

eventACTION and ussACTION Release Notes – Version 7.11



Change Control Processing

Change control processing has been enhanced to separate dataset-level changes from member-level changes. Prior to eventACTION 7.11, you could delete or rename a controlled (Change Request Required) partitioned dataset using a change request that specified a dataset name with a unique or masked member entry; likewise, a controlled member could be changed via a change request whose entry specified a dataset name and no member name, i.e., blanks in the member field. A blank member name in the change request was treated the same as a member mask “*”. This was counter-intuitive, especially when authorization is involved; a person approving a change request may assume that they are approving changes to specific members when in fact their approval may allow the person making the changes to delete the entire dataset.

To provide more granular control of the various types of changes, there is now a difference between the ways that a change request must define the resources being changed in order to indicate if the change is for one or more members versus a change to the entire dataset.

Under eventACTION, all partitioned-type datasets can have both member-level and dataset-level changes; these include regular PDS, PDSE, Librarian and Parvalet files. All sequential and VSAM files can only have dataset-level changes. The general rule of thumb is that if z/OS does not indicate to eventACTION that specific members are affected by a change or if all the data within the dataset (including the entire directory of a library) is affected, then it is considered a dataset-level change.

Member-level changes include:

- Add/replace member
- Delete member
- Rename member
- Zap member

Dataset-level changes include:

- Delete dataset
- Rename dataset
- Update dataset (sequential or VSAM)
- Create dataset (only if allocation control activated)
- Empty PDS (delete all members)
- Compress PDS (if controlled compress activated)
- DFDSS/FDR replace dataset

Therefore, when making a dataset-level change, the dataset entry in the change request intended to allow the change must have blanks specified in the member field; an asterisk will not satisfy this requirement. Conversely, when making a member-level change, the member field must contain a unique member or mask; this includes an asterisk but blanks will not satisfy the requirement. If both dataset- and member-level changes are required for a change request, then a minimum of two entries will need to be specified in the dataset list, one with blanks in the member field and one with non-blanks in the member field.

When using a forced-for-blackout change request, the member fields are not checked for a change request thus only a dataset name is required at the time a change is being made; however, the change request will only be

marked with Change Made if the member name requirements are specified and met as with regular change requests.



Considerations for Change Requests when Upgrading to eventACTION 7.11

Because eventACTION 7.11 will be searching for different dataset entries in change requests for dataset-level changes versus member-level changes, any open change requests, especially perpetual ones, will need to be reviewed prior to implementing 7.11.

If something is already specified in the member field of a dataset entry in the change request (such as member name, member mask or asterisk) and you only want member-level changes to be allowed under the request, then no change is necessary; but if you also want to have dataset-level changes (such as renaming the entire dataset) allowed under this same request, then you will need to add an entry for the dataset name with blanks in the member field.

Conversely, if you have dataset entries in the change request that have blanks in the member fields and you only want to allow dataset-level changes under this request, then no change is necessary. However, if you want only member-level changes to be allowed under this same change request and not dataset-level changes, then you will need to change the blanks in the member field to asterisk; if you want member-level changes and dataset-level changes to be allowed under this request, then you will need to add another entry for the dataset name with an asterisk in the member field.

Prior to 7.11, blanks in the member field of a dataset entry is equivalent to specifying an asterisk; after 7.11 blanks do not satisfy the requirement for member-level changes and conversely anything in the member field will not satisfy the requirement for dataset-level changes. The key to remember is that a blank member field will no longer be used to allow member-level changes. Therefore, any of the above changes can be made to open change requests prior to implementing 7.11 since, in release 7.10 and below, either specifications (blanks or non-blanks) will satisfy the pre-7.11 environment.

Please also note that if any changes must be made to open change requests, especially perpetual ones, once they have already been approved or some changes have already been made, then you may need to create new change requests since updates to the current ones may not be permitted. If you use the batch interface to create change requests and have any processes in place for doing so, then you may need to review these processes to ensure proper masking is used for member-level changes.

Change Requests

The External Change Request Id has been expanded to 10 characters.

Note: This will also work with Batch Interface to Change Request. If you need more than 10 characters, please contact Action Software International.

Enhancements have been made to improve the updating of the change request with the Change Made information as well as to better document the change event that occurred under the allowance of the change request. Refer to the Change Log (command CHGL) within a change request to see the added information; also in this log, only the userid making the change is now displayed as the reference to MZCA has been removed since it is only MZCA that ever updates this log.

Under USSACTION, the change requests are now updated at the dataset entry level with the Change Made status and the SMFid where the change was made has been added to the Change Log (command CHGL) within the change request.

Datasets Changed Tracking and Control Information

When changes are made to datasets and members under the authority of a change request, eventACTION previously saved either the internal or external request id in the change tracking information; if an external id existed then it superseded the internal one. As of 7.11, eventACTION now records both the internal and the external id, if one exists, with the change tracking information. The Member Information under Datasets Changed (Option D) now shows both change request ids for any changes that occur once eventACTION 7.11 is implemented.

Under USSACTION, both of these forms of the change request id are also now recorded with the change tracking information for changes that occur after USSACTION 7.11 is implemented; the change request information is now displayed on the panels under option D within USSACTION.

eventACTION and ussACTION Masking

A new mask character, the back slash, has been added for masking. The back slash, otherwise known as the "escape character", will cause any character that follows the "\" to be treated as a literal character instead of a potential mask character. As an example, if a userid is *BYPASS* and you wanted to select that userid through masking, using \ in front of * causes * to be compared as a character rather than being a mask character that matches anything. So your mask, in this example could be \`*BYPAS*`

PDS Dataset Level Control

Normally PDS members are updated using the STOW SVC and such updates can be tracked and controlled by eventACTION using its STOW SVC hook. But eventACTION cannot control changes made to PDS members by products that choose to update the PDS directory directly instead of using STOW.

A new Beta feature is now available to control changes to PDS by a list of user defined programs that are known to update PDS members without using STOW. Using this new Beta feature, when a user-defined PDS is opened for output by one of the user-defined list of programs, eventACTION can reject the OPEN and prevent changes to the PDS. In this case, the control is done at the dataset level, not at the member level.

If you wish to test this Beta feature and provide feedback on the results of your testing, please contact Action Software International.

Program Execution Tracking (PET)

Selection variables have been added to the database counts display which allows listing only those records that match the variables.

Product Execution Control (PXC)

Changes are made to "User Group allowed to execute". If you are part of a specified User Group, then execution will be allowed, irrespective of what was specified for SMFID.

Reference Tracking by Dataset (RTDS)

A new option, Allocation, has been added to RTDS. When this option is set to Yes, stats (date and counts) will be accumulated whenever the file is allocated, when the Allocation Tracking or Allocation Control Beta feature is active.

Allocation Tracking

A new Beta feature is now available to track the allocation of new or existing datasets.

Allocation Control

A new Beta feature is now available to control the allocation (creation) of new datasets.

Note: Both Allocation Tracking and Allocation Control are Beta features and are subject to further change. Please notify Action Software International if you wish to test these features, and provide feedback on the results of your testing.

Report - User Group and Userids Cross-Reference report

User Group and Userid Xref

This report is by User Group, under each user group, all userids defined in the Userlist will be listed. A pseudo user group for system administrators will be added to the report when no selection is specified in the selection criteria.

Userid and User Group Xref

This report is by Userid, under each userid, all the user groups that have this userid defined will be listed.

Report - DSSUMMARY Datasets Changed Summary Report

A third report format has been added to produce a listing which summarizes change information with an emphasis to include the eventACTION internal change request id (OID & change number), the external change request id, if one exists, and the short description of the change request. This new format option can be found on the "Reporting Criteria for DSSUMMARY" panel as an alternative to the SCAN or default formats.

ussACTION - Protect selected files from create/delete/rename

Currently, in order to protect a file from create/delete/rename, the file's parent directory must be defined to ussACTION for Change Tracking (with Change Request=YES). However once the parent directory is defined (protected), all files within the directory are automatically protected as well. This is in line with traditional UNIX behaviour.

A user requirement has been submitted recently to request more granular control over file create/delete/rename. In other words, instead of protecting the entire directory, only selective files in the directory are protected. A new beta feature has been developed to satisfy this requirement.

If you wish to test this Beta feature and provide feedback on the results of your testing, please contact Action Software International.

ussACTION - Detect new subdirectory created in root

Normally 'SUBDIR=YES' is not allowed to be specified when defining the root '/' to ussACTION for Change Tracking or Reference Tracking. This is to prevent unintentional and unnecessary definition of subdirectories in the root to ussACTION, resulting in costly CPU and disk I/O overhead. New or old subdirectories in the root must be added to ussACTION manually as a precautionary measure.

A user requirement has been submitted recently to automatically detect the creation of subdirectories in the root. As a result, a new beta feature has been developed to satisfy the requirement. With the new beta feature activated, a newly created subdirectory will be added automatically to ussACTION for Reference Tracking (see the description for ussRT below) and Change Tracking. A backup will be taken for the new subdirectory either immediately or by the overnight daily job.

It is still strongly recommended any new subdirectory created in the root and added to ussACTION for Change Tracking and Reference tracking should be carefully reviewed to determine if it may cause excessive CPU and disk I/O overhead.

If you wish to test this Beta feature and provide feedback on the results of your testing, please contact Action Software International.

ussACTION - ussPXC (Product Execution Control for USS)

A new feature is available in Beta mode that will allow tracking and control of the execution of executable objects in the HFS and zFS file systems.

Note: This feature is currently under Beta test and is subject to further change. Please notify Action Software International if you wish to test this feature, and provide feedback regarding the results of your testing.

ussACTION - ussRT

Now supports dynamically creating a definition entry when a new sub-directory is added to the root directory (see the description of the new beta feature above).

testACTION

The testACTION main panel has been changed to remove "START/STOP" options; only "SUSPEND/RESUME" will be supported from the main panel.

About Action Software International

Action Software International is a division of Mazda Computer Corporation.

Located in Toronto, Canada, Mazda Computer Corporation has been producing superior systems and network management software since 1980. The Company's products are widely deployed within Global 2000 companies, as well as numerous government and institutional sites.

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