

9.0 Folder Management and Archiving

The concept of folders in FEMIS provides a means to associate the activities done in a specific EOC usually over one or more days. A folder is normally initiated when some new type of activity commences. The new folder may be initialized with some preset information, but much of the folder specific information is empty at the time of creation. Information in the folder increases depending on what is happening during the time the folder is open. When the activities are completed or after some predefined length of time has elapsed, the folder is closed. A folder limits the amount of data seen by the EOC users and makes their jobs easier to perform. Since a folder contains only related information, it is easy to review this information at a later time.

Folders can be used to review information and decisions that were made in the past. This may be done informally to determine how well EOC users perform their tasks, or it may be done as part of some legal action arising from property or personal damages. For both of these activities it is recommended to copy or move the folder information from the EOC to another platform where the integrity of the data can be guaranteed. If the folder database information is not saved in a timely manner, it will be difficult or impossible to reconstruct since new information will overwrite or modify it.

9.1 External Storage

Folder data must be saved on the EOC server where it was created and put in a form so it can be moved to another database. The data must be saved soon after the folder is closed in order to capture a true snapshot of the conditions present at that time. If this is not done, changes made at other EOCs will change the database.

The Oracle export utility is used for saving the folder on a medium that can be used to recreate the database at a later time. A system level database export is performed each workday evening as part of the database backup policy. The export creates a disk file on the server each night during the workweek. These export files get backed up to tape as part of the server file backup. The export file could be copied to another server or copied to a tape that could be stored with other folder exports for long period of time.

The process is controlled by a FEMIS cron job that normally runs at 22:00 each workday night. This schedule can be modified to suit the needs of the EOC. The process does a system level export of the database and then calls the Folder Deletion process described below.

9.2 Folder Data Deletion

The FEMIS database contains information, such as meteorological data, Work Plans, and D2PC cases that will build up many records during a month's interval. In older versions of FEMIS, a timed archive process saved the data and then deleted some of it to keep the tables at a manageable size.

Archiving is now performed by the folder delete process combined with the External Storage process described above.

Folder Deletion considers whether a folder is using a database table, and if it is, whether the folder is closed and marked for deletion. Tables containing status board data, D2PC cases, and Journal data are used by folders so obsolete records will be removed when the folder is no longer needed. For the depot, the Folder Delete process is more complicated than for offpost EOCs due to the presence of Work Plans and meteorological data that only resides in the depot database.

Special business rules for deleting folder data are used for the Journal table and Met tables. The Journal table may get large even though it is a folder table, so the delete process checks the first Monday of each month to look for records older than 28 days. If any records are found, they are deleted. The Met tables are checked each Monday of every week, and data is removed that is older than 7 days.

To aid in the Folder Deletion process, a new Oracle stored procedure has been developed. This procedure is executed each time the External Store exports the database. It will delete folder data for all EOCs that reside on the server.

9.3 Archiving D2PC Cases

Archiving D2PC cases may now be done by opening a new folder and marking the old folder for archival.