



## APD ALERT

### USDA SmartPay2® Transition and Implementation

As you are aware, the current USDA contract with Bank of America expires on November 29, 2008. **Please note that Bank of America card(s) may no longer be used after November 29, 2008.** The new U.S. Bank cards for purchase, travel, and fleet will be available for use on November 30, 2008.

USDA is in the process of transitioning from our current card services (travel, purchase, and fleet) provider Bank of America (GSA SmartPay®) to our new provider, U.S. Bank, under the GSA SmartPay® Program. The post-award transition activities will include coordinating the issuance of new charge cards and integrating U.S. Bank's purchase card system (Access Online® System) with Agency/organization systems.

The purpose of this Alert is to provide an update on the transition and implementation of U.S. Bank's Access Online® System which will replace the Purchase Card Management System (PCMS) for account set up and maintenance, reconciliation of transactions, and management and oversight functions. PCMS is tentatively projected to be shutdown in June 2009; however, all transactions must be reconciled daily as they appear in PCMS.

A major component of the transition and implementation is the updating and maintenance of the PCMS database to ensure accurate information is transferred to the new bank provider. This will result in the issuance of cards in a timely and efficient manner. The Office of Procurement and Property Management (OPPM) has forwarded the appropriate information to U.S. Bank to begin the process of issuing new bank cards for all three business lines (purchase, travel, and fleet).

As a reminder, the PCMS database was frozen effective August 1, 2008. This means that modifications to records in PCMS cannot be performed to existing accounts (hierarchies, limits, etc.). Only replacement purchase cards (mutilated or damaged cards) can be ordered during this time. New purchase cards as a result of lost/stolen cards or cards to facilitate an emergency can be ordered by the REE Agency Program Coordinator, Linda Wilson (301-504-1733). An emergency consists of a sudden crisis requiring action or an unexpected event that must be dealt with urgently and the issuance of a purchase card is required.

For fleet cards, Local Fleet Program Coordinators (LFPC's) may request lost/stolen cards or cards to facilitate an emergency such as receipt of a new vehicle or a new vehicle tag assignment for lost/stolen vehicle tags. However, LFPC's must keep a detailed log of all lost, stolen, and new card requests and furnish this information to the REE Agency Fleet Program Coordinator, Cheryl Brumback (202-720-2359).

Please inform your cardholders/check writers to discontinue issuing convenience checks effective **September 1, 2008**. In addition, advise your cardholders/check writers to immediately notify their vendors to cash the checks they have been issued. We are aware of circumstances in which checks will have to be written after this date. In the event this is the case, please ensure the merchants present these checks to their banks immediately after receipt.

Another major component of the transition and implementation is training. It is anticipated that training will be offered during the October/November time frame or sooner. The training will be Web-based for cardholders and approving officials (formerly supervisors and managers) and instructor-led training for coordinators (Local Agency Program Coordinators (LAPC's), Local Fleet Program Coordinators (LFPC's) and Area Agency Program Coordinators/Alternates (AAPC's)). Please be advised that this is subject to change as the Department moves closer to implementation.

**U.S. Bank purchase cards will be issued beginning October 1, 2008, and will be delivered to the cardholder's work address along with an activation code. The fleet cards will be bulk shipped to the fleet program coordinators along with instructions for bulk activation.**

Attached is a calendar of Purchase Card Program events and dates for our transition to the SmartPay2® Program. A Departmental Web site to keep USDA employees up to date on the status of the transition and implementation is currently under development. You will be notified when this Web site is made available.

Please distribute this Alert to all cardholders and their supervisors.

ISSUE Date: August 2008

Alert 2008-14

## Calendar of Purchase Card Program Events

### Milestones

### Effective Dates

|                                                     |                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Task Order Award                                    | May 2008              |
| Database Scrub                                      | June 2008             |
| Discontinue modification to existing accounts       | August 1, 2008        |
| Discontinue ordering new cards (emergencies only)   | August 1, 2008        |
| Discontinue ordering of convenience checks          | August 1, 2008        |
| Discontinue issuing convenience checks to merchants | September 1, 2008     |
| FY08 Year-End Close                                 | September 2008        |
| Issuance of U.S. Bank Cards                         | October 2008          |
| Policy and System Training                          | October/November 2008 |
| Cancellation of Bank of America cards and checks    | November 29, 2008     |
| Identify Recurring Transactions                     | November 3, 2008      |
| Transition to SmartPay2® (U.S. Bank) Purchase Card  | December 2008         |
| Shut Down of PCMS                                   | Projected June 2009   |
| Reconciliation of transactions                      | Weekly                |
| Resolving all Disputes                              | Immediately           |
| Discontinue Using Questionable Action Code          | Immediately           |
| Confirm Receipt/Activation of new card              | As Received           |