# SOX Check Approval Console

# User Guide

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# SOX Check Approval System Overview

The use of SOX Check Approval is described in several documents, each one targeted at a different kind of user.

- **SOX Extended Payment Batch List User Guide** is a document written for users of Sage 300 who prepare payment batches and submit them for approval.
- **SOX Check Approval Console User Guide** is a document written for key users who will perform a 1, 2 or 3-step approval. These users may not be familiar with Sage 300.
- **SOX Check Approval Web Screens User Guide** is for users of the web-based versions of Sage 300 who approve A/P payment batches or submit them for approval.
- **SOX Check Approval Audit Report User Guide** is for users who oversee the A/P payment process. The report provides an audit trail for the approval of Sage 300 payments.
- **SOX Check Approval Setup Guide** is a document written for system administrators who set up databases and configure the solution.

# Check Approval Console Operation

The SOX Check Approval Console is designed to be as simple as possible for payment approvers:

- Payment approvers get an email when a batch of payments is ready for approval.
- They start the Check Approval Console from the Windows Start List, Windows Taskbar, or from an icon on the Windows desktop.
- Payment approvers log onto the Check Approval Console using a Sage 300 user ID.

  They do not run Sage 300 to approve payments, *but they must be added to Sage 300 as users*, and must be added as payment approvers in the Check Approval Setup program.
- SOX Check Approval has four different check approval workflows:
  - **Strict workflow:** All checks go to the Level-1 approvers first, then to Level-2 approvers, and then to Level-3 approvers.
  - **Basic workflow:** All checks go to the Level-1 approvers first. Payments that are above the Level 1 payment limit move on to Level-2 approvers for approval, and payments that are above the Level 2 payment limit go to Level-3 approvers. Level 2 and 3 approvers do not approve lower payment amounts.
  - **Relaxed workflow:** Checks are approved at one level only. Level-1 approvers only see payments below the Level 1 payment limit, Level-2 approvers only see payments that are above the Level 1 payment limit and below the Level 3 payment limit, and Level-3 approvers only see payments that are above the Level 2 payment limit.
  - **Simplified workflow:** Requires up to 3 approvers for each check – in any order. Approvers may see payments that have been approved by 0, 1, or 2 other users.
- Once payments have been reviewed and all edits are complete, approvers click the Approve button or the Return button to move the payment batch to the next phase of the approval process or return it to the previous phase.

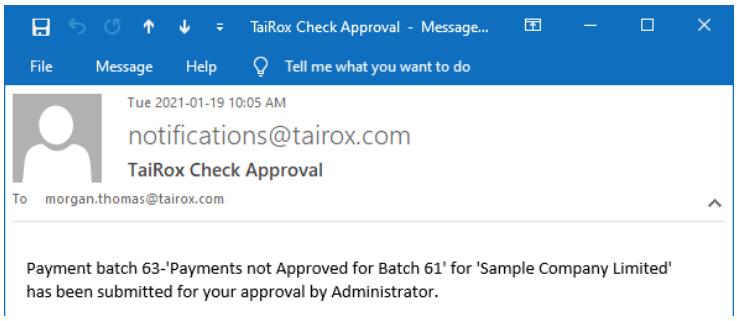
  Approvers at the next level will get an email stating that the new batch requires approval.

If you use the Simplified workflow, all other approvers will be sent an email stating that the batch has been approved by a first approver.

### Typical Email Notification

When email notifications are turned on for a company, an approver will receive an email identifying the batch, company and submitter, and will know they should open the Check Approval Console to approve payments.

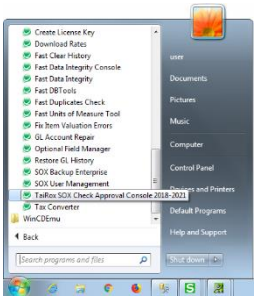
For example, the following message shows that “Administrator” submitted payment batch 63 for Sample Company Ltd. for approval.



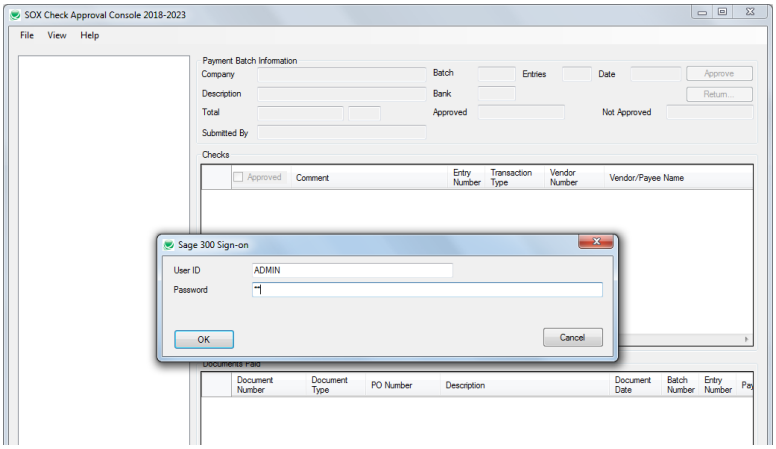

**Note:** The Check Approval Console lets you send test emails to ensure that email works properly. See Sending Test Emails from the Console, at the end of this guide.

## Starting SOX Check Approval Console

- Launch the Check Approval Console from **Start Menu > All Programs > TaiRox Software > TaiRox SOX Check Approval Console.**



The following window will appear.



- **Enter your Sage 300 user ID and Password**

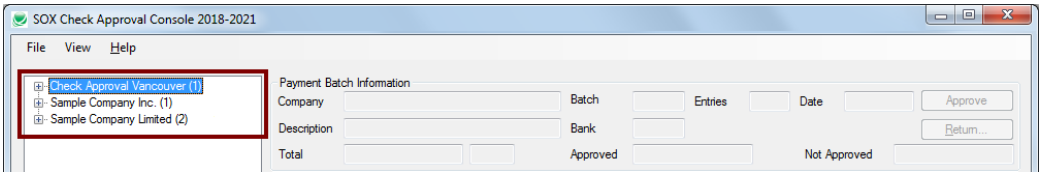
  The SOX Check Approval Console displays *all companies* with submitted payment batches *for which you are an approver*. It also shows the number of payment batches for each company requiring approval immediately after the company name.

  *The console will not list a company unless:*

  - The company has batches requiring approval.
  - You are a valid approver for the batches that require approval.

  For example, if you are a level 1 approver, you will see batches that require level 1 approval, but you will not see batches that require level 2 approval.

  The following screen shows that Sample Company Limited has two batches that require approval.




  Tree-view navigation lets you select a company and its batches. The console will initially appear with the tree-view not expanded.

  **SOX Check Approval provides 4 different workflows. Each company can use a different workflow**

  *In a Strict workflow:*

  - A level 1 approver will only see payment batches and payments that have not been approved by anyone. Once the payments are approved, they are moved to the next step of the approval process.
  - A level 2 user will only see payments that have been approved by a level-1 approver.
  - A level 3 user will only see payments that have been approved by a level-2 approver.

  *In a Basic workflow:*

  - A level 1 approver will only see payment batches and payments that have not been approved by anyone. Once the payments are approved, they are moved to the next step of the approval process if they are over the Level 1 Limit for payment approval.
  - A level 2 user will only see payments that have been approved by a level-1 approver – and are over the Level 1 Limit for full payment approval.
  - A level 3 user will only see payments that have been approved by a level-2 approver – and are over the Level 2 Limit for full payment approval.

  *In a Relaxed workflow:*

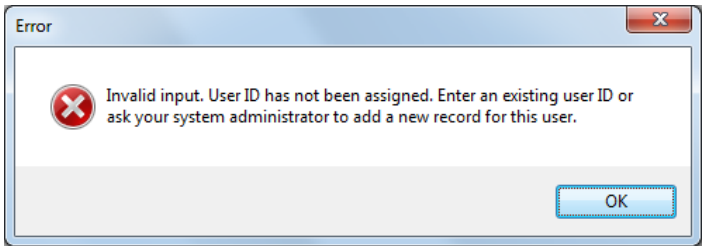
  - A level 1 approver will only see payment batches and payments that have not been approved by anyone – and are under the Level 1 Limit for payments.
  - A level 2 user will only see payments that are over the Level 1 Limit for payments and under the Level 2 Limit for payments.
  - A level 3 user will only see payments that are over the Level 2 Limit for payments.
  - Once all payments have gone through the approval process, they are moved to the next step.

  *In a Simplified workflow:*

  - An approver will see all payment batches and payments that have not yet been approved by the required number of approvers.

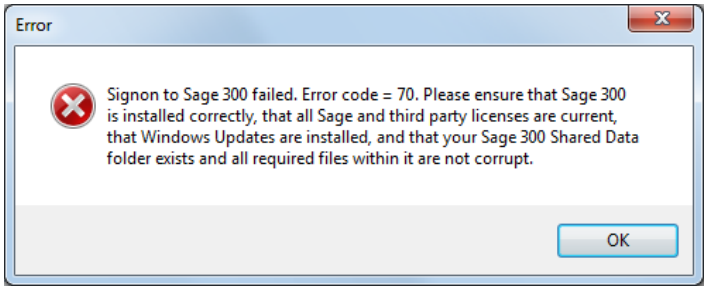
### Logon error messages

**Invalid input:** The following error message will appear if the ID you entered has not been added to Sage 300 or if the password you entered is incorrect.




If this is your first time signing in, check with a system administrator that the User ID has been added in Sage, and confirm the password. (You can test the ID by signing on to Sage 300.)

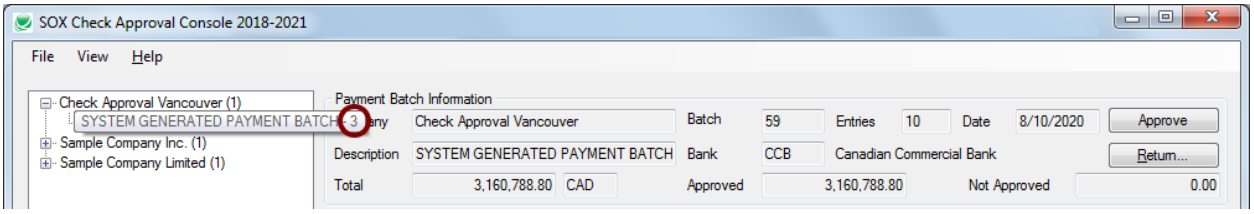
**Signon failed:** This message can appear if you were assigned a new Sage 300 ID that required a password change on the first login.




If this is your first time signing in, you should sign in to Sage 300 first to ensure your ID works properly, and then change your password if requested by Sage.

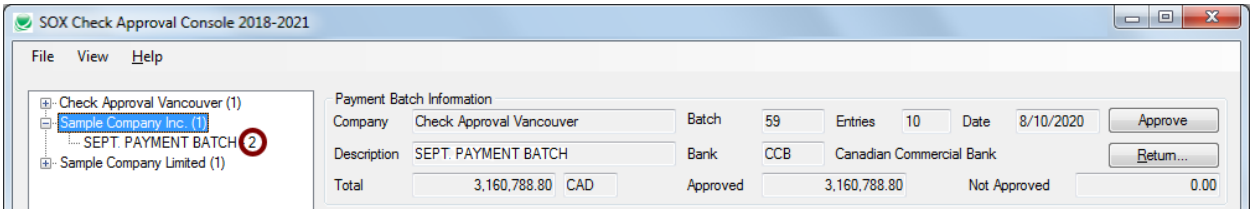
## Approving/Rejecting Payments

When you expand the tree-view, the number at the end of each batch shows the number of approvers – or the number of approval levels – that the batch requires – “3” approvers or approval levels in the example below.




This number will be the same for all batches in the same company (unless batches were submitted and then the approval workflow for the company was changed).

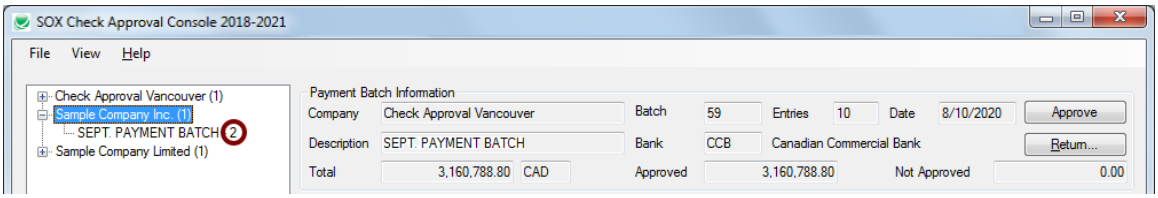
Different companies can have a different approval workflow – “2” levels for Sample Company Inc., shown below.




Once a batch is submitted, the number of approvers or the number of levels of approval cannot be changed.

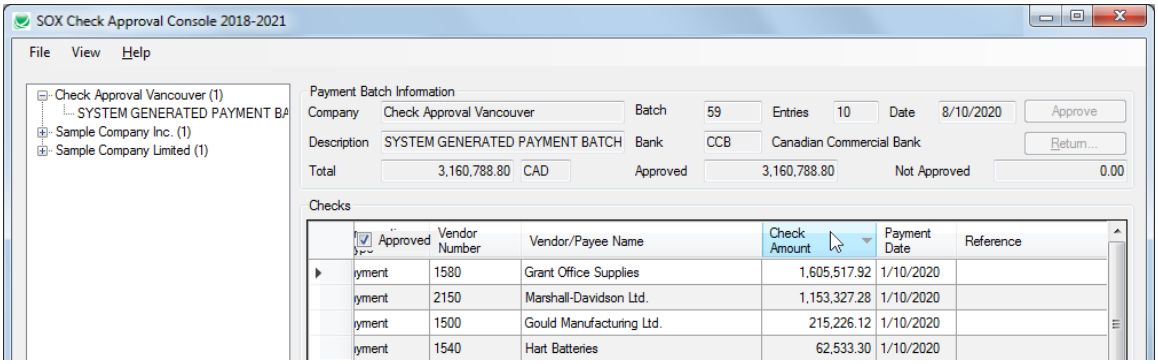
### To Approve Payments

- **Click the batch to list all payments in that batch that need approval** – as shown below.

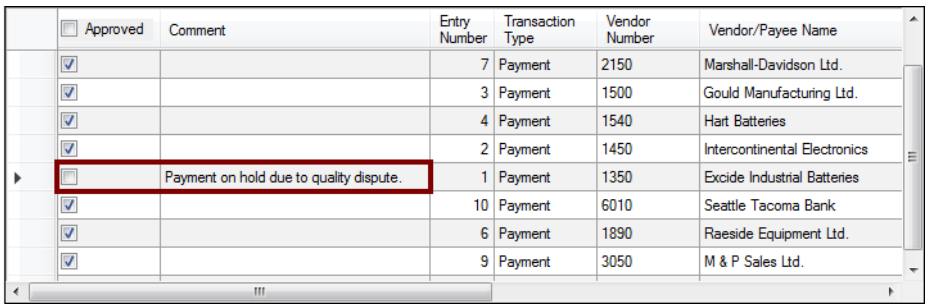



Notice that payments are marked as "Approved" by default. This is an optional setting.

- **Click a column title in the Checks grid to sort by that column.** For example, click the Check Amount column to see checks sorted by amount (as below).




- **Deselect payments to reject them. You MUST add a comment if you reject a payment.** (Reasons are required for rejected payments.)

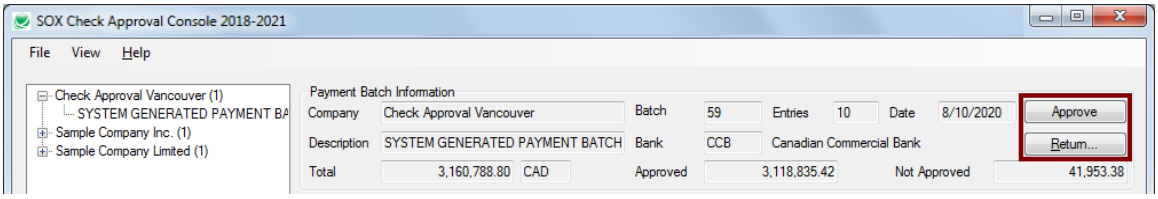



If you edit the grid (for example, if you uncheck the "Approved" checkbox for a payment), the Approve and Return buttons will be disabled until you save your changes.

Note that you must also add a comment for each unapproved payment and click the Save button to continue.

- **Click the Save button at the bottom of the form to save your edits.**

- You cannot save until you enter comments for all unapproved payments.
- When you save your edits, the Approve and Return buttons will become active.

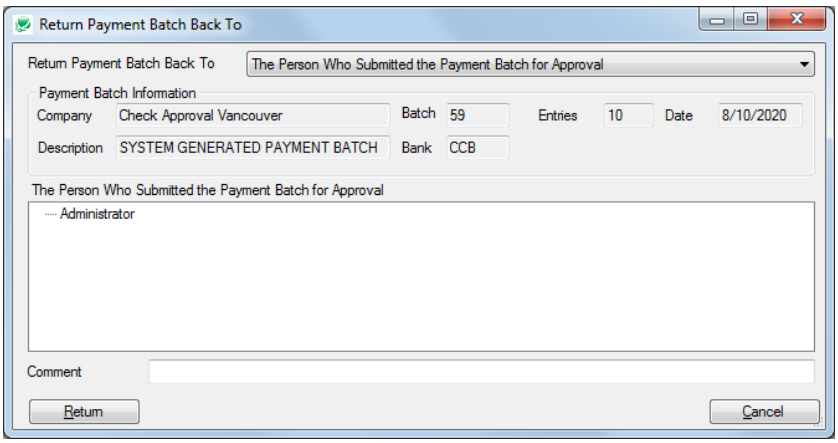



- **Once all edits are complete and saved, click the Approve button or the Return button.**
  - The Approve button will move the payment batch to the next phase of the approval process.

    **If you are the final approver,** the batch status will change to “Open” and unapproved payments will be deleted from the batch. Depending on the options chosen for your company, the deleted payments may be added to a new batch.

    The approved checks can now be printed using the Extended Payment Batch List program.
  - The Return button will return the batch to the previous phase of the process.

  **If you click the Return button**, then following message will appear:




- **Click the Return button to confirm.**

## Check Approval Option to Automatically Approve Payments Under a Threshold

SOX Check Approval includes an option to automatically approve payments under a particular threshold.

The following example shows how a payment batch will appear if you choose automatic approval for payments below $10,000.

Notice that the payments below the $10,000 threshold default to "Approved" and the payments above the threshold require the approver to specifically select these payments.

You will not be able to save this batch until comments are provided for all payments that are <u>not</u> approved.

| Approved | Comment | Entry Number | Transaction Type | Vendor Number | Vendor/Payee Name | Check Amount | Payment Date | Reference | Document Number |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ | | 1 | Payment | 1350 | Excide Industrial Batteries | 42,070.75 | 1/13/2020 | | PY00000000000000000081 |
| ☐ | | 2 | Payment | 1450 | Intercontinental Electronics | 45,826.17 | 1/13/2020 | | PY00000000000000000082 |
| ☐ | | 3 | Payment | 1500 | Gould Manufacturing Ltd. | 215,828.24 | 1/13/2020 | | PY00000000000000000083 |
| ☐ | | 4 | Payment | 1540 | Hart Batteries | 62,708.25 | 1/13/2020 | | PY00000000000000000084 |
| ☐ | | 5 | Payment | 1580 | Grant Office Supplies | 1,610,009.50 | 1/13/2020 | | PY00000000000000000085 |
| ☑ | | 6 | Payment | 1890 | Raeside Equipment Ltd. | 9,340.96 | 1/13/2020 | | PY00000000000000000086 |
| ☐ | | 7 | Payment | 2150 | Marshall-Davidson Ltd. | 1,156,553.82 | 1/13/2020 | | PY00000000000000000087 |
| ☑ | | 8 | Payment | 2300 | Torrington Ltd. | 1,447.91 | 1/13/2020 | | PY00000000000000000088 |
| ☑ | | 9 | Payment | 3050 | M & P Sales Ltd. | 5,904.86 | 1/13/2020 | | PY00000000000000000089 |
| ☐ | | 10 | Payment | 6010 | Seattle Tacoma Bank | 19,940.95 | 1/13/2020 | | PY00000000000000000090 |

### Basic and Relaxed Check Approval Options to Limit Approval Level Amounts

The Basic and Relaxed workflow options in SOX Check Approval let you limit the size of payments that can be fully approved at each level, and force larger payments to be approved at higher levels.

In the Basic workflow, all payments must be approved at lower levels, and larger payments must also be approved at higher levels.

In the Relaxed workflow, larger payments are not approved at the lower levels. Payments are only approved at the level that matches the payment amount.

For example, the following screens shows a batch submitted where the level 1 approver can only approve payments up to $5,000.00, and the level 2 approver approves payments over $5,000.00.

In this batch, the level 1 approver sees only three payments – all for amounts under 5,000.00.

Checks

| Approved | Comment | Entry Number | Transaction Type | Vendor Number | Vendor/Payee Name | Check Amount |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ☑ | | 5 | Payment | 5000 | Deca Management | 2,039.07 |
| ☑ | | 6 | Payment | 5030 | Donald & Donald | 775.99 |
| ☑ | | 7 | Payment | 5080 | Head Office - Stewart Office S | 1,662.52 |

The level 2 approver sees all payments above $5,000.00 – but not payments below that amount.

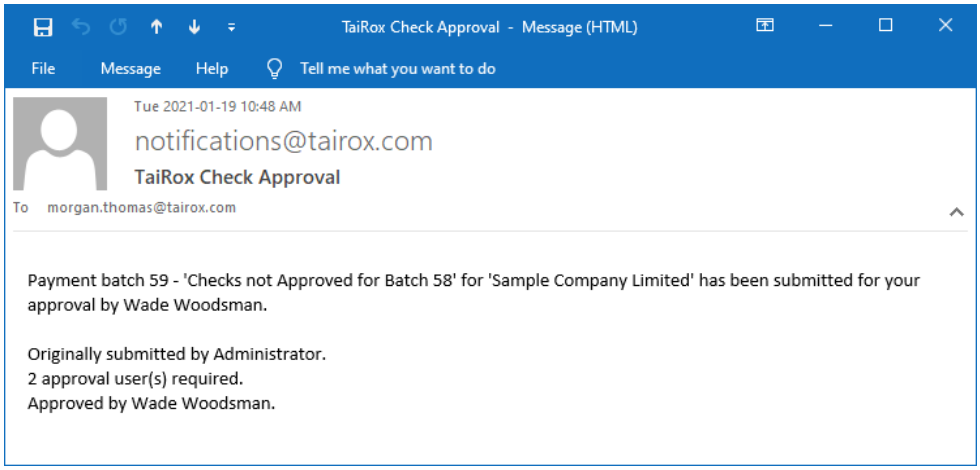
Checks

| Approved | Comment | Entry Number | Transaction Type | Vendor Number | Vendor/Payee Name | Check Amount |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ | | 1 | Payment | 1350 | Excide Industrial Batteries | 47,555.72 |
| ☐ | | 2 | Payment | 1540 | Hart Batteries | 67,784.42 |
| ☐ | | 3 | Payment | 1890 | Raeside Equipment Ltd. | 10,710.90 |
| ☐ | | 4 | Payment | 2300 | Torrington Ltd. | 17,178.46 |

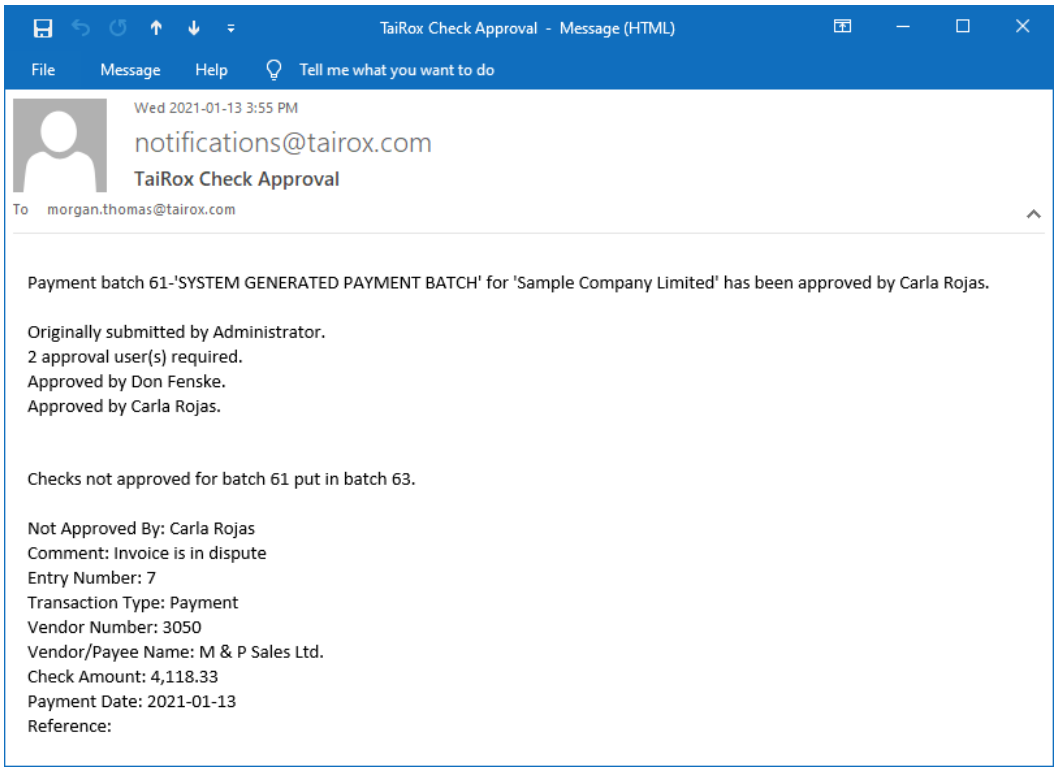
## Emails Generated When You Approve a Payment Batch

**If the payment batch is approved to the next level or next approver,** an email will be sent to the next level of approvers (or to all approvers if you just have multiple approvers).

If all payments in the batch have been approved by the first approver, the email will be short – like this:

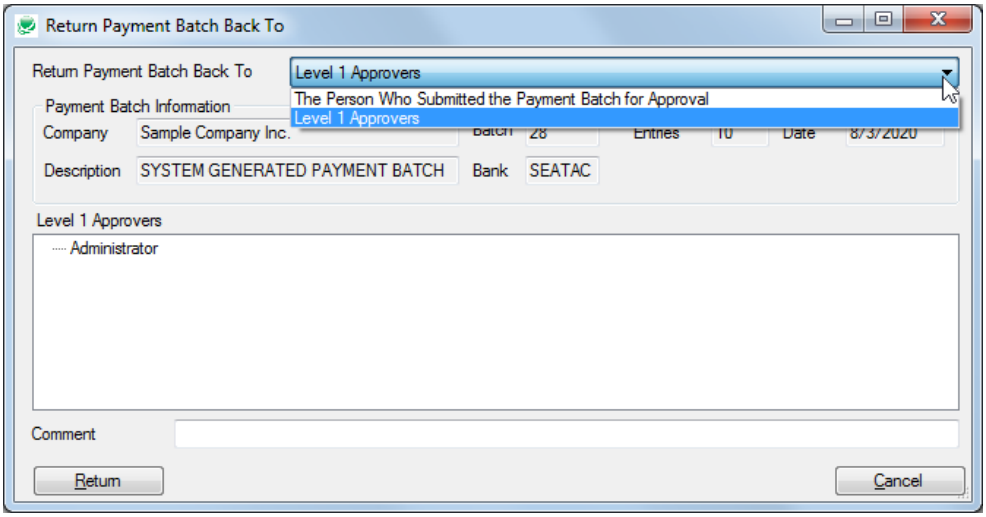



**If the payment batch has rejected payments**, and the batch is passed to another level or returned, the email includes an audit of deleted entries in the email body:




# Returning Batches

When an approver returns a batch, they can choose to return it to an earlier approver (if there are multiple levels of approvals) or to the original submitting Sage 300 user.




If the batch is returned to the original Sage 300 batch submitter, the batch status will be set back to Open.

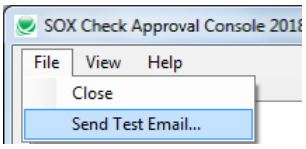
The original submitter can then edit the batch and resubmit it for approval.

# Sending Test Emails from the Console

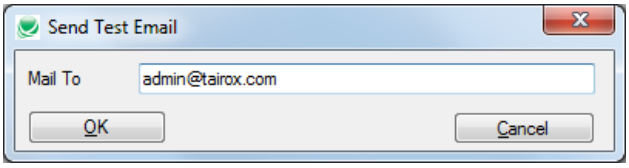
The Check Approval Console lets you send test emails to ensure that email works properly.

**To send a test email**

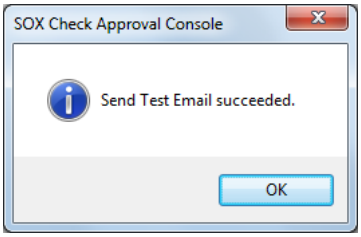
- Choose File > Send Test Email…" from the Check Approval Console.



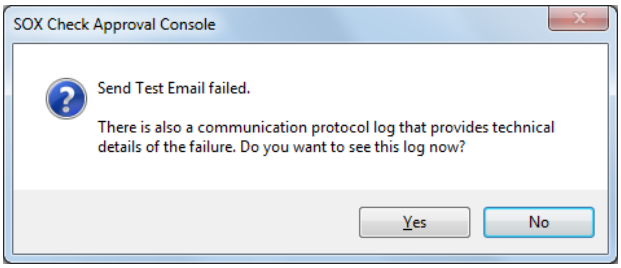

- Enter an email address for the test, and click OK.




***If the test is successful,*** the following message will appear.

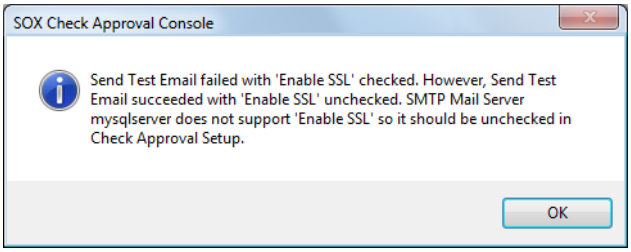


***If the email test fails,*** you will receive the following message.




- Click the Yes button to display the error log.
- To save the log file (for example, to send it to your system administrator), open the log file and click File > Save As to save it on your desktop.

***If the following message appears,*** let your system administrator know. They will have to change the Enable SSL setting in the Check Approval Setup program.




***Note regarding "Enable SSL" if unsupported by the SMTP server***

If you select the "Enable SSL" checkbox in the Check Approval Setup program, the program will first try to send a test email securely. If it does not succeed, it will try to send a test email insecurely.

The program displays the error message if the secure test fails, but the insecure test is successful.

In other words, this message means that:

- Your SMTP server does not support current email communication styles on the port provided. (The "Enable SSL" checkbox has different meanings for different email sending mechanisms, particularly older ones.)
- You should uncheck "Enable SSL" to send emails without SSL protection.

See the Check Approval Setup User Guide. You will have to change the settings in the Check Approval Setup program on the Sage Desktop.