

United States Department of Agriculture  
Research, Education, and Economics

# ARS □ CSREES □ ERS □ NASS

## *Bulletin*

**Title:** Revised Procedures for Vehicle Purchases

**Number:** 04-302

**Date:** February 4, 2004

**Expiration:** Until Replaced

**Originating Office:** Financial Management Division/Fiscal Operations Branch

**Distribution:** ARS Area Administrative Officers  
ARS Area Budget and Fiscal Officers  
ARS Area Property Management Officers  
ARS Locations  
ARS Operations, NFC  
REE Agency Liaison Officers

This bulletin provides guidance for financial requirements when procuring vehicles.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will discontinue the use of the National Finance Center's (NFC) FEDS feeder system effective February 2, 2004. (Please see the Acquisition and Property Division's (APD's) Alert notice No. 2004-03.) After February 2, 2004, all Federal Standard Requisitioning and Invoicing Procedure (FEDSTRIP) and Military Standard Requisitioning and Invoicing Procedure (MILSTRIP) orders previously made through the General Services Administration (GSA) will be made directly through the existing web-based systems.

As APD's Alert notes, all purchases of supplies and materials previously placed through FEDS should now be placed using the Government Purchase Card.

The Government Purchase Card, however, may not be used to purchase vehicles. USDA requires agencies to submit vehicle requests through AutoChoice, GSA's on-line system.

The following revised procedures are established for the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) purchasing of vehicles. Supplemental procedures will be established in the event that either the Economic Research Service or the Cooperative State Research Education, and Extension Service require vehicles purchases.

These steps should be followed to order a new vehicle:

### **ARS**

LAO:

1. Determine the order's Document Reference Number (DRN). This number will be a M1 document and the number will be derived by the Location Administrative Officer (LAO) as follows:

Digits

1 through 3 = VEH (to represent a vehicle order)

4 through 7 = 4<sup>th</sup> level mode code

8 = Fiscal Year

9 through 11 = Sequential number identified by Location

12 through 15 = # (pound sign) followed by the FFIS line number.

Example: M1VEH12304001#001.

This example shows the DRN for the first vehicle (001) purchased by the U.S. National Arboretum in FY 04.

This DRN will be used to enter the order into the Foundation Financial Information System (FFIS) and will subsequently appear on the accounting ledgers (TDL's) as a M1 document. Since this number will be used to "match" the billing to the obligation in FFIS, it is imperative that there is no deviation in the DRN that is provided to GSA when the order is placed via the AutoChoice website. A separate DRN is required for each vehicle purchased.

2. LAO's must note the M1 Document Reference Number on the AD-700. Forward the AD-700 to the Area/HQ person authorized to submit vehicle requisitions.

Person Authorized to Submit Vehicle Requisitions:

3. Note the Activity Address Code (AAC) on the AD-700. This code is the Area/Location's GSA Requisition Office number (i.e., 127MN1 = College Station, Texas).
4. Use GSA AutoChoice website (see Alert for full website address) to submit vehicle requisitions, citing AAC and DRN as determined above. Each vehicle request must have a unique DRN. Agencies cannot request more than 1 vehicle using the same DRN.
5. In AutoChoice, enter the M1 DRN in the field "**Internal Agency Financial Data**". Follow established procedures for all required fields. The "Agency Order Number" and "Requisition Number" are still mandatory and are separate from the DRN.
6. Print a copy of the order, attach it to the AD-700, and forward copies to:
  1. OCFO, COD, ACPRB, ARS Operations  
P.O. Box 53326  
New Orleans, LA 70153  
  
(For Pacific West Area (PWA) and Southern Plains Area (SPA), forward to your Servicing Budget and Fiscal Office rather than ARS Operations)
  2. The Location's administrative/accounting office.
  3. If the AD-700 cites multiple accounting codes, a copy of the order and AD-700 must be provided to Cheryl Brumback, Property and Support Services Branch, APD. (See paragraph below on multiple lines of accounting.)

The ARS Operations Staff or the Servicing Budget and Fiscal Office (for PWA and SPA) will enter the M1 into FFIS using a vendor code of 4700016FOB and a budget object class code of either 3111 (\$25,000 or more) or 3155 (less than \$25,000).

**NASS**

1. Submit an AD-700 with requirements to the NASS Budget Office. The NASS Budget Office will determine the M0 DRN, note it on the AD-700, and enter the M0 in FFIS. They will then forward the AD-700 to APD. APD will submit the request using AutoChoice, and provide copies back to the NASS Budget Office once completed.

Multiple Lines of Accounting:

Unfortunately, the use of AutoChoice and its interaction to FFIS through Internet Payments and Collections (IPAC) does not allow the recording of the obligation to multiple accounting codes. Only 1 accounting code can be charged. In order to affect transfers of obligations to multiple accounts, the information must be provided to APD. The APD will make the accounting changes through the property (PROP) system.

Liquidation of Obligations:

When NFC receives a bill from GSA, the bill will identify the AAC and M0/M1 DRN. The NFC will process the bill using this information. If the M0/M1 obligation exceeds the amount billed, the obligation amount will be reduced by the amount disbursed to GSA. It will not be completely liquidated. LAO's will be responsible for identifying these unliquidated obligations and working with the ARS Operations Staff (or the PWA or SPA Budget Offices for those Areas) to remove the excess balance from FFIS.

If the amount billed exceeds the amount of the M0/M1, NFC will work with the appropriate office (ARS Operations, PWA, SPA, NASS), to adjust the M0/M1 up to the appropriate amount, if necessary. No further action will be required by the location.

Points of Contact:

Any questions related to the financial aspects of this bulletin should be referred to:

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/s/  
S. M. HELMRICH  
Director  
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