APD ALERT
Vehicle/Fleet Card Use Logs

Background
USDA has had existing policies that required offices to maintain a reasonable audit trail to document vehicle use and capture the cost of fuel/maintenance for each vehicle. This Alert explains the current policy to provide a reasonable audit trail of vehicle and credit card use and includes a sample log.

Prior to a modern fleet credit card, offices had to manually collect fuel and maintenance costs and update PROP with all fuel and maintenance information. Offices used the ARS-715, Vehicle Operation Record Book, as the primary tool to track and record fleet costs. In the 1990's when USDA first converted to a modern credit card, the Voyager credit card automatically captures fuel and maintenance costs and fed this data to PROP. Offices were responsible for collecting costs (number of gallons of fuel and cost of fuel) when using a payment method other than the specific Voyager card, such as when using on-site Government fuel pumps/maintenance shops, or when using a POOL card. Using the Voyager credit card significantly reduced the manual data collection. Offices used a variety of methods to capture vehicle use and fuel/maintenance costs associated with each vehicle.

Current USDA Policy
In December 2008, USDA implemented the VISA fleet card. USDA Regulation DR5400-006, Use of the Fleet Charge Card, established new guidance that increased credit card oversight and required a "use log" that provides a reasonable audit trail of both vehicle and credit card use. **USDA defined the minimum requirements for use logs that provided a reasonable audit trail to include:**

- **date**
- **driver/fleet card user name**
- **odometer reading before/after use**
- **fuel/maintenance indication**

USDA also required local fleet card program coordinators or other appropriate officials to maintain **receipts** of fleet card transactions for a minimum of 1 year to support the audit trail.

Credit card oversight is an important function of the new regulation, primarily because:

- fleet cards are not assigned to a specific individual,

- there is no approval process for transactions,
- increase merchant participation through VISA, and
- increase in potential credit card account thefts.

Use logs will identify vehicle operators for questions regarding official use and official fleet card charges and determine the operator in cases of red-light or speed camera infractions. (Payment of traffic violations are the responsibility of the vehicle operator, not the Government.) Most vehicles are assigned to an office rather than an individual driver. However, ARS may have vehicles that are assigned to a primary driver. But there are occasions when others use the vehicle. Vehicle logs would identify all operators.

Options
The ARS-715 and a reservation calendar present challenges as a use log. The ARS-715 is tailored to capture fleet costs. Operators will have to update the booklet to document vehicle use. There is no field to capture the operator's name. When using a reservation calendar, operators will have to provide refueling information.

A no cost easy option that meets USDA requirements is a vehicle/card use log. The log stays with the vehicle and allows operators to record vehicle use and all fuel/maintenance costs. Property management officers can use the log to update PROP when using on-site Government fuel pumps and Government maintenance shops. The log also allows officials to update internal spreadsheets, CATS, or other software tools used to capture costs.

For offices that do not already have a tool that captures required information, enclosed are two sample logs: (1) log for a vehicle that uses the credit card as the only payment source, (2) log for a vehicle that uses Government fuel pumps/maintenance shops and a credit card. Offices can modify as needed.

Whichever method is used, **Areas and locations must establish procedures to ensure employees properly document vehicle use, credit card use, and maintain/turn-in receipts. Employees are responsible for documenting both vehicle use and credit card use.**

If you have any questions, please contact Cheryl Brumback on 301-504-1096 or email Cheryl.Brumback@ars.usda.gov.

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Government Vehicle/Credit Card Use Log   TAG No: _____

Employees must possess a valid state driver's license to operate a Government vehicle

Return Completed Log Sheets to: _____

Date	Driver's Name	Destination	Ending Odometer	Cost	# Gallons	Type of Maintenance/Repair

Immediately report any mechanical issues or problems with this vehicle.

Instructions to Re-Fuel:

        1. Swipe Card

        2. When prompted, enter the current odometer

        3. Record sale on log sheet

        4. Return Receipt

Use Hands-Free Device With Cell Phones. NO TEXT MESSAGING

Government Vehicle/Credit Card Use Log TAG No: _____

Employees must possess a valid state driver's license to operate a Government vehicle

Return Completed Log Sheets to: _____

Date	Driver's Name	Destination	Ending Odometer	Cost	# Gallons or Service Type	Credit Card	Gov
Immediately report any mechanical issues or problems with this vehicle.							

Instructions to Re-Fuel:
        1. Swipe Card
        2. When prompted, enter the current odometer
        3. Record sale on log sheet
        4. Return Receipt

Use Hands-Free Device With Cell Phones. NO TEXT MESSAGING