTFs are faxed to a person at the Federal Reserve.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can and should use your institution’s Cover Sheet to fax supporting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>documentation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The DTF Cover Sheet is only generated for ITYPs which require or allow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>documentation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The fax machine settings and the way the DTF Cover Sheet is transmitted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plays a key role in the Imaging Process.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the fax transmission report shows all pages were faxed successfully,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>then the pages must have archived successfully.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you submit an electronic adjustment request after 5:00 p.m. ET, you</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>should wait until the next business day to fax the DTFs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something as simple as faxing the DTF Cover Sheet upside down or the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>words ‘Check Adjustments’ in the Header/Footer could cause imaging/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>archiving issues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## XI. FACT OR FICTION ANSWER KEY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Fact or Fiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DTFs are faxed to a person at the Federal Reserve.</td>
<td>Fiction. Imaging software is receiving and reading the information on the DTF Cover Sheet through a process called Optical Character Recognition (OCR). Refer to pages 3 and 10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can and should use your institution’s Cover Sheet to fax supporting documentation.</td>
<td>Fiction. You should only use the DTF Cover Sheet generated through FedLine or the .pdf Interactive form. Refer to page 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The DTF Cover Sheet is only generated for ITYPs which require or allow documentation.</td>
<td>Fact. Refer to page 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The fax machine settings and the way the DTF Cover Sheet is transmitted plays a key role in the Imaging Process.</td>
<td>Fact. Refer to page 8, 9, and 13.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the fax transmission report shows all pages were faxed successfully, then the pages must have archived successfully.</td>
<td>Fiction. It should be noted that while all pages may transmit successfully according to the fax transmission report, it does not mean they have archived successfully. Refer to page 9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you submit an electronic adjustment request after 5:00 p.m. ET, you should wait until the next business day to fax the DTFs.</td>
<td>Fiction. DTFs may be faxed the same day the request is submitted regardless of the time of day the request is submitted. Refer to page 9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something as simple as faxing the DTF Cover Sheet upside down or the words ‘Check Adjustments’ in the Header/Footer could cause imaging/archiving issues.</td>
<td>Fact. Refer to page 14.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>