



G.P.C. NEWSLETTER

September 2002



Once again we find ourselves in the midst of the frantic activity of another fiscal year close-out. As always, you have our sympathy and support. This year you may use your GPC through the end of the year, but more on that later.

The topics selected for this, our twenty-sixth edition, deal with areas where improvement and/or increased understanding is required. We will highlight year-end procedures, the specifics on UNICOR as a mandatory source, the Questioned Purchases program, purchasing from the other mandatory sources, purchasing recycled products and various other subjects.

Remember, you can obtain vital program information, sample document formats and links to other GPC websites on our web page. The address is <http://www.losangeles.af.mil/SMC/PK/PKOHOME/IM/PAC/index.html>. Your suggestions for improvements are encouraged and appreciated.

FISCAL YEAR END CLOSE-OUT PROCEDURES

When GPC funding documents (AF Form 4009) are set up, they are issued with an expiration date of the last day of the fiscal year (September 30, XXXX). This is done to allow continued use of the card with full funding at all times, however, there are some tasks that must be accomplished to allow close-out for the end of the fiscal year.

To facilitate your continued use of your accounts through the end of the fiscal year, our financial counterparts have arranged to automatically MORD your remaining balances to pay for purchase made during the last few days of the FY. Additionally, US Bank has inserted an additional billing period (#13) to accommodate this year-end activity. All purchases submitted to the bank prior to 26 Sep 02 will appear on the 12th billing cycle (normal Sep cycle) and will be closed out using the same procedures used during all previous months. However, those transactions conducted between 26 Sep and 02 Oct 02 will appear on the 13th billing cycle. Each transaction made during this time period must also be reconciled in CARE and have all the pertinent documentation in file. This is especially important as FMF may require proof as to when the purchase was made if it is to be paid off the current year funds set aside for this purpose.

If you have any questions or comments, contact SMC/FMF, (310) 353-6066.

P.S.: There are two ways to enter data into your electronic log contained within CARE. The first is to wait until the item appears and then enter the required data. This is preferred. You'll see why in a minute. The second is to enter the data into the log as soon as the purchase is made. When the entry appears from the bank, you can then go into the system and reconcile the two entries. If you use this method, PLEASE contact us. If you do not reconcile the two entries into one, the funding on your account will be affected. If you fall into the latter category, please contact me ASAP.

ORI/UCI PREPARATIONS

As we prepare for the upcoming reviews, it is important that each billing official understand his/her responsibilities under the program. Toward this end, I am setting up a session with Billing Officials only to address relevant topics of concern.

We will set up a series of sessions (about 2-3) and allow you to choose which one you will attend. I anticipate having these sessions during the third and fourth weeks of October 2002. Hopefully, this will accommodate your schedules and allow most, if not all, of you to attend.

If this does not work for you or you have comments or concerns, please contact me at 3-5115.

QUESTIONED PURCHASE PROGRAM

Each month, we on the IPCPM team receive a listing of all purchases made during the previous cycle. Since it is almost impossible for us to personally survey each account monthly, we utilize this listing to provide the required level of oversight. From this listing we look for various indicators of adverse purchasing activity (i.e., purchases available from statutorily mandated sources being obtained at lower priority sources, or required coordinations or approvals not being obtained, etc.).

If any of the purchases you've made during the reporting cycle are indicative of such activity, you will be contacted via e-mail to provide a brief detailed explanation of what you purchased and how you obtained it (via UNICOR, JWOD-affiliated organizations, etc.). In the e-mail, a date when your response is due will be established. Your

prompt and complete response is required and appreciated. Failure to respond by the date indicated or to request and receive an extension to the response date will be deemed an admission that a violation has occurred. Violations will be handled as outlined in AFI 64-117.

USE OF GPC FOR EPA GUIDELINE ITEMS

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and Solid Waste Disposal Act require agencies to use recovered materials for EPA-designated items to the maximum extent practicable without jeopardizing the intended use of the item. An EPA Guideline Item is an item that is or can be made with recovered materials which is listed by the EPA in procurement guidelines and for which EPA has provided purchasing recommendations in a related Recovered Material Advisory Notice (RMAN).

A list of EPA Guideline Items can be requested from the Environmental Management function at the Base Civil Engineer Office (61 ABG/CEV). The items that we have the most interest in are paper and paper products, and non-paper office products such as bond paper for printers, faxes and copiers and the various toner cartridges that go in them. The current required percentage of post use recycled content is thirty per cent.

If the thirty percent content does not work for you, say it jams your printer for example. If that is the case, you may then obtain a waiver (see below) and use twenty percent recycled content. If that doesn't work, you can use ten percent, on down the line. At each step (percentage of recycled content), the required waiver/determination must be on file PRIOR to making the purchase.

If, for whatever reason, only virgin products (zero recycled content) can be utilized, their purchase must be approved by the cardholder's organizational commander or equivalent. Compliance with the Affirmative Procurement Executive Order 13101 is required at all dollar levels. A written determination based upon one of the following reasons must be maintained by the cardholder organization for any orders above \$2,500.

- Items containing EPA-recommended recovered content standards are not available within a reasonable period of time.
- Items are only available at an unreasonable price. Include sufficient information to support price decision.
- Items are not available from a sufficient number of sources to maintain a satisfactory level of competition. Include list of sources queried.
- Items based upon technical verification fail to meet performance standards or specifications.

When conditions apply for repetitive purchases of the same item, an annual blanket determination, approved by the Chief, Operational Contracting Division, may be approved and maintained by the cardholder's organization.

Written approval must be obtained from a general officer or SES before buying non-compliant items over \$2,500. If there is no general officer or SES on the installation, then the installation commander is the approving authority. Questions on the EPA Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines should be addressed to SMC/PKO.

GPC AND APPROPRIATED FUNDS

Questions continue to arise about the use of the appropriated funds GPC for procuring things such as party supplies, food and drink for commander's call, retirements, PCS farewells, mementos for commanders to give visitors, T-shirts, promotional items for conferences, meetings, symposia, and a myriad of other procurements.

As a rule of thumb, if appropriated funds were not legally available for a procurement before the advent of the GPC, they are not legally available now. The GPC **did not** abrogate the propriety of funding rules established by statute, Congressional direction, Comptroller General decisions and Air Force policy. Party supplies, serving materials, food and drink are considered "entertainment" and are addressed in AFI 65-601, Vol. I, para 4.28, Entertainment. There is no authority for procuring these items for Commanders call, retirement, PCS farewells, office gatherings, and the like.

Mementos are only authorized using Official Representation Funds (ORF) (10 USC 127) (AFI 65-601, Para 4) (sic) and the Latin American Cooperation Fund (LATAM COOP) (10 USC 1050) (AFI 65-601, para 2.3). AFI 65-601, Vol. 1 does not address the use of appropriated funds for the procuring of mementos because, other than the foregoing, there is no legal basis for using APFs for such expenditures. AFI 65-601, Vol. I, para 4.29.3 addresses promotional items and it does not include coins, coffee mugs, pens, or coasters for conferences, meetings, symposia, etc. Organizational coins are for mission accomplishment awards documented in the AFI 36-XXXX series or supplements thereto, not mementos. There is no problem using the IMPAC card for expenses related to conferences, meetings, symposia, etc. that are authorized for APFs: meeting rooms, honoraria, or fees for speakers.

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.**

CANCELLATION OF GPC ACCOUNTS

Cardholder

Upon reassignment, separation, retirement, etc., a cardholder shall surrender the GPC to the billing official at least 30 days prior to departure. The billing official will send e-mail to the Installation Purchase Card Program Manager stating all transactions (charges/credits) have cleared the Bank, the card has been destroyed and request cancellation. The Installation Purchase Card Program Manager will cancel the account with the Bank within 14 days and document the file. At the discretion of

the Installation Purchase Card Program Manager, close-out surveillance may be required prior to cancellation of accounts.

Billing Official

To cancel a GPC account, the billing official shall:

- Complete a Cardholder Maintenance bank form with "Cancellation" and "purge from reporting" marked and forward to the Installation Purchase Card Program Manager. Also, forward to Installation Purchase Card Program Manager (e-mail acceptable) verification that all transactions (charges and/or credits) have cleared the Bank and the card has been destroyed. When possible, cardholder accounts should be cancelled 60 days prior to reassignment or retirement to ensure all monthly statements have been reconciled and items purchased have been received.
- Notify the SMC/FMF for adjustments to the funding document, if required.

Billing officials must notify the Installation Purchase Card Program Manager, on a quarterly basis, of cardholders who have retired, separated, been reassigned, or who no longer have cardholder responsibilities.

LOST OR STOLEN CARDS

Billing officials shall submit a written report (e-mail acceptable) through the Installation Purchase Card Program Manager to the MAJCOM/FOA/ DRU Program Coordinator within five workdays. The report will include:

- The purchase card number, the cardholder's complete name;
- The date and location (if known) of the lost/stolen card and the date reported to police;
- The date and time Bank was notified;
- Any purchase(s) made on the day the purchase card was lost or stolen; and
- Any other pertinent information.

A new purchase card will be mailed within 24 hours of the reported loss or theft (Monday through Friday). If the cardholder finds the original purchase card, it shall be cut in half and given to the billing official who will complete the destruction notice and forward it to the Installation Purchase Card Program Manager, who will notify the MAJCOM/FOA/DRU Program Manager. The Installation Purchase Card Program Manager will contact the Bank to ensure the account is closed.

WEB-BASED TRAINING PASSWORD CHANGE

The password for C.A.R.E. Web-based training will be changing on **Monday, September 16, 2002** to “opportunity” and affects all users. The Web-based training ID is not affected by this change and remains “usbank”.

INITIAL AND REFRESHER TRAINING

GPC refresher training is MANDATORY for all program participants, cardholders and billing officials. Failure to attend this training within 90 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
02 Oct 02	09 Oct 02
06 Nov 02	13 Nov 02
04 Dec 02	11 Dec 02

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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