

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

(December 2003)

**SUBJECT:** FLRA Use of Government Vehicles

**BACKGROUND:** The seven FLRA Office of the General Counsel Regional Offices are located in major cities and have adjudicatory unfair labor practice charge jurisdiction for Federal agencies and unions in the state they are located in and other states nearby. Four regional offices (Boston, Denver, San Francisco and Washington D.C.) maintained Government vehicles in FY 2003. All of these subject regional offices have had Government vehicles since their onset. The other regional offices (Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas) never had Government vehicles and used rental vehicles/personal vehicles or public transportation for travel. At the onset of this review, the San Francisco Regional Director cancelled his Government vehicle for FY 2004 when he realized that the usage was minimal.

The FLRA does not have written policy/guidance for the use of Government vehicles (nor have they provided GSA guidance to the subject regional offices or provided training for the use of Government vehicles). Although the majority of the users used the vehicle appropriately, there were several employees who unknowingly misused the Government vehicles. The subject regional offices office managers are responsible for managing the use of their Government vehicles and file required statistics directly with GSA. The Government vehicles are maintained periodically, changed every three or four years and parked in the regional office building's parking areas for fees which are included in the regional offices' building leases.

**DISCUSSION:** Travel is an essential requirement for Office of the General Counsel attorneys and labor management specialists (investigation agents.) Depending on the location of the complainant and associated Federal Agency/Union, investigation agents travel using public transportation, airlines, rental vehicles Government vehicles or personal vehicles (not required.) The costs of maintaining/using Government vehicles is part of the allocated regional office travel budget. Over the last three years, the actual use of Government vehicles, when correlated with case workload, was not significant. The Washington Regional Office used their Government vehicle the most but had extensive maintenance expenditures in FY 2002 -2003 because of 3 accidents and one Government vehicle theft. Regional office parking lot fees are incorporated in the regional office building leases and are much higher in Boston and Washington than in Denver. The Denver Regional Office has minimum public transportation available but used the Government vehicle the least because several investigation agents preferred using their own vehicles.

Although the subject regional office caseload, associated travel costs and Government vehicle costs (FY 2000-2003) statistics were not standardized and can only be considered "approximate," with the exception of the Washington D.C. Regional Office, the statistics indicated that the other subject regional offices did not use the Government vehicles

significantly enough to support having them. Ironically, the Washington D.C. Office has the most extensive public transportation and closest rental car facility of all other regional offices. The money allocated for Government vehicles would provide more dollars to the subject regional offices for the use of a rental vehicle and/or other types of public transportation. Although having Government vehicles provides a convenience for employees (which can be considered a human capital asset) and supports case processing timeliness, its use and cost effectiveness has lessened over the last few years. The use of rental vehicles, and other modes of public transportation is definitely a viable alternative.