Full-Text Searches

Using a full-text search, you can locate any word or phrase in a file stored as an electronic document (E-Document) in the STAR database. (Depending on your installation, the search may also include the Description and Synopsis fields of filings.) To get the specific results you're looking for, however, you should become acquainted with a few basic rules and guidelines.

This document provides the following information:
- Basic rules for full-text searching
- Using Boolean and proximity operators
- Using wildcards
- Using word stems

Basic Full-Text Search Rules

Rule	Search Criteria Entered	Results
Queries can include a single word. **Note:** If you type more than one word, you will receive an error unless you enclose them within quotation marks (see the following rule) or use a Boolean or proximity operator.	pipeline	Files containing the word *pipeline*
Multiple words enclosed within quotation marks are treated as a phrase. They must appear in the same order within a matching file. **Note:** If you enter multiple words without enclosing them in quotation marks, you will receive an error. To find multiple words that are not a phrase, you must use a Boolean or proximity operator.	"pipeline regulations"	Files containing the phrase *pipeline regulations*
Queries are not case sensitive; the search ignores capitalization.	RAM	Files containing the word *RAM* or *ram*
Common words—"a," "an," "and," "for," "or," and "the"—are ignored during a search. Such words are treated as placeholders in the phrase. **Note: "**AND" and "OR" also function as Boolean operators.	"Word for Windows"	Files containing a three-word phrase where the first word is "Word" and the third word is "Windows," including *Word for Windows* and *Word and Windows*
Punctuation marks (for example, period [.], colon [:], semicolon [;], and comma [,]) are ignored during a search.	"regulations: pipeline"	Files containing the phrase *regulations pipeline*

Boolean and Proximity Operators

Boolean and proximity operators (AND, OR, NOT, and NEAR) can be used to produce more precise search results. Each operator has both a keyword and a symbol (or combination of symbols) that can be used in the search. **Note:** To use an operator as a word and not an operator, place quotation marks (") around the phrase. For example, the search phrase "*Abbott and Costello*" returns files containing the three-word phrase where "Abbott" is the first word and "Costello" is the third words, such as *Abbott and Costello*, *Abbott sees Costello*, and *Abbott baffles Costello*.

Operator	Notes	Search Criteria Entered	Results
Keyword: AND *Symbol: & Searches for:* Files containing both terms	AND has a higher precedence in searches than OR. Refer to Precedence of Boolean Operators.	access AND basic access & basic	Files with both the words *access* and *basic*
Keyword: OR *Symbol: |* *Searches for:* Files containing either term	OR has a lower precedence in searches than AND. Refer to Precedence of Boolean Operators.	cgi OR isapi cgi | isapi	Files with the word *cgi* or *isapi*
Keyword: AND NOT *Symbol: & ! Searches for:* Files containing the first term without the second term	NOT may be used only in conjunction with AND, not alone (that is, AND NOT). When AND NOT is used, the search finds all matches for the first term and then excludes all matches that also include the second term.	access AND NOT basic access & ! basic	Files with the word *access* but not the word *basic*
Keyword: NEAR *Symbol: ~ Searches for:* Files containing both terms, located close together	NEAR functions similarly to AND—in other words, the matches returned contain both terms. However, the rank of the match indicates the closeness of the words to each other—the closer together the words are, the higher the rank. If they are more than 50 words apart, the result is assigned a rank of 0.	excel NEAR project excel ~ project	Files with the word *excel* near the word *project*

Precedence of Boolean Operators

In general, the search term is considered from the left to the right; however, this order is overridden in the following cases:

- Anything in parentheses is considered first; therefore, use parentheses to nest expressions within a search.
- AND takes precedence over OR (that is, AND operators are considered before OR operators).

Search Criteria Entered	Results
Pipeline AND regulations AND application AND tariff	Files containing all of the following terms: ♣ *Pipeline*, *regulations*, *application*, and *tariff*
Pipeline AND regulations AND application OR tariff Tariff OR pipeline AND regulations AND application	Files containing all of the following terms: ♣ *Pipeline*, *regulations*, *application* And files containing the following single term: ♣ *Tariff*
Pipeline AND regulations AND (application OR tariff) Pipeline AND (application OR tariff) AND regulations (Application OR tariff) AND pipeline AND regulations	Files containing all of the following terms: ♣ *Pipeline*, *regulations*, *application* And files containing all of the following terms: ♣ *Pipeline*, *regulations*, *tariff*

Wildcards

At times, you may want to include variations of a word in your search results (for example, *regulation* as well as *regulations*, or *regulation* and *regulations* as well as *regulatory*). To do so, use a "wildcard," which is indicated by an asterisk (*).

Important: Any search term with a wildcard must be enclosed within quotation marks (for example, "regulat*"); if the term is not enclosed within quotation marks, the * will not be treated as a wildcard. To use a wildcard, enter the characters that must match at the beginning of the word and then place the wildcard character (*) where there is a variation. **Note:** Wildcards can be used only at the end of a word—they cannot be used at the beginning of or in the middle of a set of characters (for example, "*ation" or "reg*s").

Search Criteria Entered	Results
"reg*"	Files containing any word that begins with the letters "reg," such as *regency*, *regulation*, *regulations*, *regulator*, *regulators*, and *regulatory*
"regulat*"	Files containing any word that begins with the letters "regulat," such as *regulation*, *regulations*, *regulator*, *regulators*, and *regulatory*
"regulati*"	Files containing any word that begins with the letters "regulati," such as *regulation* and *regulations*
"regulato*"	Files containing any word that begins with the letters "regulato," such as *regulator*, *regulators*, and *regulatory*

Word Stems

Sometimes, variations of a word (especially verbs) are spelled dramatically different. For example, if you wanted all variations of the word "fly," you would need a search for *fly*, *flies*, *flying*, *flew*, and *flown*. Because the words are so different, the only wildcard search that would find all of them would be "fl*", but that would also match any other word that started with "fl", such as *flag* and *fluoride*. However, because these words are all based on the same word stem (*fly*), you can use word stems to find all variations. To use word stems, use the search criteria formsof(inflectional, "[your search term]") where [your search term] is replaced with the word stem for which you are searching.

Search Criteria Entered	Results
Formsof(inflectional, "fly")	Files with words based on the same stem as "fly": *fly*, *flies*, *flying*, *flew*, and *flown*.
Formsof(inflectional, "eat"")	Files with the words based on the same stem as "eat": *eat*, *eats*, *eating*, *ate*, *eaten*.