**What story does your short-cut code tell?**

**Deconstructing your STARS Coding**

To ensure that all of the financial data that an agency currently captures in STARS is captured in Luma, agencies will need to go through the exercise of decoding their short-cut codes (Index and PCA codes). This not only makes the build-out of hierarchies a much more efficient task, but will also make cross-walking data from STARS to Luma easier!

Once an agency has deconstructed their short-cut codes, they can begin to analyze their needs, identify in which dimension each piece of information belongs, and start the hierarchy build-out process. The following questions will help simplify this process:

1. Does your agency use PCA codes, Index codes or both? Do you use any optional fields in STARS to capture data (such as MPC, Task, Location, Project, Grant, etc.) and for what purpose?
2. What is the logic behind your short-cut codes? What does each number in the sequence mean?
   * For example, some agencies use PCA to represent the Fund and Program dimensions (PCA 348**20**: 348 represents Federal Fund 0348 and **20** represents the agency’s appropriated Program). Additionally, agencies build location, fund, and division into their PCAs and Index codes, while others randomly assign new PCA’s each State Fiscal Year. All of this information is helpful to determine optimal set-up in Luma.
   * For the other optional STARS fields (MPC, Task, Location, Project, Grant, etc.), some agencies use the Location dimension to capture a specific geological location while others have used it as an “extra” field to capture some other piece of information. MPC codes are used to capture an invoice numbers among other things, while Task codes are used to capture a location, cost/activity type (travel, supplies, equipment, etc.), or projects, to name a few.
3. Now that you have answered the above, it’s time to self-evaluate:
   * Do you need to capture all of above information?
   * Why do you need the above information? Is it for appropriation purposes? Internal/external reporting requirements? Internal budgeting, forecasting and planning? *It is vitally important that the Agency staff setting up their agency hierarchies in Luma have a firm understanding of their STARS coding and how it relates to their operations.*
   * Is there accounting-related data that is not captured in STARS that you need captured in Luma? Do you have external systems (applications, Microsoft Excel spreadsheets, etc.) that capture information?