



GPC NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2002



Happy New Year!! *Fiscal* New Year, that is!! Hope all your closeout activities went well. This year we find ourselves in the midst of activity preparing for another ORI/UCI. Looks like we'll all find out just how good we really are. Good luck and if we can do anything to help you prepare, please let us know!!

The topics selected for this edition, our twenty-seventh, deal with areas where improvement and/or increased understanding is required. We will highlight the start of fiscal year activities, Billing Official responsibilities, the Affirmative Procurement Program, and other various subjects.

Don't forget about the GPC website! You can obtain vital program information, sample document formats and links to other GPC websites. It is available at: <http://www.losangeles.af.mil/SMC/PK/PKOHOME/IMPAC/index.html>. We're always looking for opportunities to improve our processes and procedures (within the boundaries of the law, of course) to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the program. Your suggestions for improvements are encouraged.

FUNDING YOUR GPC ACCOUNT

Now that fiscal year (FY) 2002 has concluded and FY 2003 has begun, organizations are beginning to receive current year funding. Before you begin making purchases on your account, please ensure you have a funded, approved and certified AF Form 4009. Organizations CANNOT and SHOULD NOT use their cards until they obtain a certified AF Form 4009. Use of the card without having met this requirement is a violation of the anti-deficiency act and will result in suspension of the billing official account.

Beginning with this fiscal year (FY 03), each billing official is required to forward a copy of your funded, approved and certified AF Form 4009 to 61 CONS/LGCP prior to using the card. If possible, please submit this copy in a PDF format. If that is not possible, please send a copy legible enough to facilitate scanning. The fax number is 363-2463.

Accounts showing activity without providing a copy of the funded, approved and certified AF Form 4009 to this office will be suspended until the requirement is met. Questions should be addressed to me at 3-5115.

BILLING OFFICIAL TRAINING SESSIONS

The GPC Program Management Office will conduct a couple of training sessions to discuss Billing Officials' responsibilities and other program management issues. The sessions will last no longer than one hour each. Though these sessions are not mandatory, **attendance is highly encouraged**. Topics of discussion will be as follows:

- Management/Oversight Responsibilities
- Reconciling Billing Statements in CARE
- Document Disposition Requirements
- Account Maintenance Procedures
- Reporting Lost/Stolen Cards
- ORI Preparation
- Miscellaneous Topics

The sessions will be conducted on 23 Oct 02 and 14 Nov 02 from 1330 to 1430 in Bldg 219, Room 1080. The room will only accommodate about 25 persons, so attendance will be on a **first-come, first-served basis**. To reserve a seat, contact Jennifer @ 3-0623 or David @ 3-2852.

Please do NOT send e-mail requests. If you sign up, please attend as you may be preventing someone else from attending. Additional sessions will be scheduled as required. If you have any questions or comments, contact me at 3-5115.

RECONCILING THE 13TH MONTH BILLING STATEMENT

The "13th Month" billing cycle (26 Sep through 30 Sep) implemented by US Bank to accommodate year-end purchases closed on 02 Oct 02. Cardholders and billing officials should now go into CARE and approve/certify their accounts. Please ensure you have done so by COB on Friday, 25 Oct 02. On this date, both the regular Sep 02 billing statement AND the "13th month" billing statement must be completely approved and certified. The cardholder is already locked out of the Sep 02 cycle, so if she cardholder has NOT approved each purchase, the billing official will have to do so. The cardholder will be locked out of the "13th month" cycle on or about 17 Oct 02. If the cardholder has not performed all her actions by this date, these, too, will have to be performed by the Billing Official.

Remember, for each of the two billing cycles (Sep 02 and "13th month" cycle), the cardholder must first approve each

transaction, then the entire bill. If she does not perform these in the timeframe described above, she will be locked out. Should this occur, the billing official will have to perform these tasks PRIOR to certifying the bill for payment. Since both billing cycles are now closed, the billing official should NOT indicate he/she is acting on the cardholder's behalf. This is only necessary if the cycle is still open for cardholder approval. After these actions have been completed, the billing official must then certify the entire billing statement. All accounts should be approved and certified NO LATER THAN COB, 25 Oct 02. Accounts not certified by COB on 25 Oct 02 will be suspended.

Additionally, all transaction logs entries must be completed. That means you must complete the applicable information under the tabs entitled "Log Detail" and "Log Line Item Detail". You must do this for EACH transaction. FILL IN ALL THE APPLICABLE BLOCKS!! Failure to complete the transaction log in CARE by the close of business on 25 Oct 02 will result in the suspension of the billing official account effectively rendering ALL cardholder accounts there under useless. You will receive no further notification.

All the above information is applicable to the SEP 2002 and "13th month" billing statement cycle.

If you encounter ANY problems, difficulties, etc., you should contact Mr. Robledo (3-2852) or Ms. Agcaoil (3-0623) to seek a resolution. We are willing to meet with you to get you back on track. All you have to do is call!!

BILLING OFFICIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

AFI 64-117, Air Force Government-wide Purchase Card Program, 6 Dec 2000, outlines several actions for which the billing/billing official (BO) is responsible. The most important of these is the monthly reconciliation of each of their cardholder's statements. Each month the billing official reconciles accounts to:

1. Obtain and review each cardholder's statement. Conduct reviews of 100% of cardholder files at least every 12 months to ensure documentation and reconciliation is being performed properly.
2. Verify that all transactions were appropriate, given the duties of the cardholder and mission of the unit, and those purchases were made in accordance with this AFI.
3. Signs the monthly Billing Account Statement, confirming it is correct and forwards the original statement to the FSO within five duty days after receipt but not later than the 10th of the month. Each statement must be signed by the billing official, and
4. Retain a copy of each monthly invoice. (IAW AFMAN 37-139, Table 64-1, R 26 and FAR

4.805(b)(10)). If the billing official determines that the files have future value to the Government and they require retention longer than authorized by AFMAN 37-139, notify the base record manager and request authority for longer retention. . The billing official will also maintain all original supporting documentation (receipts, logs, approvals, etc.) for accounts when the cardholder or check writer has transferred, been reassigned, or retired and the account(s) is closed.

Next, the BO must verify, at least semi-annually, that cardholders are in possession of their purchase cards. BOs must notify the Installation Purchase Card Program Manager (IPCPM) of any cardholder who has retired, separated, been reassigned, or who no longer has cardholder responsibilities. (5.3.4.4) Additionally, the BO must notify the IPCPM upon his/her reassignment, separation, retirement, etc., and turn in his/her funding document to the Financial Services Office. (5.3.6.5)

It is imperative that BO accounts are kept current because the program is periodically purged of accounts belonging to personnel known to have departed the base. Should a BO account be terminated for any reason, any cardholder account under that BO will have its spending level decreased to \$0.00.

Lastly, prior to his/her departure, the cardholder must surrender the GPC to the BO who will complete a destruction notice (or write a letter) and forward it to the IPCPM. (5.3.5.8)

Bottom Line: The BO is an integral element of the GPC program and must perform several critical tasks to insure the program operates efficiently. He/She must keep the IPCPM apprised of all changes in his/her cardholder accounts. Early identification of program participant departures and their replacements will prevent lapses in the organization's ability to procure its supplies and services. Failure to do so could render cardholder accounts useless!!

AFFIRMATIVE PROCUREMENT AND THE GPC

Executive Order (EO) 13101, "Greening the Government Through Waste Prevention, Recycling, and Federal Acquisition" directed federal agencies to promote economic growth through purchasing recycled—and other environmentally preferable products. Under E013 101, federal agencies must purchase only paper and non-paper products made with recycled content.

Whenever you purchase office supplies or equipment, look for environmentally preferable products and the recycle symbol. As an example, some organizations have purchased carpet and other durable goods manufactured from recycled plastic. All I'm asking is that you buy recycled – especially when using the GPC. A listing of EPA-designated guideline items, paper and nonpaper

products and internet resources are available through 61 ABG/CEZV upon request.

Begin today buying products containing recycled and reclaimed materials instead of purchasing products made entirely from virgin materials. In the long run, we'll limit our waste generated and save precious environmental resources. Remember, the recycling loop is not closed until you purchase products made with recycled material. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Craig Groman, 61 ABG/CEZV, 363-0874.

BUSINESS CARDS

We often get inquiries about the purchase of business cards and normally the reply is not what the inquirer wanted to hear. There has been a slight change in the guidance, but you might want to put your celebrations on hold until you finish this paragraph.

The purchase of business cards is now authorized from The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc., a Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) participating non-profit agency. **IF** the business cards are *equal to or less in cost* than private stock cards created on a personal computer **AND** *written approval* is obtained from the Secretary of the Air Force delegable to subordinate management officials (General Officer or civilian members of the Senior Executive Service).

Business cards may also be printed, using existing software and agency-purchased card stock, when the above-referenced appropriate approving official determines an organization or position under his/her cognizance requires business cards in the performance of their official functions. Recruiting and liaison personnel, as described in AFI 65-601, para 4.36.1 are authorized to have business cards commercially printed (including the use of DAPS) by other than The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. without the approvals outlined above.

GPC TRANSACTION REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

In accordance with the DoD supplement to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (DFARS), Part 204.670, Defense Contract Action Data System (DCADS), any awards greater than \$2,500, but less than or equal to \$25,000 must be documented on a DD Form 1057. Effective 01 Oct 01, cardholders (CHs) **will** collect certain data (size, classification, etc.) from vendors for any purchase transaction awards greater than \$2,500, but less than or equal to \$25,000. The CHs will sign and date each document, then forward to the purchase card program office **within three working days** after the order is placed.

The vendor knows its size classification if it has been awarded a pre-priced contract, so don't just accept an "I don't know" from the sales person. Have him/her find

someone who does know. If you cannot get the data, **DO NOT** make the purchase.

As detailed in AFI 64-117, Government-wide Purchase Card Program, the use of the GPC above the micro-purchase threshold (\$2,500) is optional, and must be authorized by the Chief, Operational Contracting Division. Therefore, it is the Billing Official's responsibility to decide whether to use the GPC or submit an AF Form 9 to the Contracting Office. Contracting personnel will not automatically return your purchase request when the cost is greater than \$2,500, but less than or equal to \$25,000, just because you may be able to procure it using the GPC.

Despite the increased reporting requirement, the use of the GPC will still result in timelier receipt of your products and/or services than would be the case when using the AF Form 9 procurement process. Weigh both the advantages and disadvantages when deciding how to liquidate your requirements, GPC or send to Contracting. One thing you should remember is that if you use the AF Form 9 process, you will not receive a rebate for using the GPC. Collection of this data is **not optional**. If you use the GPC at any level above \$2,500, you **shall** collect and submit this data to 61 CONS/LGCP within 3 workdays of making the purchase. We will verify receipt of the required data during our monthly surveillance.

You should have already received copies of the reporting documentation. If not, you can contact us for a copy or you can download it from the GPC web page.

HONORARIA AND SPEAKING FEES

When deciding whether to contract personnel to deliver speeches, lectures, and presentations, it is the Commander's responsibility to ensure the organization does not pay excessive fees from appropriated funds. The level of authorization required rises as the cost escalates. Use the following to determine the appropriate authorizing official for paying honoraria or fees from O&M funds:

- Installation Commanders - \$500 or less
- MAJCOM, FOA, DRU Commanders - \$2,000 or less
- HQ USAF/CVA - More than \$2,000

To determine the appropriate approval level for honoraria or speaking fees, the total compensation per contract must be considered. For example, if a person is going to sign a speaking contract for \$1,000 and that contract is for 4 speeches on an installation at \$250 each, the \$1,000 contract would determine the approval level required (MAJCOM, FOA, DRU Commander), not the \$250 cost of each address. (AFI 65-501, Para. 4.9)

Should you have any questions contact 61 CONS/LGCP at 363-5115.

REFRESHMENTS AT AWARDS CEREMONIES

Commanders may hold awards ceremonies for military members and civilian employees, including their families, friends, work associates, and union representatives (See CG Decision B-223319, 21 July 1986 which addresses a national award ceremony). While light refreshments may be served, the Comptroller General Decision implies that the award being presented must be **substantial in nature** to qualify for the serving of refreshments. A substantial award would involve a competitive USAF-wide selection (national award), such as 12 Outstanding Airmen, or a competitive Command-wide selection (regional award), such as Command Officer, NCO, Airman, and Civilian of the Year. PCS, promotion, school graduations, recurring quarterly recognitions, commander's call, and retirement ceremonies **are not considered** award ceremonies for the serving of refreshments using appropriated funds.

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS AT CONFERENCES, SYMPOSIUMS, AND SEMINARS

The JFTR and JTR, pursuant to General Services Administration (GSA) travel rulings, authorize the serving of light refreshments during breaks at conferences, symposiums, and seminars. Light refreshments (**excluding alcohol**) include such things as coffee, tea, milk, juice, soft drinks, doughnuts, bagels, fruit, pretzels, cookies, chips, muffins, or similar items. The serving of light refreshments during breaks at conferences is optional, not mandatory. **APFs are not authorized to fund "ice breakers" before the conference or farewell socials after the conference concludes. These are a personal expense.**

For Air Force sponsored conferences the organization that sponsors the conference will fund any light refreshments served during breaks in conference sessions and, therefore, it is the sponsoring organization's option as to whether they wish to have such refreshments. It is not an entitlement. **NOTE: Simply referring to a local meeting on an installation, at a MAJCOM, or at HQ USAF, even with one or two people TDY in attendance, as a conference, seminar or symposium does not confer authority to use appropriated funds for light refreshments. There must be a significant number of people in a TDY status.**

NON-EXPENDABLE EQUIPMENT

Non-expendable (Budget Code 9) equipment items valued over the micropurchase threshold (\$2500) that are purchased on existing contracts with the purchase card must have accountability records established through Base Supply. Equipment custodians must contact Base Supply Equipment Management Element immediately upon

receipt of the asset. For items under \$2500, no formal Base Supply accountability is required (except items that are classified or sensitive). Accountability for items equal to or less than the micropurchase threshold is the responsibility of unity commanders. Unit Commanders must establish a locally devised program that provides visibility and audit trail capability. This may include use of hand receipts and spreadsheets

INITIAL AND REFRESHER TRAINING

GPC refresher training is MANDATORY for all program participants, cardholders and billing officials. Failure to attend this training within 30 days of your due date will result in your participation in the program being temporarily suspended until this requirement is satisfied. If the billing official account is suspended, all cards managed there under will be rendered useless.

The upcoming training schedule is included for your convenience and planning.

Initial	Refresher
Bldg. 219, Room 1080	Bldg. 219, Room 1080
0800-1200	0900-1200
13 Nov 02	20 Nov 02
04 Dec 02	11 Dec 02
08 Jan 03	15 Jan 03
05 Feb 03	12 Feb 03
05 Mar 003	12 Mar 03
02 Apr 03	09 Apr 03
07 May 03	14 May 03
04 Jun 03	11 Jun 03

NOTES

As always, questions, comments and/or suggestions should be submitted to our GPC dedicated e-mail address at smcpk.impac@losangeles.af.mil. Take good care of yourselves!! See you next month!!

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