



Building Rural America
National Association of Credit Specialists
of the
USDA – Farm Service Agency
Management / Personnel Committee

THE MANAGEMENT/PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MET AT THE HOLIDAY INN BY THE BAY HOTEL IN PORTLAND, MAINE ON JUNE 21,2010, TO REVIEW RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED BY THE MEMBERSHIP.

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS ARE RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION:

Resolution 1

CONCERN: We are told that we are not allowed to let non-federal individuals ride in government vehicles. When doing farm visits and security inspections this is an inconvenience to us and our customers. Ex: You end up meeting a customer out in a field. The only way for him to get to a vehicle is to walk or drive his tractor back to his farmstead which may be a considerable distance. If we want him to go with us to inspect security the best customer service is to have him ride with us in the GOV. Information on the GSA web site on use of vehicles states that "Your agency is responsible for making the determination to authorize non-Federal individuals to accompany you in Government vehicle."

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Seek Agency approval to authorize non-Federal individuals to accompany us in Government Vehicles for official business.

Resolution 2

CONCERN: With the advent of GovTrip, FSA employees were required to list their name, home address, phone number, Government credit card number and their bank account information. Doing so has created a perfect environment for identity theft. Earlier this year the GovTrip security was breached and the possibility of Personal Identity Information being compromised was highly elevated. Other USDA Agencies do not require their employees to provide the GovTrip system personal bank account information. There is no reason for GovTrip to have personal bank account information. GovTrip does not pay the employee. GovTrip communicates to the National Finance Office who in turn issues payment to the employee. The employee does not have the

ability to delete or modify the bank account information only the state travel coordinator has that authority and they are extremely reluctant to do so and most will not.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: The National Office immediately issue a Notice to the field instructing state travel coordinators to remove the personal banking information from GovTrip and further, to no longer require personal banking information be listed in GovTrip by the employees.

Resolution 3

CONCERN: The agency is facing a wave of retirements in FLP. Many states are having trouble replacing personnel due to budget constraints.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: The agency shall establish an attrition plan on a state by state basis which will be used by SED's to manage this issue. Placement decisions for FLO's & FLOT's should be consistent with agency workload needs. Please provide NACS a status of the attrition plan that was reported to be in development.

Resolution 4

CONCERN: The agency has adopted Ag Learn as the primary training tool. Although Ag Learn can be a useful training tool, it does not offer interactive communication and peer consultation. Further, the time and privacy required to complete coursework can be prohibitive.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Adequate funding be provided for states to provide group training sessions and/or proficient trainers that can travel to (remote) locations to provide smaller local training sessions. The use of computer based (NetMeeting and/or Web Meeting) training sessions in a smaller, intimate training setting that allow student participation and interaction is put forth as one possible solution. "Hands on" activity increases the learning process.

Resolution 5

CONCERN: Adequate funding for relocation expenses is not being maintained. This is impacting the selection of new personnel and the placement of personnel by workload demand.

SOLUTION: Maintain adequate relocation funding to meet proper personnel selection and placement.

Resolution 6

CONCERN: Policy and/or directives on many issues are being put forth in email and notice format. This leads to long periods of time before they are incorporated into standard Handbook guidance resulting in expiration of the notice.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Given the current technology and handbook format, updates/amendments to Handbooks should be issued timely and prior to the expiration of the notice.

Resolution 7

CONCERN: The Web TA System sends emails to delegated back-up supervisory and alternate approval officials whenever any action needs approval. This procedure has resulted in an excessive amount of emails to backup and alternate approval officials.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Develop a system and provide training to Web TA back-ups and alternates on the method to switch off the back-up email notification.

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS ARE RECOMMENDED FOR NON-ADOPTION:

None

Respectfully submitted by the 2009/2010 Management/Personnel Committee.

Joyce NevinsGinsberg, Zone A, Chairperson

Allen D. Hall, Zone B

Helena Pitcock, Zone C

Ed Hall, Zone D