CHANGE

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

1500.14A CHG 1

2/24/88

SUBJ: TRAVEL MANUAL

1. PURPOSE. This change transmits Change 2 to Order DOT 1500.6A, Travel Manual, which is included as appendix 1 to FAA Order 1500.14A. Filing instructions for this change are provided in paragraph 3 of the DOT page change.

2. DISTRIBUTION. This change is distributed to branch level in the FAA headquarters and regions; to section levels at the centers; and to resident directors. A limited distribution is made to all field offices and facilities; and copies are furnished to addresses on the ZAA-388 special distribution list.

3. BACKGROUND. Change 1 to Order DOT 1500.6A is being held in abeyance at this time and will be transmitted at a later date.

E. M. Keeling
Director of Accounting

Distribution: A-WX-3; A-YZ-4; A-E-1; A-FOF-0(LTD); ZAA-388; M-80(2); GAO-1(3); FAA-15

Initiated By: AAA-300

U.S. Department of Transportation
Office of the Secretary of Transportation

FAA Order 1500.14A CHG 1
Appendix 1
2/24/88

PAGE CHANGE

DOT 1500.6A
Chg 2

7-29-87

Subject: TRAVEL MANUAL - CHANGE

1. PURPOSE. This Page Change transmits a change to DOT 1500.6A, Travel Manual, of 1-2-85.

2. EXPLANATION OF CHANGE. This change incorporates the Department's Relocation Services Program into the Travel Manual. The Program provides contractual services, including guaranteed home sale and property management, for employees incident to their permanent changes of station. The authority for the Program is contained in the Federal Travel Regulations.

3. FILING INSTRUCTIONS.

a.

Remove Pages	Dated	Insert Pages	Dated
5-ix (and 5-x)	1-2-85	5-ix and 5-x	7-29-87
		5-101 thru 5-112	7-29-87

b. This transmittal sheet should be filed with the Travel Manual for reference purposes.

FOR THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION:

Melissa J. Allen
For the Assistant Secretary for Administration

DISTRIBUTION: All Secretarial Offices
All Operating Administrations

OPI: Office of Financial Management

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SECTION 11. RELOCATION SERVICES PROGRAM

5-1101. PURPOSE. This section establishes policies and procedures for use of the Departmental relocation services contract which provides real estate assistance to employees incident to transfers to new duty stations.

5-1102. BACKGROUND.

a. Public Law 98-151, Relocation Assistance Act (5 U.S.C. 5724c), authorizes agencies to enter into contracts with private firms to provide relocation services to eligible employees who reported to their new duty stations on or after November 14, 1983. The General Services Administration (GSA) has provided guidelines for the use of these third party relocation services companies.

b. The primary purpose of the legislation and the GSA guidelines is to enable agencies to establish "safety nets" for their employees who are unable to sell their homes upon transferring to new duty stations. This safety net in agency programs is the guaranteed home sale feature which enables employees to sell their homes to third party relocation firms. Agency programs are not intended to ensure that relocating employees will never lose money in connection with residence transactions.

5-1103. GENERAL POLICY. The Department's Relocation Services Program is intended to significantly improve the benefits for employees who are directed to relocate and to thereby facilitate recruitment and retention of well-qualified personnel. The Program offers eligible transferred employees the opportunity to sell their homes to a third-party relocation company. The contract also affords access to other elective relocation services including marketing and home finding assistance and property management.

5-1104. EMPLOYEE RELOCATION GUIDE. An Employee Relocation Guide has been prepared by the contractor for distribution to prospective employee participants in the Relocation Services Program. The Guide is an essential part of the Program which provides information on services available and procedures to be followed by employees to obtain them.

5-1105. RELOCATION SERVICES COORDINATORS. A primary Relocation Services Coordinator (RSC) for each Operating Administration and the Office of the Secretary will be appointed (see paragraph 5-1110a) to act as a liaison between the contractor and employees. The RSC is to counsel employees and resolve problems involving contractor service. In

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addition, regional and district RSC's should be designated to service field activities where justified by the volume of employee transfers.

5-1106. DESCRIPTION OF RELOCATION SERVICES. The Program provides relocation assistance to help employees plan and complete their moves to their new duty stations. Under the contract, the following services are offered:

a. Guaranteed Homesale. The contractor makes an offer to purchase the employee's home at current market value based on the average of two independent appraisals, or at a higher "amended value" offer (see paragraph 5-1107) obtained independently by the employee. When the employee accepts the contractor's offer and vacates the home, responsibility for resale of the home and all the costs associated with its resale and maintenance are assumed by the contractor. The Government pays the contractor a fee for this homesale service, and employees receive their full equity from the sale.

(1) Eligible Properties. To be eligible, properties must be livable, saleable, insurable and must qualify for financing.

(2) Ineligible Properties. Properties that are under construction or are considered to be not saleable by the contractor in an as-is condition are not eligible for the guaranteed homesale service.

b. Marketing Assistance. The contractor advises employees on strategies to market their homes. Using marketing assistance along with the guaranteed homesale service may help to generate a higher net offer from the contractor.

c. Property Management. The contractor will arrange for the lease and management of an employee's home when there is a reasonable expectation that the employee will return to the old duty station as a result of a subsequent permanent change of station. Consequently, property management entitlements are limited to those employees who reasonably expect to return to their residences within a three-year period from the effective date of their transfers (i.e., the maximum time period for which travel entitlements are available). Property management entitlements must be reviewed each year. A new purchase order will be issued under procedures established in this section to continue services if the services are still desired by the employee and if the employee remains eligible for the service.

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d. Homefinding Assistance for Buyers. When employees plan to purchase homes at the new duty stations, the contractor provides information on new communities, brokers' recommendations, homefinding trips scheduling, and planning throughout the homefinding process.

e. Mortgage Counseling. The contractor assists employees in determining the approximate mortgage amount for which they may qualify and provides general counseling and information on national or local mortgage financing alternatives.

f. Homefinding for Renters. For employees planning to rent at the new location, the contractor provides advance information about local rental housing and rental practices and recommends rental agencies for assistance.

g. Spouse Employment Counseling. If the employee's spouse is planning to work at the new duty station, the contractor offers a spouse employment counseling service that may be helpful. Employees are responsible for the nonreimbursable fee for this service. This service has been designed to meet general guidelines established by the Department for comprehensiveness and affordability. Upon request, the contractor will provide more information to the employee on the cost and content of the service.

5-1107. AMENDED VALUE OFFERS. The contractor's offer under the guaranteed homesale provision of the contract may not provide the highest market price for the home. Consequently, an employee may choose to market the home independently in an attempt to obtain a higher net offer. If a higher bona fide offer from a qualified buyer is obtained after the contractor has presented the guaranteed offer, the contractor will amend its offer to reflect the higher amount. Employees are cautioned to fully discuss this process with both their RSC and the contractor to assure that eligibility conditions are clearly understood. In addition, the following guidance is essential to the amended value process:

a. An exclusion clause must be included in the listing agreement the employee signs with the real estate broker to exempt the employee from any obligation to the broker if the employee sells the residence to the contractor.

b. The employee must not accept a down payment or earnest money deposit from the potential buyer.

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c. The employee must not sign an offer presented by a potential buyer.

d. The contractor is to be notified immediately of the higher offer. The contractor will evaluate the offer to determine if, in fact, the higher offer will net the employee additional equity. (Employees should be aware that any costs of contingencies and buyer concessions, such as discount points and repairs, which are not reimbursable under this Manual will be deducted from the gross proceeds of the sale.)

e. If the higher offer is acceptable to the contractor, the employee will sign a binding sales agreement with the contractor and set a date to vacate the property. After the employee vacates the home, the contractor assumes responsibility for the property and negotiates a separate listing agreement with the real estate broker to assist in its final sale.

5-1108. GENERAL CONDITIONS AND LIMITATIONS FOR ELIGIBILITY.

a. Services for Which Fees are Charged.

(1) Employees Eligible. Only employees who are eligible for allowances for expenses incurred in connection with residence transactions under section 9 of this chapter are eligible for guaranteed homesale, property management and other agency-paid services. Eligibility conditions include the requirement that the transfer from one official station to another is determined to be in the interest of the Government and is not primarily for the convenience or benefit of the employee or at his/her request.

(2) Employees Ineligible. The following employees are ineligible for all Program services under the contract for which a fee is charged to the agency:

(a) New appointees including new appointees to shortage category and Senior Executive Service positions and Presidential appointees;

(b) Employees assigned under the Government Employees Training Act (5 U.S.C. 4109);

(c) Employees assigned or transferred to and from posts of duty in foreign areas; and

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(d) Uniformed service personnel who are excluded from the Program by law for both chargeable and nonchargeable services.

b. No Fee Services. All transferred employees are eligible for the Program services provided under the contract for which there is no fee to the agency. The no fee services are marketing assistance, homefinding assistance for buyers, and mortgage finding assistance.

5-1109. PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS AND CONTROLS.

a. Service Agreements. The employee must have signed a service agreement to be eligible for relocation services. In the event the employee violates the terms of the agreement, the agency has the right to recover from the employee all payments made to the contractor on the employee's behalf.

b. Requesting Services. The employee will request the services by submitting a signed Relocation Service Authorization Form to the appropriate RSC. This will be the RSC at the location to which the employee is being transferred. Until a Departmental form is published, RSC's can obtain an initial copy of the existing form from the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (see paragraph 5-1110) and reproduce needed copies.

c. Employee Entitlement Period. The employee may request the services under the contract at any time after official written notification of transfer. However, services are to be performed no later than two years from the date that the employee reported for duty at the new duty station. A one-year extension of the two-year limit may be approved by the authorizing official upon written request by the employee. Requests for an extension must be made before the original two-year limit expires. Former employees of the Department will not be authorized contractual relocation services unless the services were requested prior to their leaving the agency.

d. Optional Use of Services. An employee offered the use of relocation services has the option to accept or reject any or all of the services. An employee who requests the guaranteed homesale service may accept or reject the relocation contractor's purchase offer.

Vertical line denotes change.

e. Dual Benefit Prohibited. Once an employee chooses to use the offered relocation services, he or she shall not be allowed reimbursement for expenses incurred in connection with residence transactions (section 9 of this chapter) that are analogous or similar to services that will be paid under the contract.

f. Cancellations.

(1) An employee who requests the guaranteed homesale service may cancel the service at any time prior to an offer or reject the offer once made. In either case, any authorized charge to the agency by the contractor generally will not be recovered from the employee. The exception occurs when the employee decides not to relocate or violates his/her service agreement; in such cases, the agency may recover from the employee any cancellation fees and other costs (e.g., appraisal costs) incurred in providing services to the employee under the contract. Once an employee cancels or rejects the guaranteed offer, he/she cannot reenter the Relocation Services Program for the rejected services in connection with the same permanent change of station.

(2) Use of the guaranteed homesale service or a request for reimbursement for expenses incurred in selling the residence results in a cancellation of property management services and any fees paid by the agency for those services will be recovered from the employee.

g. Ineligible Individuals. The Department will not pay for relocation services that will benefit ineligible individuals. For example, where joint ownership of a residence exists between an eligible employee and an individual who is not a member of the employee's immediate family, the benefit derived from relocation services could accrue equally to the ineligible party. In this example, the Department will pay a portion of the contractor's fee for services based on the employee's share of the residence; the employee will be responsible for paying the contractor the remaining portion of the fee. If the residence is a duplex or other type of multiple occupancy dwelling, the contractor will be authorized to provide relocation services only on the nonbusiness portion of the dwelling that is occupied by the employee.

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5-1110. RESPONSIBILITIES. The following individuals have direct responsibilities for the Relocation Services Program:

a. Heads of Operating Administrations and the Assistant Secretary for Administration. Heads of Operating Administrations or their designees and the Assistant Secretary for Administration for the Office of the Secretary will designate RSC's and alternates at headquarters and appropriate field locations.

b. Travel Authorizing Officials. Each travel authorizing official, with the assistance of the losing activity, will prepare a permanent change of station travel authorization that correctly identifies only the residence transaction benefits authorized. If the travel authorization provides for sale of residence benefits, the authorizing official must ensure that the residence address shown on the travel authorization is the dwelling from which the employee regularly commutes to and from the duty station. Proper care in preparing the travel authorization is critical to help avoid misunderstandings leading to possible suspension of contractor services and collection for fees paid by the Government to the contractor for services rendered to an ineligible employee. The authorizing official is responsible for ensuring that the travel authorization is completed expeditiously and that a copy is forwarded to the RSC.

c. Employees. Transferring employees are responsible for requesting services under the contract in ample time (usually within the first few months of the transfer) to ensure that the services will be completed within the eligibility period. Employees also are responsible for knowing their transfer requirements and the conditions that their residences must meet for eligibility for relocation services.

d. Relocation Services Coordinators. RSC's are responsible for:

(1) Referring employee requests to the contractor when copies of the travel authorization, employee service agreements, and employee relocation services authorization forms are received. Before making the referral, the RSC will review the travel authorization to verify that the employee was properly approved for residence transactions. The RSC also will compare the former duty station location to the address shown on the travel

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(2) Coordinating the training, communication, service assessment and problem resolution activities under the relocation services contract.

(3) Tracking and assessing vendor performance and analyzing cost and service impact of the Program and related policy changes.

(4) Serving as the primary interface with the Office of the Secretary on the impact of changes to policy, services, and internal procedures.

(5) Representing the agency on relocation contract issues applicable to other organizations and the relocation industry and keeping management apprised of significant industry developments related to relocation services contracts.

f. Heads of Accounting Offices. Heads of accounting offices will assume that all employees entitled to services will use them. (RSC's will be responsible for notifying the gaining activity's program division and accounting office if the employee does not elect to use the services or later decides to cancel or change his/her selection of services so that the obligation related to the relocation funds can be adjusted.) The head of the accounting office is also responsible for:

(1) Providing guidance to the RSC regarding employees' entitlement for services under this section.

(2) Enforcing the dual benefit prohibition.

g. Relocation Contractor. The relocation contractor is responsible for performing in conformance with the terms of the current contact. The contractor's primary responsibilities include the following:

(1) Make initial contact with employees referred by RSC's to explain contract services and procedures.

(2) Distribute the Employee Relocation Guide which describes the relocation services in detail.

(3) Provide each employee in the Program with services authorized under the contract. Property management and guaranteed home purchase services must be specifically authorized by the RSC.

(4) Report to the RSC and COTR as required by the contract.

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5-1111. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES.

a. Funding. Each Operating Administration and the Office of the Secretary will fund its own relocation services furnished through the contract. Object class 12 will be used to record obligations for services provided under the contract.

b. Travel Authorization. The travel authorization, DOT F 1500.4 (Travel Order for Permanent Change of Station), will be used for ordering any item of service covered under the contract. The Relocation Services Program requires additional information to be shown on the DOT F 1500.4 to assure proper recording of fund obligations, to furnish employee telephone numbers for the contractor, and to provide authorizing officials the estimated total cost of the relocation. Specific information should be entered on the DOT F 1500.4 as follows:

(1) Block 3 should include the employee's home and commercial office telephone numbers. This information will allow the contractor immediate access to the employee.

(2) Block 22 should include both the cost of the guaranteed home purchase service (which is the employee's estimate of the value of the residence multiplied by the contractor's current fee) and the Withholding Tax Allowance.

c. Delivery Orders. Under the relocation contract, each requesting office will issue delivery orders to the contractor for services. The RSC initiates the delivery order by submitting a Procurement Request, DOT F 4200.1, to the servicing procurement office. The delivery order procedures provide the issuing organization with the authority to request the guaranteed homesale and rental homefinding services up to the amount stated on the delivery order. Delivery orders will not be used to authorize property management services which must be authorized by individual purchase orders.

(1) Large Volume of Transfers. Organizations that have a large number of transfers will issue a blanket type delivery order to cover the relocation services fees for moves expected to occur during a specific period. Such delivery orders may be issued to provide for services for any time period up to the entire fiscal year. The procurement request and subsequent delivery order must show the following information:

(a) The relocation services contract number.

(b) The name of the Operating Administration, or OST, and appropriate organizational subdivision.

(c) A unique delivery order number assigned by the procurement office which reflects the fiscal year and the volume (sequentially) of orders that have been issued for the organization during the period of the order.

(d) The anticipated beginning and ending dates for service requests to be processed under the delivery order.

(e) The estimated number of cases to be authorized under the delivery order.

(f) A "not to exceed" dollar amount for services to be provided under the delivery order. The RSC and the contractor are responsible for tracking expected and actual costs incurred against the delivery order. The RSC will initiate the process for a new delivery order when costs are expected to exceed the available balance covered by the current delivery order.

(g) The agency address to which invoices should be sent for verification and payment.

(2) Small Volume of Moves. Organizations that process only a few moves each year are not required to prepare delivery orders to use contractual relocation services. The alternative procedure is to submit a purchase order with each case submitted to the contractor. Purchase orders also will be used to authorize the property management service. The purchase order must cite the following information:

(a) The relocation services contract number.

(b) The name of the Operating Administration, or OST, and appropriate organizational subdivision.

(c) The dollar amount for the services.

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(d) The employee to whom services are to be furnished and the services which are authorized. Property management services may be authorized for a maximum period of one year per purchase order.

(e) The unique purchase order number.

(3) Copies of Orders for Service. Copies of all delivery orders and purchase orders will be forwarded to the primary RSC for the Operating Administration or OST. In turn, the primary RSC's will forward copies to the COTR. These documents will be used to track total Program activity and fund obligations under the contract.

5-1112. CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS. Contracts for relocation services may not violate other regulatory or statutory provisions. Those provisions include the following:

a. Real Estate Losses. Reimbursement may not be made for losses on residence transactions. These include losses resulting from failure to sell a residence at the old official station at the price asked, at its current appraised value, or at its original cost. Also included are losses resulting from failure to buy a dwelling at the new official station at a price comparable to the selling price at the old official station.

b. Mortgage Cost Differences. Reimbursement may not be made for mortgage interest differentials. A mortgage interest differential is the difference between the interest rate of the mortgage on the residence at the old official station and the interest rate of the mortgage on the residence being purchased at the new official station.

c. Home Purchases. The law does not authorize the Government to become a homeowner either by direct purchase of the employee's home or by taking title to the home through the contractor.

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