

Wheels & Wings

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Training for Success

When people talk about “behind the scenes” at the Smithsonian Institution (SI), just about everyone assumes you are talking about the museum curators or the exhibit builders, but rarely does anyone think about the operational “behind the scenes.” The fifteen in-house vehicle technicians play a crucial role within not only the Transportation

Division, but within the entire Institution.

The Transportation Division is the backbone of Smithsonian; supporting all the museums throughout the metropolitan area as well as facilities across the country and even the globe. With a complex fleet comprised of over 1000 pieces of equipment, the

Transportation Division ensures that the bamboo trucks that feed the National Zoo’s pride and joy, the giant pandas, are up and running as well as maintaining the shuttle buses that connect over 55,000 employees in the various facilities that comprise the Smithsonian Institution.

Transportation is successful in these areas due to the hard work and dedication of its maintenance staff.

The technology in today’s vehicles and equipment changes quickly. With flex

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Wheels & Wings

Director
Jan Dobbs
(202) 208-6601

Vehicle Management Policy Contacts

The Office of Governmentwide Policy, Vehicle Management Policy Program's mission is to ensure the effective and efficient use of the Federal Government's 640,000 motor vehicles and the expenditure of close to \$2 billion annually on fleet operations through innovative policies, adoption of best practices, effective communication, and leading edge technologies.

Connie Aaron Jacquie Perry
(202) 208-7634 (202) 501-3347

Ed Lawler Jim Vogelsinger
(202) 501-3354 (202) 501-1764

Mike Moses
(202) 501-2507

Please address your questions or comments concerning *Wheels & Wings* to the editor:
Jacquie Perry (202) 501-3347 or
e-mail to Jacquie.Perry@gsa.gov.

Aviation Management Policy Contacts

The aviation management policy team, in collaboration with the Interagency Committee for Aviation Policy (ICAP), develops governmentwide policies for managing the acquisition, use, and disposal of aircraft that the federal civilian agencies own or hire. In addition, it collects, analyzes, and reports information on government aircraft, using the Federal Aviation Interactive Reporting System (FAIRS); and promotes best practices in federal aviation management. In cooperation with ICAP-member agencies, the overarching goal is to foster, most effective and efficient aviation in U.S. government agencies.

Elizabeth Allison Bob Sherouse
(202) 208-7634 (202) 501-3347

Mike Miles Jay Spurr
(202) 501-3354 (202) 501-1764

Please address your questions or comments concerning *Wheels & Wings* to the editor:
Elizabeth Allison (202) 208-7634 or
e-mail to Elizabeth.Allison@gsa.gov.

Graphic Design: Tom Pearlman
GSA Office of Citizen Services
and Communications

fuel, hybrid electric vehicles and electronically controlled diesel engines, it is challenging for today's technicians to stay up to date on all the latest technology. In order to guarantee the future success of its technicians, the Transportation Division, through a partnership with the Montgomery Community College (MCC), is committed to developing a state of the art automotive training program culminating in a degree in automotive technology and ASE certification.

Working with MCC, the SI has been able to send four technicians during the fall 2007 semester to the Rockville campus to attend automotive courses. The technicians build upon their current skill sets with advanced automotive training focusing on areas such as computerized engine controls, fuel and emissions systems. With the additional knowledge gained from the courses at MCC, the technicians are able to dramatically decrease vehicle downtime thereby increasing the quality of vehicle maintenance.

As the Institution's Fleet Manager, Mr. Bill Griffiths wanted to develop a program where his technicians could have access to the latest technical knowledge as well as a means to demonstrate how they have mastered those skills. The partnership between the SI and MCC provides a platform for such a program through ASE certification and MCC's automotive degree program.

The training program has thus far been a huge success – increasing in size for the spring 2008 semester by almost 100%! Seven mechanics will be attending the courses offered by MCC. The college courses have not only positively impacted the quality of work, but they have also promoted team building and increased confidence among the technicians.

Working in tandem with the MCC courses, Mr. Griffiths has instituted monthly in-house training since his arrival to the SI in May 2007. His goal with the monthly in-house training is to provide a forum for his technicians to continually sharpen their technical skills. By using a "hands on" approach, Mr. Griffiths transfers classroom concepts into practical knowledge.



"All of the guys are already motivated to succeed. I want them to know I'm committed to making sure they have the tools to do their jobs more effectively and proficiently," says Mr. Griffiths. While Mr. Griffiths is focused on

developing a world class transportation program, he is also committed to assisting all his employees in realizing their career goals and aspirations.

Car Regs Not a One-Way Street

By William N. Rudman *Government Executive*

In January 1987, an Interior Department employee was driving in a government-owned vehicle (GOV) when he spied the loan officer from his bank. He offered her a ride to a lawyer's office several blocks off his direct route. Two Interior Department employees saw their colleague giving the loan officer a ride and reported him. The employee was suspended without pay for 30 days.

No other type of administrative misconduct carries a penalty as severe as does the willful misuse of a government vehicle, vessel or aircraft. Title 31 of the U.S. Code, section 1349(b), states that an employee who willfully misuses or authorizes the misuse of a government vehicle shall be suspended for at least one month, and could even be fired.

The statute's wording is deceptively simple. The confusion comes in deciding when the rule applies and whether the 30-day suspension can be avoided. Federal managers need to understand what constitutes GOV misuse, both to avoid it and to ensure none of their employees ends up on a lengthy, unpaid vacation.

Some agencies are strict in setting rules for use of GOVs and dealing with misuse, while others are relatively blase. Some inspectors general follow employees around hoping to catch them violating the rules, while others wouldn't stoop to getting involved in such "minor" administrative misconduct.

Personal Use

Sometimes, bad results are a foregone conclusion. After a General Services Administration police officer took a GOV to get beer for the boss, the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals ruled the appropriate uses of government vehicles "do not include frolics and detours—even at the behest of a supervisor—in order to procure alcoholic beverages for on-duty consumption."

Most appeals of employee misconduct cases, such as GOV misuse, wind up at the Merit Systems Protection Board, whose judges' rulings can, in turn, be appealed to the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals.

At the other end of the spectrum is the doctrine of "minor" personal use when the primary use is for government business. For example, a Customs inspector at a border station drove a short distance in a GOV with his girlfriend in order to scold a guard. The guard had told the girlfriend she had to submit to a Customs examination when she entered the United States to bring her boyfriend some food. The Merit Systems Protection Board ruled the personal use was minor and the vehicle was used primarily to further agency business. The inspector "merely allowed [his girlfriend] to ride with him in the government vehicle for the short trip from his duty station to [the guard's] post in order to inquire regarding the proper entry point. . . his inquiry did involve a matter of official concern with respect to proper entry procedures," the board found.

In the same vein, the board reversed the suspension of an IRS employee who had been authorized to use a GOV while on temporary duty. En route from the restaurant where she had eaten dinner to the motel where she was staying, the employee stopped at a disco. The board stated that what constitutes an "official purpose" is not always clear and that a deviation is "simply one of the circumstances to be considered in determining the overall nature of the trip."

Following Orders

Disobeying a supervisor's order about a GOV may well be insubordination, but it isn't necessarily vehicle misuse. For example, a supervisor told an Army employee to park his government car at a

GSA lot, but the employee instead drove it to his house to drop off and pick up some work-related equipment. He then headed for a service station, where he intended to put the car for the weekend, and had an accident. The board saw no vehicle misuse, stating that "although the driving of the vehicle to appellant's residence might have involved some minor personal use, it was primarily for the furtherance of the agency's business."

However, employees should not be misled into believing they can park a GOV at home with impunity. In one case, a Defense Investigative Service employee parked his government car at home for two months while his request for domicile parking was pending. In another case, an Immigration and Naturalization Service employee kept his GOV at his residence overnight, even after his supervisor ordered him to return it to a government garage. Both employees received 30-day suspensions, which the MSPB upheld, saying that even if the supervisors' refusals to allow at-home parking were arbitrary and capricious, the employees should have obeyed the orders and then filed grievances.

Willful Misuse

The case of a supervisor at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) gets to the heart of the willful misuse issue. The office's only typist told the supervisor that her personal car had broken down on the expressway at a time when the caseload was especially heavy. The boss authorized the typist to take a government vehicle back to the breakdown site to secure her own car. The EEOC suspended the supervisor for 30 days. The appeals court reversed the suspension, because even though the supervisor "knew and intended" to do what she did, "there is no evidence that she actually knew that the use would be characterized [by the agency] as

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‘nonofficial’. . . [the supervisor] acted in good faith in attempting to solve an office emergency.” In short, she did not act “with knowledge of or reckless disregard for whether the intended use was for other than official purposes.”

On the other hand, the MSPB upheld the 45-day suspension of an Army employee for entering a restricted area of Fort Eustis, Va., in his GOV and using it to kill an injured deer. The employee “voluntarily and consciously” drove into the restricted area without permission and likewise lacked the approval to drive over the deer. The board was not impressed by the employee’s profession of humanitarian motives, noting that he could have phoned the post’s game warden.

An Air Force officers club manager also failed to get his suspension overturned. He used a government truck to commute, five to seven times in two weeks, while his personal car was being repaired. It was not a one-time emergency like the EEOC typist’s breakdown, or even a case where the government could derive some benefit.

Drunken Driving

Being under the influence of alcohol excuses or mitigates certain criminal offenses in many states, but the MSPB regards it as an aggravating factor, especially if someone is killed or injured in an ensuing accident. An Army employee who worked as a caretaker at a national cemetery left the grounds without permission in a government truck to pick up his daughter. En route he struck a light pole, narrowly missing some pedestrians. The board upheld the employee’s removal and rejected his claim of handicap discrimination because of his alcohol abuse. The board said the employee had not established a causal connection between his handicapping condition and the charged misconduct.

Even an employee who can establish that his or her free will was so overborne by alcohol or drugs that he didn’t know what he was doing, still may not prevail. A Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms employee driving home from a bar in a government car went the wrong way on an interstate highway and struck a car head on. A 2-year-old in the other car was killed. Affirming the employee’s

firing, the board noted that even though alcoholism is a handicapping condition, the employee was not a “qualified handicapped individual” because his conduct was “so egregious and notorious” that it “struck at the very core of the agency’s mission.”

Rental Cars

It is a long-held belief that an employee who misuses a rental car can be punished under the willful misuse statute. Not so, says the appeals court. An Interior Department employee on temporary duty rented a car on his government credit card at the government rate and drove 300 miles on personal business. In reversing his suspension, the court ruled that the contract was between the employee and the rental company, that regulations governing government leases were not complied with, and that the government had assumed no liability to pay the charges. In short, the car was not “owned or leased by the government,” and the willful misuse statute doesn’t apply.

Exercising Mercy

Must an agency exact the harsh penalty of 30 days (or more) when a decent and productive employee suffers a one-time lapse of judgment? Yes and no. If the agency charges the employee with willful vehicle misuse, neither it nor an administrative judge nor arbitrator can mitigate the 30-day suspension. On the other hand, the agency can cite a different violation that doesn’t mandate such a harsh penalty. For example, agency provisions covering general misuse of property—everything from telephones to copying machines—carry lighter penalties ranging from a letter of reprimand to a five- or 10-day suspension. Although technically an agency is supposed to apply the charge that most closely fits the offense, it is a rare employee who complains about a three-day suspension when he could have gotten 30.

Clear as Mud

Any hope of a clear understanding of willful misuse disappeared last year when the court decided the case of a Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and

Explosives (ATF) special agent who transported his 3-year-old son “on a few occasions” to and from a daycare facility while his wife was confined to bed during pregnancy.

An administrative judge reversed the agent’s 30-day suspension, noting that the job required him to be on call round the clock, the car had specialized equipment necessary to remain in contact with the office, and the employee worked a lot of overtime. The special agent testified that he deviated 2.6 miles each way to take his son to day care, but if he had used his own car, returned home and picked up his GOV, he would have had a 21.2-mile, 40-minute round trip. The judge said the employee was making the most efficient use of his and the agency’s time during his wife’s medical emergency, adding that he is a “highly decorated ATF agent with more than 10 years of service, a flawless record and an excellent reputation,” and “would be unlikely to violate a rule knowingly” or “lie about his motives.”

“Even if (the employee) could have first secured permission to transport his son, his failure to do so given the circumstances does not amount to ‘reckless disregard’ for the regulations,” the court found.

The court found further that the ATF staffer “was authorized to commute to work in his GOV, which contained specialized equipment necessary to remain in contact with the agency.”

The agent’s adventure stretches credibility to its furthest extent, and most employees lacking his wings and halo, probably would not fare so well. Nonetheless, “willful misuse” is difficult to define and must be judged on a case-by-case basis. Agencies should not assume that every deviation or apparent violation is actionable misconduct. The charge, with its 30-day minimum suspension and possible removal, is a serious one and should not be made before careful deliberation by management, agency counsel, and labor and employee relations staff. Somewhere between the EEOC’s well-intentioned supervisor and the Army’s deer slayer is the line.

Innovations in Fleet Management

by Russ Pentz, GSA, Assistant Deputy Associate Administrator

It's no longer adequate to simply have a Management Information System (MIS). Industry has the technology that makes it possible to connect our management information system with on-board vehicle event management systems providing us with real time vehicle event management capabilities. These on-board systems can connect to our management information system with any available communication device currently being used by the fleet owner which provides immediate notification of adverse events such as an engine failure, crash, or deployment of an airbag. On-board vehicle event management systems include such technologies as electronic readers that connect directly to the vehicle On-Board Diagnostic (OBD) Control Module, and vehicle operator readers that measure the performance of the operator such as how fast they were driving.

The OBD reader provides the maintenance manager with real time vehicle inventory and performance data. The availability of performance data will warn them of serious safety or maintenance issues that require immediate action, or to create a deferred maintenance item for the next scheduled maintenance. In either case, the maintenance manager will have the information necessary to reduce maintenance costs, and minimize vehicle downtime reducing the number of back-up vehicles required. Used in conjunction with an MIS and managed correctly, fleets will be able to significantly reduce maintenance costs, increase vehicle life, and reduce the size of the fleet.

The vehicle operator reader is a digital recorder that is activated by a vehicle movement event such as quick or sudden starts and stops. These recorders provide managers with the ability to predict and prevent risky driving behaviors and save lives. Risky driving is a global problem

resulting in crashes, serious injuries and deaths each year. Using these devices, managers will have the tools needed to reduce claims costs and save lives by improving the way vehicle operators drive and assessing liability in collisions. By using this technology in our fleet vehicles combined with good program management, expert analysis and driver coaching, we can reduce vehicle damages, workers' compensation and personal injury costs by 30 to 90 percent.

The OBD reader and the vehicle operator reader have the capability to interact with another new technology-Smart Highway and Smart Car systems. These technologies provide tools for vehicle-to-vehicle and highway-to-vehicle communications that literally help operators drive their vehicles thereby reducing or eliminating risky driving events. The goal of the Smart Highway is to improve traffic flow and to alert motorists to potential hazards on the road. The Smart-Car or Intelligent Vehicle performs functions such as warning a driver if the car gets too close to another vehicle. If the driver does not react then it will automatically apply the brakes, preventing the collision. The system has the ability to take charge of steering the vehicle if the driver happens to be very careless. There is even an existing technology that will parallel park the car without assistance from the operator. Another feature of Smart Car and Smart Highway systems are the ability to interact with the vehicle navigation system to inform the operator of speed limits in the zone, hazards, patches of black ice or rain, potholes, and available parking. These technologies reduce vehicle crashes and improve employee productivity by eliminating the time they spend on our highways.

The OBD reader and the vehicle operator reader combined with Smart Highway and Smart Car technology

make it easier for a Fleet Manager to manage their fleets by notifying them of maintenance issues, potential unsafe driving patterns by operators, and crash prevention technology that helps operators drive and park vehicles. This past Fall, GSA published an advisory bulletin on the Requirements for Management Information Systems in Federal Vehicle Fleets GSA Bulletin FMR B-15. This bulletin will help your agency to move closer to incorporating the newest technological innovations in fleet management into your programs. You can find a copy of this bulletin at www.gsa.gov/vehiclepolicy.

Your Guide to Federal Fleet Management!

The **Guide to Federal Fleet Management** (GFFM) is available on GSA's website at www.gsa.gov/vehiclepolicy in the Reference section. It is a comprehensive guide to help you manage your agency's fleet. Federal fleet management incorporates five areas of competency that Fleet Managers require to perform as professionals:

- **Legal Requirements**
- **General Management**
- **Fleet Asset Management**
- **Fleet Operations Management**
- **Risk Management**

The *GFFM* discusses these topics in detail to give you the information you need to perform your job at all levels of Federal fleet management from the driver in the field to the National Agency Fleet Manager. The *GFFM* will be updated on a continual basis as we receive input from Federal fleet personnel. It can be used as a model for developing your own agency fleet management guidelines. It also has a list of electronic resources available to you to help perform your job.

If you have any comments or suggested changes to the *GFFM*, please e-mail them to vehicle.policy@gsa.gov.

Alternative Fuels & Vehicles National Conference Program Announced

Focus is on Funding, Fueling and Fleets



Alternative Fuel Vehicle Institute (AFVi) announces the concurrent sessions that will be offered as part of the Alternative Fuels & Vehicles National Conference and Expo 2008. The conference will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada, May 11-14. This fuel and technology neutral gathering is designed to bring one-stop information and product shopping to fleets, policy-makers, and advocates for clean transportation choices.

AFVi concurrent sessions complement the General Session proceedings, which feature keynote presentations by Amy Myers Jaffe, head of the Baker Institute Energy Forum; race car icon Bobby Rahal; and, billionaire entrepreneur and chief of BP Capital, T. Boone Pickens. The AF&V Conference & Expo features more than 125 exhibitors from all corners of the globe, as well as a Ride-n-Drive showcasing light-, medium-, and heavy-duty vehicles. The AF&V Conference concurrent session lineup is organized around the categories of electric drive, fuels & fueling, money, policy, and vehicles.

Electric Drive

- *All Charged Up: Electric Vehicle Product Rollouts*
- *Changing Gears: The Medium- and Heavy-Duty Hybrid Promise*
- *Charge It Please: Electric Vehicle Investments that Make Sense*
- *Creative Outlets: Growing the Market for Plug-in Hybrids*

Fuels & Fueling

- *An Ounce of Prevention: How to Select the Right Alternative Fuels for Your Fleet*

- *Cream of the Crop: Ethanol Leading the Way*
- *Fuels Rush In: Retailers Leading the Way in Infrastructure Development*
- *Hindsight Is 20/20: Drivers and Mechanics Share Lessons Learned*
- *It's a Gas: Running Your Fleet on Propane*
- *Ready, Set, Grow: How to Incorporate Biodiesel into Your Fleet Today*
- *Smog Busters: Why Natural Gas is Gaining Traction as a Clean, Cost Effective Transportation Fuel*
- *Waste Not, Want Not: The Promise of Biogas*

Money

- *Breathing Easy: Understanding Credit Trading Options for Business*
- *Clearing the Air: An Emissions Focused Well-to-Wheels Analysis*
- *Fed Fever: Using Federal Incentives to Drive Your Fleet*
- *Prophetic Profits: Early Adopters Show How Green Begets Gold*

Policy

- *Auto Motion: Clean and Green Goods Movement*
- *Bottoms Up: Local Government Paving the Alternative Fuel Pathway*
- *California Greenin': The Alternative Fuel Plan that Could Change the World*
- *Hydrogen Cells: Paving the Way for the Hydrogen Highway*

Vehicles

- *AFV Converts: Small Volume Manufacturer Product Rollouts*
- *Car Talk: Light-duty Product Rollout*

- *Heavy Lifting: Medium- and Heavy-Duty Product Rollouts*
- *The Right Fit: A Toolkit of After-Market Solutions for Heavy-Duty Vehicles*

AF&V Conference + Expo is presented on behalf of AFVi's sponsors. The 2008 lead partners at the Platinum level include American Honda, Clean Energy, and General Motors. Diamond sponsors include American Clean Skies Foundation, Foton America, and Toyota. Other confirmed sponsors include Alloy Custom Products, ARB, Inc., Bosch, Chrysler, Cummins Westport, Ethanol Promotion and Information Council, FirmGreen, Ford Motor Company, Global Electric Motorcars, GreenField Compression, Luxfer Gas Cylinders, Miles Automotive Group, National Biodiesel Board, South Coast Air Quality Management District, Westport Innovations, and Wheels Inc.

Alternative Fuel Vehicle Institute (AFVi) is an entrepreneurial organization that works through industry to bring people in need of proven transportation technologies together with those who can meet their needs. AFVi is the education provider and information link between the alternative fuels and vehicles industry and public/private fleets. The primary business of the company is to advance the interests of OEMs, fuel providers and their associated business partners through education, outreach and deployment. AFVi is fuel and technology neutral. More information on the conference is available by going to www.afvi.org/NationalConference2008.

For more information contact Kimberly Taylor at (702) 203-4982 or email her at ktaylor@afvi.org.

Runway Safety

Reducing the risk of runway incursions is one of the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) top priorities. The agency has been aggressively addressing the issue and has made progress reducing the most serious incidents, particularly those involving commercial aircraft. The number of serious runway incursions — called Category A and B — has dropped by more than 40 percent since fiscal year 2001 (see chart below). The number of serious runway incursions dropped from 31 in fiscal year 2006 to 24 in FY 2007 — an all-time low.

Over the years, the FAA has made significant advances in improving runway safety, including better airport layout, signage and lighting; implementation of technology designed to prevent accidents and reduce the number of incursions; and human factors training for both pilots and air traffic controllers. In addition, the FAA

person, or object that creates a collision hazard or results in loss of required separation with an aircraft preparing to take off or land. (The term “loss of required separation” refers to the loss of minimum safe distances between aircraft and other objects on the runway surface.)

Background

To realize the scope of this challenge, it is important to note that more than 600,000 pilots made about 62 million takeoffs and landings last year, and about 14,000 air traffic controllers at more than 500 towered airports handled them. Adding to this complex choreography are the hundreds of thousands of individuals who drive vehicles on the airport grounds. The sheer number of flights, people, and vehicles moving across airport runways and taxiways means there is no single way to reduce

New Technologies

The FAA has implemented important new technologies to allow tower controllers to see everything that is taking place around them.

One of these is an advanced warning system called the Airport Movement Area Safety System (AMASS). AMASS tracks ground movements and provides an alert to controllers if evasive action is required. The FAA has installed AMASS at the nation's top 34 airports.

Airport Surface Detection Equipment, Model X (ASDE-X) is an even more sophisticated surface detection technology. While AMASS is radar-based, meaning signals might bounce off rain and fog, ASDE-X integrates data from a variety of sources, including radars and aircraft transponders, to give controllers a more reliable view of airport operations. ASDE-X capabilities will be added to many of the sites that already have AMASS, as well as other busy airports.

The FAA is also testing new technologies that will alert pilots to potential runway incursions. One of these, called Runway Status Lights, is just as it sounds: a series of runway lights, not unlike traffic lights, that tell pilots whether or not runways are clear. Surface and terminal surveillance systems, such as ASDE-X and AMASS, detect the presence and motion of aircraft and vehicles on or near the runways; the Runway Status Light safety logic then assesses any possible conflicts with other surface traffic. Red in-pavement runway entrance lights are illuminated if the runway is unsafe for entry or crossing, and red in-pavement takeoff hold lights are illuminated if the runway is unsafe for departure. The operational evaluation of the runway entrance lights using ASDE-X surface surveillance was completed in June 2005 at Dallas/Ft. Worth International Airport, and the system showed promising initial results. The lights were compatible with the tempo and style of operations at a busy airport, there was no increase in air

Serious Runway Incursions		
Total A and B Incursions	Number Involving Commercial Aircraft	Fiscal Year
53	26	2001
37	11	2002
32	10	2003
28	9	2004
29	9	2005
31	10	2006
24	8	2007

continues to conduct research into new technology that will provide direct warnings to pilots.

What is a Runway Incursion?

A runway incursion is any instance on a runway involving an aircraft, vehicle,

runway incursions. Runway safety is a shared responsibility among pilots, controllers, and vehicle drivers. Automated warning systems enhance runway safety, but education and situational awareness are the keys to preventing incursions.

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traffic controller workload, and the lights proved useful to pilots. An enhanced lighting configuration is being installed on a second runway at Dallas-Ft. Worth this year. The evaluation of Runway Status Lights with AMASS began last year at San Diego Lindbergh Field.

Other new technologies include an experimental system called the Final Approach Runway Occupancy Signal (FAROS), which is being tested at the Long Beach/Daugherty Field Airport in California. FAROS is designed to prevent accidents on airport runways by activating a flashing light visible to landing pilots to warn them that the runway is occupied and hazardous.

FAA's Runway Safety Management Strategy

To address the errors committed by pilots, air traffic controllers, and airport-authorized vehicle operators and pedestrians, the FAA is focusing on outreach, awareness, improved infrastructure, and technology. Recent efforts include:

Outreach to Pilots

The FAA recently released a new booklet for pilots that highlights communication procedures for safe surface operations at towered and non-towered airports.

In collaboration with the industry, the FAA created two online courses that educate pilots on runway safety. One is tailored for commercial aviation, the other for general aviation.

Every year, the FAA conducts hundreds of safety seminars across the country to encourage safe practices on the airfield.

The FAA provided information to pilot training facilities on use of aircraft lighting during taxi and takeoff operations and appropriate air traffic language.

The role of Flight Service Station (FSS) specialists was expanded to provide runway safety information to pilots using towered and non-towered airports.

FAA Aviation Safety Inspectors now verify that pilots have current surface movement charts (airport diagrams) available and that they are in use.

Situational Awareness

To enhance general aviation runway safety education, the FAA produced DVDs that highlight safe surface operations and proper communications procedures. A similar DVD for commercial pilots is currently in production.

To enhance air traffic supervisor and controller discussions of serious runway incursions during team briefings, the FAA is developing simulated recreations of actual incursions.

Airport managers and fixed-base operators participate in Runway Safety Action Teams to address airport-specific factors (e.g., procedures, environment, and infrastructure) that affect runway safety. The FAA awarded more than \$170 million in Airport Improvement Program grants in fiscal years 2005 and 2006 to implement recommendations of these teams.

The FAA provided airline maintenance personnel operating "tug and tow" vehicles with standardized best practices while operating on the airport surface.

The FAA requires driver training programs for all airport operators who access the airfield movement areas at commercial airports. The movement area includes runways and taxiways and other parts of an airport used for taxiing and takeoff and landings, exclusive of ramps and aprons.

The FAA published a small placard with a key of all airport markings and signs, for the benefit of vehicle operators who operate on the airfield. The placard can be placed on a vehicle dashboard and includes radio frequencies, as well as the different types of markings and signs.

The agency also developed and initiated controller training to enhance their skills in teamwork, communication, problem solving, situational awareness, and managing workloads.

Standardizing Runway Safety Data for Global Use

While the FAA already has a runway incursion rating system, the agency is developing a system that uses the new standard ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) definitions for

runway incursion severity categories. Several factors are considered during the rating of a runway incursion, such as the time of day, aircraft type, speed, and visibility condition. The FAA is testing the system now and hopes to offer it to ICAO as a tool that can be given to all of ICAO's member states. International use of the system would support collaborative studies of runway incursion data. Such collaboration would help the agency identify trends and develop mitigation strategies that could be shared around the world to reduce runway incursions.

Evaluating Incursions

The FAA has established a new voluntary program that gathers runway safety data on surface incidents and runway incursions. The information is available in a centralized database. The primary means of gathering the data is through in-depth interviews of pilots and maintenance technicians involved in these incidents. Analysis of the data is used to implement risk-reduction mitigation programs, produce guidance and augment technologies. Called the Runway Incursion Information and Evaluation Program (RIIEP), it provides safety information that identifies the root causes of pilot deviations that result in runway incursions.

Improved Management Oversight

The FAA established regional runway safety program manager positions for each region. Additionally, Runway Incursion Action Teams were established for specific airports. To date, more than 700 action team meetings have been held at approximately 430 airports with countless follow-up meetings at every airport.

Airfield Changes

The FAA developed standards for end-round taxiways, which can keep aircraft from having to cross runways being used for takeoffs and landings at the busiest airports. New end-round taxiways at Atlanta and Dallas-Fort Worth will eliminate more than 2,000 runway crossings each day.

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The FAA encourages operators to build perimeter roads around the airfield so that vehicles do not have to be driven across taxiways and runways.

Airport Signs, Marking and Lighting

Throughout the years, the FAA has published substantially revised and comprehensive standards for the marking and signing of airports for standardization purposes, thus eliminating confusion on airfields. Some of the many standards/changes implemented by the FAA include:

Changing the airfield markings (paint) standard for taxiway centerlines at 72 airports (based on enplanements) to require new markings that will alert pilots when they are approaching hold short lines.

Creating new standards for surface markings that require the use of glass beads in the paint for better reflectivity.

Doubling the size of standard holding position markings and requiring them to be outlined in black on light colored pavements, for greater conspicuity. The standard is now 12-inch wide lines and 12-inch spaces between the lines. The prior standard was 6 inches wide and 6 inches apart.

Where runway guard lights are installed to help pilots identify holding position markings during marginal weather, the

FAA encourages airport operators to leave the lights on in good weather conditions as well, serving as an additional alert. Runway guard lights are flashing yellow lights that may be elevated on posts or installed in-pavement, and are placed immediately before a holding position marking.

Working with airport operators to install stop bars at certain runway/taxiway intersections. A stop bar is a series of in-pavement and elevated red lights that indicate to pilots that they may not cross.

Encouraging airport operators to barricade taxiway access to closed runways and taxiways and to use the lighted “X” device. This device is used to indicate to a pilot landing that a runway is closed.

Revising the color coding of taxiway centerline lights at taxiway/runway intersections. The alternating green and yellow lights inform a pilot that the aircraft is within the runway safety area. This change has been proposed to ICAO and was well received. We expect it to be incorporated into ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices.

Recommending that airports improve how they provide information on rapidly changing runway and taxiway construction and closings. The FAA wants airports to provide airlines and pilots with diagrams giving the latest information on runway construction and

closings. This would be distributed by email, on a web site or hand-delivery. It would supplement Notices to Airmen (NOTAMS), which are printed as text or delivered verbally, and thus do not have diagrams.

Runway Safety Areas

Since the late 1980’s the FAA has had in effect standards for runway safety areas that exceed ICAO standards.

The FAA has instituted a program to accelerate the improvement of runway safety areas that do not meet agency design standards. Since 2000, 53 percent of the runway safety areas identified as “high priority” have been improved, with the remainder to be improved by 2015.

The FAA, in partnership with industry and airport operators, conducted research to develop a soft-ground arrestor system to quickly stop aircraft that overrun the end of a runway. On the basis of that research, the FAA issued a specification for engineered material arresting systems, or EMAS. An EMAS bed provides a safety enhancement on runway ends where there is not enough level, cleared land for a standard runway safety area. EMAS has been installed at more than 18 runway ends in the U.S. and more are planned.

*For more information contact:
Paul Takemoto at (202) 267-3883.*

Alcohol Misuse + Driving = Crashes

For any organization with employees on the roadway

From the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety

Scope of the problem: Alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes

- 16,885 deaths (39%) of all fatal crashes and 500,000 injuries are alcohol-related.
 - 1 alcohol-related fatality every 31 minutes.
 - 1 alcohol-related injury every 2 minutes (NHTSA, 2006).
- Drugs other than alcohol are involved in 18% of motor-vehicle-related driver deaths. These other drugs are generally used in combination with alcohol. (Jones et al 2003)
- 25% of occupational fatalities are motor-vehicle related (DOL-BLS, 2005)

Alcohol impaired driving contributes to:

- 40% of crashes involving serious injury.
- 30% of crashes involving minor injury.
- 10 to 15% of minor crashes.

Most drinking and driving episodes are undetected

- 159 million self-reported episodes of drunk driving each year.
- 1.4 million arrests for DUI (driving under the influence).
- An arrest rate of 1 for every 135 licensed drivers.
- 1 arrest occurs for every 772 drunk driving incidents. (Quinlan et al. 2005)

Cost of alcohol-related crashes

- Alcohol accounts for about 22% of all costs associated with all motor vehicle crashes. (Blincoe et al. 2000)
- 15% of total costs to employers for all



crashes are due to alcohol-related crashes by employees or their benefit eligible dependents.

- Two-thirds of these crashes occur off-the-job.

Drunk driving can be a symptom of a larger problem, alcohol misuse

- As many as one-third of impaired drivers have a previous DUI conviction.
- More than 50% of people arrested for DUI have serious drinking problems.
- 16-29 year olds arrested for DUI are 4 times as likely to die in a future crash involving alcohol.
- Drivers 30 years and older arrested for DUI are more than 11 times as likely to die in future alcohol-related crashes.

The business case for addressing alcohol impaired driving in the workplace

- The vast majority of the 14 million Americans with alcohol problems are between 18 and 49 years old and are

employed full-time.

- Light and moderate alcohol users cause 60% of alcohol-related problems. Dependent drinkers cause 40%.
- Employees who drink in ways that endanger safety and well-being—spend four times as many days in the hospital as the national average, mostly as the result of alcohol-related crashes.
- Employers can reap productivity gains and savings from a reduction in alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes. A University of Wisconsin study found problem drinkers that did not receive brief interventions had more traffic fatalities, 55% more crashes with nonfatal injuries and 46% more arrests.
- Employers are in a potentially unique position to change the way alcohol problems are addressed.



Defensive Driving Course

GSA Fleet has made safety a priority by offering a variety of safety programs geared towards its customers' and employees' needs. GSA Fleet's most recent program is a free online defensive driving course offered through the National Safety Council. This course is a comprehensive driver improvement program offering practical knowledge and techniques to avoid crashes and to improve driving behaviors. GSA Fleet is offering this course to all drivers of GSA Fleet vehicles and is absorbing all costs associated with the course.

GSA Fleet launched the course five months ago. We are seeing outstanding results. Participants take a standardized test before beginning the course and after they complete it. Pre-test scores have averaged 60 points while post-test scores have averaged 92 points (on a 100 point scale). To date more than 20,000 drivers from 55 agencies have registered to take the course. Our goal is to have at least 120,000 customers complete the course in 2008.

In addition, GSA Fleet in partnership with the Public Buildings Service has held an annual Safety Day for the past

two years. The event promotes office, home, and driver safety. More than 50 agencies from the Washington metropolitan area and across the country have attended. We plan to hold the event again in June 2008.

Direction to sign up for the course:

New Students:

1. Go to <http://drivethru.fss.gsa.gov>
2. Enter your GSA Fleet customer number (15 digits without hyphens) **NO ACCESS CODE NEEDED.**
3. Click on the GSA Fleet Driving Course Button to the left of Customer number.
4. You will be presented with a registration page. Fill in all your information, including a login ID and a password of your choice, then click on Submit. (Please note - you will receive a confirming email reminding you of the user name and password you created for access to the site at a later date).

5. On the My Place page, click on Safety.
6. Then on My Course page, click on NSC Defensive Driving Course 8th Edition to begin the course.

*For more information contact
Lauren Allen at (703) 605-2929.*

Customer Numbers

Region 2	02-01-00-472455-103
Region 3	03-11-00-473455-002
Region 4	04-01-00-474455-201
Region 5	05-01-00-475455-001
Region 6	06-01-00-476455-111
Region 7	07-12-00-477455-815
Region 9	09-02-00-479455-001
Region 10	10-01-00-47A455-001
Central Office - 03-11-00-473455-002	

Your customer number is the 15 digit number that corresponds with your region.



New AAA Foundation Study Offers Hope For Improving Senior Drivers' Performance

Provided by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

Senior drivers 70 years of age or older who take classroom driving improvement courses and behind the wheel training can improve their driving performance, according to a new study released today by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety and Yale University.

Out of 27 million people currently aged 70 or older in the United States, an estimated 20 million have active drivers' licenses. The Census Bureau predicts by 2020, those aged 70 or over will grow to 37 million and by 2030, over 50 million. The study was undertaken to research

ways to reduce the safety risk of older drivers, according to AAA Foundation President and CEO Peter Kissinger.

"An intervention, such as driving improvement classes that include behind-the-wheel training, can enhance senior driving performance and potentially prolong their safe driving years," Kissinger said. "Hopefully, this study will encourage seniors, families and health care professionals to engage in discussions about this important traffic safety issue."

The research, "Enhancement of Driver Performance Among Older Drivers," used

126 drivers aged 70 years or older who recorded sub-optimal driving performance scores during road tests. Participants were then divided into two groups, one undergoing eight-hours of classroom training, based in part on AAA's Driver Improvement Program, plus two-hours of behind-the-wheel training and the other serving as the control group. Drivers who took the classroom and on-road training showed significant improvement in their driving skills.

"Senior drivers cherish their mobility and families and health professionals struggle with the issue of how long their loved one or patient should be allowed to drive," said Kissinger. "This study shows there are ways to improve driving performance of seniors."

"There are a number of changes that can occur with aging that may potentially affect driving safety," said Dr. Richard Marottoli, the study's principal investigator from Yale University. "Doctors and other rehabilitation specialists can take an active role in helping seniors identify and work on potential problems in advance that may limit their mobility later."

Generally available throughout the United States, various driver training programs for older drivers are provided by AAA and other organizations. In 33 states and the District of Columbia a senior can qualify for an insurance discount upon taking a course, most of which do not include on-road instruction. Bills proposing car insurance discounts for senior drivers are pending in three states.

Established in 1947 by AAA, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is an independent, publicly funded, 501(c)(3) charitable research and educational organization. The AAA Foundation's mission is to prevent traffic deaths and injuries by conducting research into their causes and by educating the public about strategies to prevent crashes and reduce injuries when they do occur. The report "Enhancement of Driver Performance Among Older Drivers," is available online at www.aaafoundation.org

For more information contact Fairley Mablum at (202) 638-5944 x4, or email at fmablum@aaafoundation.org. You may also try Allison Soule at (202) 638-5944 x5, or email at asoule@aaafoundation.org.

Hey! What's With the Splice and Staples On Those Retreads?

An Often Asked Question

Many people who have been in a modern retread plant using the pre-cure system often ask about the splice where the pre-cured rubber is cut to fit the tire casing circumference. And when they see the spliced ends STAPLED, they usually say, "Whoa! What's with the staples? Is THIS how the tread is held on to the casing?"

Let's remember that perception is NOT reality

After a tire has been retreaded, the splice happens to be far stronger than the staples that are ONLY used during the manufacturing process and are REMOVED before the finished retread is completed. They have nothing to do with keeping the tread in place on the finished retreaded tire.

The staples do the same thing that staples or stitches do when treating a cut or wound – they TEMPORARILY hold the two sides in place while the permanent process (healing or curing) takes place.

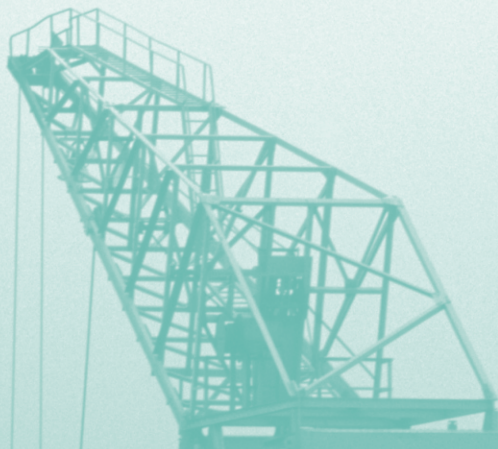
For those of you who are familiar with welding, you understand that the weld is the STRONGEST part on the finished metal product. The analogy between the weld in metal and the splice on a pre-cured retread is a good one. In fact, the new tread on the retreaded tire is held in place with over 1,000 square inches of the bond between the tread and the underlying tire! **This bond is stronger than the rubber itself.** The splice doesn't even play an important role in holding the tread on the tire, and is not even

remotely the cause of the "gators" on the highway. Underinflation gets the credit for the vast majority of the tire debris we all see on our roads.

But, please don't take our word for any of the above. Let us arrange for a tour of a modern pre-cure retread plant and while you are there, ask to see the adjustment records of retread failures. Any reputable plant manager will be happy to review his adjustment records with you and you will then see that there is nothing to worry about when you see "the splice".

Our materials are non-commercial and there is no cost.

For more information about the economic and environmental benefits of retreading, including a Retread Tire Information Packet, a CD & DVD, please contact us toll free from anywhere in North America at 888-473-8732, or by email to: info@retread.org.



EDTA President's Response to the State of the Union Address

The Electric Drive Transportation Association (EDTA), the trade association promoting battery, hybrid and fuel cell electric drive technologies and infrastructure, supports the President's commitment to investment in advanced battery and other transportation technologies that can reduce dependence on oil and greenhouse gas emissions.

"We agree that development of clean and efficient technologies is critical to our national interests," says EDTA president Brian Wynne. "Based on the president's remarks last night, we are optimistic that the Administration's FY09 budget request will specifically acknowledge the unique contribution that electric drive technology can make to a sustainable transportation and a secure energy future."

"EDTA members are committed to working with the Administration and Congress to displace petroleum through the increasing electrification of transportation," says Wynne.

Background:

- Transportation accounts for 50% of U.S urban air pollution and roughly 33% of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. 50% of all Americans live in areas that fail to meet national air quality standards. Electric drive vehicles reduce petroleum use by up to 40% and emissions by up to 50%. Current hybrid buses reduce particulate matter by up to 90% and nitrous oxides by up to 50%.
- Global oil consumption is expected to reach 119 million barrels a day in 2025; 60% of which will be supplied by OPEC members. Even reliance on



Pictured above is the battery-powered Chevrolet Volt concept car.

non-OPEC supply, with increasing global competition for the commodity and political instability of supplier nations, poses risks to our national security.

- By 2030, the Energy Information Administration is projecting that imports will be required to meet 61% of our liquid fuel demand. That dependence has significant security and economic implications for the United States.
- By 2030, if ALL of the light duty vehicles in the US had electric drive technology, emissions from the light duty sector would be reduced by 832 million tons per year, oil imports would be reduced by 65% and oil consumption by the light duty vehicles would decline by 83%.

About EDTA:

The Electric Drive Transportation Association (EDTA) is the trade association representing battery, hybrid and fuel cell electric drive technologies and infrastructure. EDTA conducts public policy advocacy, education, industry networking, and international conferences. EDTA's membership includes automotive and other equipment manufacturers, utilities, technology developers, component suppliers, and government agencies. For more information about EDTA and its members, visit www.electricdrive.org.

*For additional information contact:
Jennifer Watts at (202) 408-0774 x306,
or e-mail her at jwatts@electricdrive.org.*

Congress Quietly Revises 'Buy America' Rule for Defense Materials

By Megan Scully

CongressDaily December 17, 2007

Much to the surprise of the Defense Department's legion of industry suppliers, Congress last week approved legislation that would give them some relief from heartburn-inducing restrictions regulating the amount of domestic metal content in the U.S. military's weapons systems.

The fiscal 2008 defense authorization bill, which President Bush is expected to sign into law, revises language in last year's defense bill that stipulated that all "specialty metals," including titanium, zirconium and certain steel alloys, in U.S. defense hardware come from domestic sources.

The provision is a relatively obscure one in the sweeping policy measure. But it is almost certain to have significant long-term effects on the defense industry's ability to deliver equipment, such as vehicles and aircraft, to the military.

With fervent "Buy America" heavy hitters, including House Armed Services ranking member Duncan Hunter, R-Calif., behind last year's law, many in the defense industry were resigned to living with the domestic-content restrictions a little while longer.

But it became apparent this year that the restrictions weren't working.

The specialty metals industry complained that the Defense Department had found a way to work around them by using waivers allowed by last year's law.

Meanwhile, defense suppliers cried that it had become too difficult and too costly to comply with the law's requirements. Both sides of the polarizing "Buy

America" debate agreed that the law simply was getting impossible to live with.

"You can't bend the laws of physics; it's like ordering me to get taller," quipped House Armed Services Air and Land Forces Subcommittee Chairman Neil Abercrombie, D-Hawaii.

Defense suppliers had to track the origins for every specialty metal in their products -- an arduous and expensive task, they said.

Often hit the hardest were firms that sell mainly in the commercial market, forcing them to weigh whether their limited defense business was worth the headaches associated with last year's law.

One subcontractor on Boeing's massive C-17 Globemaster III cargo plane learned at the last minute that some of the parts it had provided were from foreign sources, John Douglass, the retiring president of the Aerospace Industries Association, recounted in an interview this fall.

The subcontractor ultimately had to charter a jet and fly several engineers to the plane's assembly site to replace "maybe \$10 worth of nuts and bolts" before Boeing could deliver the C-17 to the military, he said.

Chris Myers, the Washington manager for Caterpillar Inc., a largely commercial firm that also sells engines and other equipment to the Defense Department, said this fall that executives were doing a cost-benefit analysis of their military business in light of the specialty metals law.

In an e-mailed statement last week, Caterpillar praised the new language, which the company believes will "streamline the compliance process."

Bill Greenwalt, deputy undersecretary of Defense for industrial policy, said he is still reviewing the new legislation, but noted, "The problem with the earlier law is that it doesn't recognize that the department's industrial base is highly dependent upon commercial vendors."

"At the end of the day, I don't think anybody wants to see the Department of Defense unable to take products," Greenwalt added.

To deal with last year's law, the Pentagon issued a broad waiver exempting all fasteners, a major portion of the specialty metals business. That move drew immediate concerns among U.S. metal manufacturers, who feared the department's work-around was the beginning of a slippery slope toward the gutting of last year's law.

The recently approved FY08 defense bill puts less focus on the waiver process and includes more specific exemptions that leave less wiggle room for the Pentagon while at the same time giving defense suppliers more breathing space.

It closely resembles language pushed by the Senate and the defense industry last year, but ultimately shot down by House lawmakers.

Supporters of "Buy America" laws called the new language a compromise that still reaches their overarching goals of supporting domestic metals suppliers.

Rep. Robin Hayes, R-N.C., a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee and advocate of last year's law, said the intent of the new provision is to "make it realistic, make it practical, make it as flexible as we can." Still, several industry sources said they were surprised with the outcome of this fall's conference negotiations.

The House originally tried to expand last year's restrictions by tightening the rules and provided little, if any, new relief for defense suppliers while giving greater

Continued on page 17

protection to U.S. specialty metals manufacturers.

Some said they believed the final language came about because Hunter was on the presidential campaign trail and often absent during negotiations.

“Mr. Hunter was otherwise occupied running for president,” Abercrombie said. “Buy America” restrictions “did not have the same prominence” in the House-Senate conference this year, he said.

But Hunter -- and congressional aides on both sides of the aisle -- said he was very involved with crafting the new provision, which he touted in an interview as a way to give defense suppliers some relief while

still protecting the domestic specialty metals sector.

“I put this package together at the behest of the specialty metals industry that wanted to accommodate the industrial base,” Hunter said. He acknowledged concerns that last year’s law might have been “too complicated” and “couldn’t be complied with.” The specialty metals industry, meanwhile, is still reviewing the conference to determine how it will affect their sector.

“The specialty metals industry is studying the conference report,” said Jeff Green, a former House Armed Services aide who runs a lobbying firm representing several

small defense contractors, including metal producers.

Larry Lasoff, who represents the Specialty Steel Industry of North America, likewise said he is still sorting through the language.

“What I see so far is there seems to be real effort here by Congress to achieve some fair balance between the need for flexibility and also the need to preserve the integrity of the law,” Lasoff said.

We have only 60 days before the authorization expires; 60 days to determine if indeed the passenger can get there from here.

FAA Statement On Pilot Retirement Age

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) welcomes the legislation signed into law by the President that allows U.S. commercial pilots to fly until age 65. The determined efforts of Congress have averted a lengthy federal rulemaking process while enabling some of our nation’s most experienced pilots to keep flying.

Effective last night, the Fair Treatment for Experienced Pilots Act allows both pilots on a domestic flight to be up to age 65. For international flights, one pilot may be up to age 65 provided the other pilot is under age 60, consistent with the November 2006 International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standard.

While the law is not retroactive, airlines do have the option to rehire pilots who are under age 65. The rehiring of pilots is not mandatory and is the decision of each airline.

In January, the FAA announced that it would raise the retirement age for commercial pilots to 65. The mandatory federal rulemaking process would have taken 18 months to two years. The FAA took a renewed look at its longstanding rule in September 2006 with the help of aviation industry and medical experts who provided the agency with valuable insight and analysis. The “Age 60 Rule” had been in effect since 1959.



Federal Fleet Policy Council (FEDFLEET) Enrollment

If you are new to area of Federal fleet management, please enroll for FEDFLEET. The Council consists of representatives and alternates from agencies or activities operating a federal

motor vehicle fleet. If you would like to be a member of FEDFLEET and receive notices from GSA regarding Council meetings and federal fleet policy initiatives, complete the registration form at www.gsa.gov/fedfleetenroll.

Looking for an answer to a question about Federal fleet management?

Email your questions to vehicle.policy@gsa.gov for help! A vehicle policy expert will respond to your question and help you navigate your way through all the laws, policies, procedures, regulations, and advisory bulletins.

**Register today for
FedFleet 2008!
June 24- 26, 2008
Hilton Anatole
Dallas, Texas**

Registration and agenda information can be found at www.fedfleet.org.