

General Services Administration
FEDERAL CIVILIAN AGENCIES HOUSEHOLD GOODS RELOCATION COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
September 13, 2000
Washington, DC

Attendees:

Allison, Elizabeth, GSA
Ballantine, Rossana, DOE
Bania, Noreen, DOS
Bardwell, Bill, VA
Bembenek, Ted, GSA
Boland, Teresa, DHHS
Booker, Chris, DEA
Brown, Betty, GSA
Calcote, Duncan, USSS
Crowell, Ann, FAA
Evans, Jakob, FBI
Fant, Sheila, EPA
Fouts, Bill, USCS
Gore, Barbara, GSA
Hawkins, James, NASA
Hill, Charles, NOAA
Holley, Anita, NOAA
Jones, Lisa, DOE
Landry, Carolyn, NASA
Lewis, Nathaniel, EPA
Mathuey, Ricky, EPA
Mitchiner, Carole, VA
Osborne, Jacque, DHHS
Oden, Les, DOI
Pate, Clara, GSA
Phifer, Yvette, GAO
Purdy, Gorman, GSA
Ransom, Debbie, GSA
Tucker, Larry, GSA
Turner, Gracie, USSS
Varnado, Tyree, GSA
Vogt, Barbara, GSA
Wilson, Alma, DEA

Noreen Bania, Executive Director of the Committee, Department of State, opened the meeting at 9:15 a.m. and welcomed attendees.

Larry Tucker, Chief, Transportation Programs Branch, introduced the following GSA guests: Tyree Varnado, Assistant Regional Administrator, FSS, Region 6, Kansas City,

MO (Region 6 operationally maintains CHAMP on a day-to-day basis); Ted Bembenek and Elizabeth Allison, Transportation Management Policy Division, Office of Governmentwide Policy (OGP); and Barbara Vogt, Acting Assistant Commissioner, Office of Transportation and Property Management, FSS. Larry announced that Mr. Bembenek and Ms. Allison would update the Committee on certain OGP household goods transportation initiatives. Larry also informed the Committee that Frank Pugliese, FSS Commissioner since 1994 is retiring and Donna Bennett was appointed FSS Commissioner effective September 4, 2000.

Larry then turned the podium over to Mr. Bembenek to speak about OGP's household goods transportation initiatives. Mr. Bembenek provided an update on the requirement in Federal Management Regulations 102-118 (formerly 41 CFR 101-41) effective October 1, 2000, for agencies to conduct a prepayment audit of transportation bills. He explained that unlike a postpayment audit where funds collected for overcharges must be deposited into the miscellaneous receipts of the Treasury, over-billed amounts identified as the result of a prepayment audit are retained, and available for use, by the agency. There was discussion of which companies perform prepayment audit service and their associated costs. Mr. Bembenek provided a flyer explaining an agency's choices for having the prepayment audit conducted. In response to an agency representative's question as to whether GSA could require household goods carriers that participate in CHAMP to provide prepayment audit service under the Household Goods Tender of Service (HTOS), Larry advised GSA would look into the matter.

Ms. Allison updated the Committee on the status of OGP's revisions to the transportation management regulations, Federal Management Regulations (FMR) 102-117 (formerly 41 CFR 101-40). OGP is reviewing and reconciling comments solicited in the Federal Register and their goal is to publish the revised regulation by the end of this fiscal year. The revised regulation abolishes the Government Bill of Lading for domestic use effective September 30, 2001. Ms. Allison also discussed OGP's desire to abolish the Commuted Rate System (CRS). This would require a legislative change, however, and must be pursued very systematically. Currently household goods must be shipped under the CRS unless an agency can demonstrate a savings of \$100 or more under the GBL method. This issue, among others, including prepayment audits, will be discussed in an OGP Transportation Policy Council meeting on October 19, 2000, at the GSA auditorium, 18th and F Streets, N.W., Washington, DC.

Larry and Carla Young, GSA Region 6, updated the Committee on the GSA "Tracker" system. As a result of this system, GSA's receipt of Industrial Funding Fee (IFF) payments has increased and the household goods financial picture has been showing improvement. There is room for much more improvement, however, and a definite need for greater agency cooperation in providing "Tracker" data to match up with data and payments received from carriers. GSA greatly appreciates those agencies that are submitting "Tracker" data, but the number is small. Larry asked Committee representatives if it would help increase "Tracker" data submissions if a GSA management official were to write a letter to a management official within each agency describing the importance of "Tracker." The committee welcomed the idea.

Charlie Hill of NOAA, in response to GSA's request to Committee members for meeting agenda items, had submitted a request for a status update on the following issues:

(1) Availability of HHG rates effective November 1, 2000

These rates will be available on GSA's web site and on CD-ROM prior to their effective date.

(2) Availability of the Agency and Employee Guides, "Shipping Your Household Goods"

Both guides currently are out of stock and have not been reprinted in bulk because they also are out-of-date. GSA, Region 6, currently is working on updating both guides, and plans to make them available on the GSA web site when the project is completed.

In the meantime, GSA has printed a small supply of the "Employee Guide" in response to specific agency requests for copies to give to their relocating employees even though the guide is out-of-date. Any agency needing a small quantity may contact Clara Pate at 703-305-7967.

(3) Availability of the combined domestic/international Household Goods Tender of Service (HTOS)

The rewritten HTOS is undergoing GSA internal review. GSA intends to publish the document in the Federal Register for comment during the 4th calendar quarter of this year.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:00 a.m. The next Committee meeting is scheduled from 9:00 a.m. until approximately noon on Wednesday, January 10, 2001, in Crystal Mall Building 4, Room 1129.