FEDERAL FLEET VEHICLES
MANAGING AN OPTIMAL FLEET PROFILE WHEN THEY'RE ALWAYS ON THE MOVE!
PART II

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Property and Cybersecurity
Contractor Self-Assessment
What Story is Your Property Data Telling
Enterprise Power!

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Welcome 2021, we have been waiting for your arrival and hope that you will provide a better year than your predecessor 2020. Not that 2020 was all negativity and despair, but 2021 does not have to raise the bar much to be a better year. In this new year, NPMA will take the challenge to raise the bar. We will roll out new programs of support to our members and continue working the back of the house to ensure effective management.

As discussed previously NPMA has increased its online presence in offering online certification review classes, educational classes, and free online webinars. To move to the next level, a new learning management system has been acquired that will pull all the pieces together to provide a professional experience. We also reached out to our Chapter Officers to provide feedback as to what they expect from NPMA leadership for support of their chapter. A roadmap is being developed to meet these expectations and results will begin to be seen early in the New Year.

We continue to plan for our three educational seminars. The host chapters for the Spring and Fall seminars are working with our Meeting Expectations team to create educational opportunities. Our National Education Seminar (NES) team has put out the call for presenters and is well on their way to having all in place for a great NES. We are working with all three location properties to ensure proper safety measures are in place based on state and federal government guidelines and hope to see many of you in attendance. I certainly missed the seminars in 2020 and am looking forward to what is coming in 2021. In addition, I expect that this year will bring us full accreditation of our Property Certification program. Many people have worked a long time toward this goal, and we have the experts in place to make it happen.

There is now in place an enhanced marketing strategy to reach out to other organizations promoting the mission of NPMA. This will help get the messaging of NPMA’s benefits and offerings outside of our normal box. Our website has been upgraded with the new NPMA Online Community professional option allowing you to reach out to all members of your groups in a new social media format that is specific to NPMA. This is an evolution of what was our Member Forum but allows you to access your profile and other information in one page. We also will complete a review of our strategic objectives; updating, adding, and deleting as necessary to ensure NPMA has a sound foundation.

Above are just a few of the actions that will begin or are already taking place. 2020 is so last year – this New Year is full of promise and progress for NPMA. I hope you feel the same. If you have any questions or feedback, please reach out, I am always available at wfranklin@noblis.org.
The year 2020 has now passed, leaving pandemic and social wounds that many have suffered both individually and collectively. We mourn with those who have lost loved ones and empathize with those whose lives have been altered by unemployment, health and other circumstances. My son, an anesthesiologist at the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in Manhattan, New York, has been our family’s “boots on the ground” as he experienced firsthand the nightmare New York City has gone through – both within the medical community and in the streets of New York City. With medical personnel shortages, he was quickly trained as an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) physician and looked after COVID patients on life-support systems in operating rooms that were turned into ICU rooms.

Lifestyle adjustments have been made by individuals and businesses. Parents have worn new hats as their children have been required to stay home for school. One mother, talking to herself, said that she was having a “parent-teacher conference.” I have found myself at times, while tending a baby grandson, having him on my lap and trying to use a computer using one hand. It’s a challenge for parents to work from home and tend to the needs of their children. Zoom and Skype meetings have become a new norm; and the “gathering around the water cooler at work” now seems a thing of the past.

Whether referencing Winston Churchill’s speech or a particular scene from the Apollo 13 movie, what will be “our finest hour?” We have seen strength manifest in the midst of adversity and strength gained through adversity. We have seen the goodness of people reaching out to others. Our own NPMA has made multiple adjustments along the way and reached out in new or innovative ways.

This year we hope for vaccinations that will halt this pandemic. We also hope for the healing of wounds that are carried inside by many. I like the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., “Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.” I’m grateful for those who reach out to help others and those who allow kindness to rule their behavior.

May we look forward this year with renewed hope and gratitude. May we learn from our experiences and become better. May we “pay it forward” whatever goodness we have received. And may NPMA continue its mission to enrich the lives of its members and community.

I wish you the best of years.

We start this issue with Part II of “Federal Fleet Vehicles: Managing an Optimal Fleet Profile When They're Always on the Move!” by a frequent contributor, Steve Holland; next we have “Property & Cybersecurity” by first time contributor, Rodney Wellington; third we have “Yup. It’s Still There! Rightsizing Expectations for Meeting Contractor Self-Assessment Requirements Under FAR 52.245-1” by two names you will undoubtedly recognize as frequent contributors to this magazine and the NPMA in general, Tom Ruckdaschel and Dr. Douglas N. Goetz; lastly we have “What Story is Your Property Data Telling? A Parody of Property Accountability and Alice in Wonderland”, a clever piece by first time contributor: Jamie Holguin.

We present issue 33-1 of The Property Professional.
Ladies and gentlemen of the NPMA:

A text I was required to read in my Doctoral Studies was “Seasons of a Man’s Life” by Daniel J. Levinson which provided an analysis of “Stage Development” – the periods of our life that we progress through from early adulthood to late adulthood. Well, I am going through one of those transitional stages. I have reached that stage of my life where I need to change the focus of my employed/business life to retirement.

And rather than let rumors circulate, in consultation with family and friends and NPMA leadership – thought it better to let everyone in our property family know through our most visible product – The Property Professional. So, using a colloquial phrase – to lay the cards on the table -- I’m retiring from full time work! There are many contributing factors – family, health, travel, etc. But, as one gets older and see one’s friends take ill or pass away, one has to sit back and ponder the path ahead.

To the NPMA family – THANK YOU and God Bless You! Over the past forty years you have made my life a JOYOUS JOURNEY AND VOYAGE! I never thought I would end up in property – had never even heard of it in 1975 after graduating from college – and many of you probably experienced the same entry to this profession. We just ended up here! But each and every one of you has contributed to my work in property. I could spend pages (which I won’t) calling out everyone who helped me, who befriended me, who challenged me – but I gotta’ call out a few: Carnevale, Marigiliano and DeCeasare – my first bosses in Property in the Government. They laid the groundwork of my knowledge. Ed Winters and Pat Jacklets who introduced me to NPMA. Tom Ruckdaschel as one of my first contractors - -and then a peer in the Government. Dr. Bill Pursch who saw potential in me as an instructor and fought to get me hired at the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT). My instructional peers at AFIT and DAU who challenged me to battles of intellectual disputation – Dr. John Paciorek and Prof. Chuck Waszczak. My department heads who gave me my own lead to do my job – Professors Dyke McCarty, Alan Gilbreth, Judy Volpe, and Scott Williams. My deans, who I drove crazy, Rich Murphy, Gerry Emke, Travis Stewart and Carl Hayden – some threw me out of their offices because I wanted to debate matters of management. Some in this group listened to me – and when I left probably shook their head in disdain with the thought, “What am I going to do with him?” And the multiple Leadership Officers of the NPMA – too many to name after 40 years -- who allowed me the opportunity to do weird stuff at regional and national seminars, teaching classes all across the country and singing the praises of NPMA to anyone and everyone who would listen, and serving as an elected Officer. THANK YOU!

And I have to thank my wife – by the time you read this we will have celebrated our 43 Wedding Anniversary. My wife is a saint – but if you know me you already know that. She stayed by herself while I worked. She stayed alone when I was away from home for extended travel for school, for work, in war zones, teaching, conferences, seminars – she stayed alone a LOT of the time because she knew my work was important to me – and therefore important to her and the family. Kathy, THANK YOU for your love and patience.

Though I do not usually wear my faith on my sleeve, as, to me, it is a very personal issue -- I thank the Good Lord for this opportunity, opening doors that I could have never imagined. There were times when my faith was weak – there were times when my faith was strong – but God was there, all the time.

So again, to each and every member of the NPMA, THANK YOU!!!

Yes, I am retiring – and with that backing off from the usual hectic schedule I maintained over the past four decades. But I will still be around a little – helping where I can, answering questions, writing articles and papers. Doing small things. I do not know exactly what this next “Stage” of my life will bring – but I will trust that God has it under control!

Your friend, your peer,

Dr. Doug Goetz, CPPM, CF
The General Services Administration’s (GSA) mismanagement of Federal contract employees Personal Identity Verification (PIV) cards has put GSA personnel, Federal property, and data at risk, according to a report from the Office of Inspector General’s (OIG).

The report, issued earlier this month, explained that GSA issues an average of 14,500 PIV cards annually, which are used to access GSA buildings and information technology systems, to Federal contract employees. Back in 2016, the OIG performed an initial evaluation of GSA’s management of contract employee PIV cards and found several issues related to GSA’s recovery and destruction of PIV cards. The OIG remained concerned about contractor PIV cards and performed another audit.

During its audit, the OIG found that GSA is mismanaging PIV cards issued to contract employees and cannot account for approximately 15,000 PIV cards issued to contract employees. Additionally, the OIG found that GSA failed to collect more than half of the 445 PIV cards from contract employees who failed their background checks.

“GSA’s poor management and oversight of these cards raises significant security concerns because the cards can be used to gain unauthorized access to GSA buildings and information systems, placing GSA personnel, Federal property, and data at risk,” the OIG wrote in its report.

The complete article can be found at https://www.meritalk.com/articles/oig-gsas-mismanagement-of-contract-employee-piv-cards-puts-data-at-risk/
Part I of this article offered insight on the problem of managing an optimal fleet profile; conducting periodic vehicle allocation methodology studies and physical inventories; evaluating sizes and types of fleet vehicles to meet mission needs; provided thought leadership for fleet management professionals to support the Agency’s enterprise strategy and strategic asset management plan; identified drivers that required Government action; explained the need for top management support; and, employee competencies. Part II details a path forward for agencies to achieve their optimal fleet profile; fuel consumption; home-to-work vehicles; reports; telematics; and, fleet management best practices.
PART II

A RECAP OF THE BACKGROUND

In April 1986, 40 U.S.C. 907, Federal Motor Vehicle Expenditure Control, was established requiring federal agencies to reduce spending on the operation, maintenance, leasing, acquisition and disposal of motor vehicles of 150 million dollars less than the budget submitted in fiscal year 1986. This statute covered everything from definitions to establishing a fleet monitoring system; data collection; motor vehicle usage; a presidential statement on the total motor vehicle acquisition, maintenance, leasing, operation, and disposal costs; reduction of storage and disposal costs; cost savings; compliance; agency priority and applicability; and cooperation on implementation of the chapter. This chapter was revised under 40 U.S.C. Chapter 175, Subchapters 17501 through 17510 with the same title.

In March 2015, Executive Order 13693, Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade was signed. This order addressed Federal leadership in energy, environmental water, fleet, buildings, and acquisition management to continue driving national greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions and other topics. The goal was to reduce GHG emissions by over 40 percent in the next decade. There were a number of initiatives focusing on sustainability with the key function of fleet management. Federal agencies were tasked to achieve GHG emissions per mile fleet-wide reductions of not less than 4 percent by the end of fiscal year (FY) 2017; 15 percent by the end of FY 2021; and 30 percent by the end of FY 2025. However, EO 13693 was revoked on 17 May, 2018 when EO 13834, Efficient Federal Operations, was signed. EO 13834, states “It is the policy of the United States that agencies shall meet such statutory requirements in a manner that increases efficiency, optimizes performance, eliminates unnecessary use of resources, and protects the environment.” This order stipulates the Secretary of Energy along with the Secretary of Defense and Administrator of the General Services Administration and heads of other agencies shall review existing Federal vehicle fleet requirements and report to the Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) with opportunities to optimize Federal fleet performance, reduce costs and streamline reporting and compliance requirements.

FUEL CONSUMPTION

The Federal Government has been keen in reducing petroleum fuel consumption dating back to fiscal year 2005, when they instituted the requirement for reducing petroleum fuel by 20 percent by FY 2015. Yes, this is a bit dated; however, the requirement still exists. With technology changes, motor vehicle manufacturers have developed dual-fueled vehicles (petroleum and ethanol [E-85]). The “Catch 22” is there aren’t enough fueling stations with E-85 fuel available across the nation. There are tools available such as the afdc.energy.gov website that enables users to locate E-85 fuel stations wherever they are. There is a requirement for all drivers of dual-fueled
Federal vehicles to use an alternative fueling station within five miles or 15 minutes of their garaged location. Otherwise, agencies need to submit an EPAct 2005, Section 701, waiver to DOE on a vehicle-by-vehicle basis, if they do not meet that requirement. If the driver is in transit and requires fuel, and a E-85 fuel station has E-85 fuel, E-85 must be used.

**OPTIMAL FLEET PROFILE**

In the fleet management world, there is a key term, the “Optimal Fleet Profile (OFP).” The OFP is a fleet inventory or portfolio of motor vehicles that is right-sized and right-typed. Fleet managers must optimize their fleet by identifying vehicles by vehicle identification number (VIN) or property ID number that do not exceed the agency's minimum utilization criteria. This is accomplished by comparing each organization’s fleet inventory to mission requirements based on a list of approved vehicles for that organization and answering a series of VAM (Vehicle Allocation Methodology) questions.

Ensuring fleet vehicles are fully utilized is a principle that fleet managers always strive for. GSA FMR Bulletin B-43, Vehicle Allocation Methodology, is a best practice assessment that evaluates an agency fleet to determine if the fleet is right-sized and right-typed and includes recommendations for elimination, retention, and identifies questionable vehicles that require discussion. The underutilized vehicles may be reassigned within the agency, returned to GSA, if GSA-leased, or processed for disposal if agency-owned.

**VEHICLE UTILIZATION**

How agencies use motor vehicles is based on agency mission requirements. The Agency Fleet Manager (AFM) works with Program Managers and vehicle users on what size and types of vehicles are best suited to meet mission requirements. It is up to the AFM to ensure that the smallest size, type and cost efficient vehicle is selected that meets the mission requirements.

Agencies should establish minimum utilization criteria that supplements the minimum mileage and age criteria found in the FMR. Criteria can be hours of use, number of trips per day/week/month and the number of passengers transported.

Additional information can be found in FMR Bulletin B-43. Agencies can also gain cost efficiencies by optimizing utilization of fleet vehicles and operations through regular motor vehicle reviews. Regular reviews evaluate whether property is excess and can be dispositioned, and they also can uncover opportunities to transfer or relocate vehicles to improve utilization.

**HOME-TO-WORK VEHICLES**

Agencies that utilize Federal NTVs (Non-Tactical Vehicles) for field operations must implement a Home-to-Work (HtW) Program when vehicles are taken home by employees in the performance of their duties. The Federal Management Regulation (FMR) has Part 102-5 that allows only agency heads to approve HtW for its employees. HtW covers employees engaged in field work, when they are faced with a clear and present danger, or anemergency or a compelling operational need that meets statutory criteria to drive Government-Owned Vehicles (GOV) to/from their residence to their duty location. In some Federal agencies, HtW is also referred to as “Domicile to Duty.” HtW requests for employees engaged in field work are good for up to two years and updated on a biennial basis. Otherwise, all other requests are only effective for fifteen days. 

**REPORTS**

**Physical Inventory Report**

The results of physical inventories are reported to management and senior leadership and affected stakeholders. Conducting physical inventory verification and reporting the results are important for a number of reasons such as financial requirements, vehicle replacement planning and operational requirements, or for assessing the fleet portfolio to determine if it is right-sized or right-typed by conducting a VAM. Physical inventory verification is a key element in the asset management system that demonstrates existence and location of any fleet asset, and in some cases, under-utilized Government property sitting idle. To facilitate the physical inventory verification process, assets are marked with a barcode identification tag, RFID tag, or a unique form of mesh identification to verify physical location electronically. These forms of identification show ownership and facilitate the physical inventory verification process.

**Federal Fleet Report**

The General Services Administration (GSA) develops an annual Federal Fleet Report that is a summary of Federal fleet statistics based on an agency’s fleet composition, inventory, fuel usage and operating costs at the end of each fiscal year. Federal agencies submit their fleet information into the Federal Automotive Statistical Tool (FAST) database to support this report. The purpose of this report aids in evaluating the effectiveness of the operation, maintenance, and utilization of motor vehicle fleets with a view towards identifying where high fleet costs can be reduced or eliminated.

**TELEMATICS**

Telematics is essentially on-board equipment in the vehicle that collects, transmits and receives vehicle usage and performance data. Telematics can provide several benefits to agencies that can use this capability. Benefits include improved utilization rates, monitoring of fuel usage, detection of improper vehicle use, accident investigation support, and enhanced policy compliance. Telematics transmit through a GSM Path with Global Positioning System (GPS), WiFi mobile devices, and cell towers to servers. There are cost savings that can be gained just through fleet utilization and fuel consumption. Telematics provide feedback to Agency fleet managers on vehicle operator behavior with instant driver feedback. In the case of an accident, telematics can provide validation on what is thought versus what can be proven. Fleet managers can also take advantage of telematics by setting up engine diagnostics reports sent to them via email with data on...
current condition of the vehicle, odometer reading, idle time, emissions and speed data. They can also monitor vehicles in real-time through a user accessible website. Telematics data can also be useful in preparing Fleet Management Plans (FMP) and supporting VAM assessments. While telematics can be used by most Federal agencies, it is one capability that doesn’t fit all agencies’ scenarios. For its vehicle-leasing customers, GSA Fleet has a waiver process in place for agencies to obtain an exemption from using telematics when the agency must protect their employees, physical locations, and operational missions for operational or national security reasons.

FLEET MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES
There are multiple sources for fleet management best practices. In many aspects of personal property and fleet management, sources such as the National Property Management Association (NPMA), GSA Federal Management Regulation (FMR) Bulletins, ASTM International Committee E-53 Standards and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Standards can be helpful. All Federal fleet personnel must be mindful of these best practices and incorporate them into their fleet management program wherever possible:

Fleet Management Information System
The COBRA Act of 1985, Subtitle C, Federal Motor Vehicle Expenditures Control, requires Federal Executive agencies to have centralized management information system to identify, collect, and analyze motor vehicle data; acquisition, leasing, operations, maintenance and disposal costs of motor vehicles.\(^5\) GSA FMR Bulletin B-15 requires Federal agencies to establish and maintain a well-designed Fleet Management Information System (FMIS) that is capable of collecting essential information in managing a fleet management program, and supporting other internal business systems (e.g., property management and financial management) and external systems (e.g., GSA Federal Automotive Statistical Tool), for reporting fleet inventory and operational costs, as well as providing the required data to support the agency and fleet budget request process.\(^6\) GSA Fleet has developed the Federal Fleet Management System (FedFMS) and provides it to any U.S. Federal agency free of charge.\(^7\)

Lifecycle Cost Analysis
Agencies that perform lifecycle cost analysis (LCA) to make investment, vehicle replacement or purchase versus lease investment decisions are better off. Reaching a decision on when to replace or dispose a vehicle is a result of this type of analysis, because an owned vehicle may be costing the agency more to maintain than operate it. A key decision that needs to be made is whether to purchase or lease a new vehicle.

The benefits of LCA include justifying a newer fleet at a lower cost; improve employee and public safety; enable greater control over maintenance and repair costs; improve managing the total cost of ownership; foster employee productivity; minimize risk, and cultivate a positive image to Agency top management, elected officials and the American taxpayers.

The costs of owning and operating a Government vehicle involves acquisition, fuel, maintenance, and administrative and disposal costs. All Executive agencies that operate domestic vehicle fleets must comply with motor vehicle fuel efficiency requirements. Leasing Government vehicles may be more financially beneficial in using the Pay-as-you-go model through GSA Fleet, rather than purchasing the vehicle using the Pay-before-you-go model through GSA Auto Choice.

**Table 1. GSA Fleet Minimum Replacement Standards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vehicle Category</th>
<th>Fuel Type</th>
<th>Years/Miles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passenger Vehicles</td>
<td>Gas or AFV</td>
<td>5 or 60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hybrid/Electric</td>
<td>5 and 60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 and any miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>85,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Duty Trucks 4x2</td>
<td>Non-Diesel</td>
<td>7 or 65,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Duty Trucks 4x4</td>
<td>Diesel</td>
<td>8 or 150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hybrid</td>
<td>7 or 90,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Duty Trucks 4x2/4x4</td>
<td>Non-Diesel</td>
<td>10 or 100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diesel</td>
<td>10 or 150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy Duty Trucks 4x2/4x4/6x6</td>
<td>Non-Diesel</td>
<td>12 or 100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diesel</td>
<td>12 or 250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambulances</td>
<td>Non-Diesel</td>
<td>7 or 70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diesel</td>
<td>7 or 100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Duty Shuttle 341, 342, 343, 346, 347</td>
<td>7 or 100,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Duty Shuttle 359, 363</td>
<td>8 or 150,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy Duty Shuttle 377C, 386</td>
<td>20 or 1,000,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercity Coach 396, 397, 398</td>
<td>15 or 1,000,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Numeric/Alpha designators represent the Federal Standard Item Numbers (SINs) for each vehicle type within each vehicle category.
Vehicle replacement cycles are very important in fleet management, because it requires investment decisions that involve the availability of appropriated funds. GSA is a mandatory source, under FPMR 101-26.501, for purchasing new non-tactical vehicles for DOD and federal Executive agencies. GSA Fleet provides low cost vehicle solutions that enable Federal agencies to achieve their missions. It is the volume of leased vehicles that affords agencies the low monthly lease rate. Table 1 identifies the GSA Fleet Minimum Vehicle Replacement Standards for all vehicle types, regardless of whether they are gas (e.g., petroleum fuel), AFV (E-85 Alternative Fuel), Diesel, Non-Diesel, Hybrid or Electric.

Retaining old agency-owned vehicles tends to result in “fleet creep,” (the overall size of the fleet - both the size and quantity of the units within the fleet - slowly grow over time) which is not good. Utilizing accurate fleet records enables the analysis of data and provides information for agency senior executives (e.g., CFO, Agency Director, etc.) to make sound business decisions when presented with a fleet management capital financing plan. Utilizing GSA Fleet, agencies can take advantage of their minimum vehicle replacement standards and prevent older owned fleet vehicles from climbing maintenance costs, declining resale values, increased fuel consumption, and increased vehicle pollution.

**Vehicle Allocation Methodology**

The purpose of a Vehicle Allocation Methodology (VAM) study of Federal agency fleets is to promote the efficiencies and cost effectiveness throughout the fleet management lifecycle. 41 CFR § 102-34.340 defines the fleet management lifecycle as Acquisition, Operation, Maintenance and Disposal. It is imperative that agencies ensure they have the right-size and right-type vehicle for every use within their agency to perform its overall mission. Just because an individual wants a Chevrolet Suburban, perhaps they should be issued a Ford Fusion for the job at hand. It is the Agency Fleet Manager that needs to make that call, with the decision backed by senior executive leadership. There is quite a disparity when the vehicle is only to transport three Government officials from their duty station to a meeting and back versus when the vehicle is regularly necessary to transport large boxes of equipment, as well. Agency personnel requesting Government motor vehicles must provide justification for all vehicles to meet utilization criteria and must pass a justification review in order to acquire a vehicle through purchase or lease. All Federal agencies are required to establish vehicle utilization criteria to support vehicle justifications and the agency’s VAM submission. Agency Fleet Managers must review vehicle utilization at least annually, which can be performed in conjunction with the annual property management physical inventory verification process. Performing a VAM study every five years, or as deemed necessary because of fleet changes, can be very beneficial to an agency in reducing costs and establishing and maintaining an optimal fleet profile.

The Federal Management Regulation under 41 CFR Part 102-34.50 (b) and GSA FMR Bulletin B-43, Vehicle Allocation Methodology for Agency Fleets, requires agencies to establish and document a structured vehicle allocation methodology to determine the appropriate size and number of motor vehicles within their agency fleet. A VAM study ensures the agency determines the appropriate size, quantity and types of motor vehicles using a structured approach to eliminate non-essential vehicles from the fleet, which efficiently and effectively perform its overall mission and comply with federal fleet and sustainability mandates. The benefits of conducting a VAM are reduced lifecycle acquisition costs, improved driver safety, enhanced justification to support an operational budget request, improved operational effectiveness, and empowered field organizations to identify the right-size and right-type of vehicle suited to meet mission requirements.

**Vehicle Sharing/Agency Sharing**

Agency Fleet Managers should evaluate transportation alternatives including shuttle bus service, public transportation, use of privately-owned vehicles (with mileage reimbursement), taxi, multi-purpose vehicles, short-term rental vehicles, and motor pool vehicles, all of which can support vehicle sharing and agency sharing of transportation resources.

**Motor Pool**

Agencies that establish and maintain a motor pool for shared vehicle usage increase vehicle utilization and organizations only pay for the hours of transportation their employees actually use a vehicle. Shared vehicles increase overall
efficiency of the fleet because agency employees can take more trips, demonstrate vehicle utilization, and serve more drivers per day than assigned vehicles. Pooling vehicles for shared use benefits the agency because the motor pool can eliminate assigning vehicles to individual programs or employees. Motor pools reduce the size of the fleet because vehicle use is spread across a large customer base and the demand can be met with fewer vehicles. Motor pools increase vehicle utilization by reducing the days and times when a vehicle may be idle.

Agencies that employ a motor pool management system enabling online vehicle selection and reservation as well as a key valet system are out in front of all other agencies. This capability guarantees availability of vehicles that are reserved with advance notice. Motor pools that provide mostly new vehicles, usually under GSA lease, attract and retain employee usage demonstrating that the motor pool vehicle sharing concept really works. Placing motor pool vehicles in close proximity to the majority of users is a definite advantage, because employees usually don’t want to walk to the “South 40” to get a vehicle. Providing dedicated numbered parking spaces in clean, secure, well-lit areas allowing customer ingress/egress outside of normal business hours is a benefit. Fleet managers who employ a knowledgeable motor pool management customer service staff can create a service that is truly customer focused. Answering phone requests for information, assisting customers (e.g., agency personnel) with their vehicle needs are service functions. Greeting customers during duty hours when they pick up the keys and upon their return to inquire how their trip was, ask about vehicle damage, and how the vehicle operated is personal touch where customer service can really make a difference. Preparing motor pool vehicles for service means they are clean and ready for issue, have at least ½ tank of fuel, and are fully operable when customers pick them up. All this can foster improved vehicle utilization. No one likes getting into a dirty vehicle.

On the data analytics side of fleet management, fleet managers who track and report vehicle demand and utilization, number and types of unfulfilled vehicle requests can also enable the right-sizing of motor pool vehicles. Fleet managers that implement an outreach communication program to inform agency employees about the types of vehicles and equipment that are available, reservation and return procedures, after-hours key valet system, and the billing process contributes to a first-class run fleet management program.

PATH FORWARD

Figure 1 below identifies the seven steps to an Optimal Fleet Profile. Agency fleet managers who do the right thing and follow these seven steps can make a positive impact in managing their fleet management program. They can also build rapport and confidence with top management by providing tangible quantifiable results that can justify cost savings. Saving money and being able to use it for additional essential vehicles or giving it back to the agency to use in performing operational missions is a definite measure that demonstrates an agency fleet management program is successful.

THE PATH TO AN OPTIMAL FLEET PROFILE

- **Step 1: Right-size the Fleet** by identifying and eliminating under-utilized vehicles if they are not critical to the agency mission.
- **Step 2: Right-type the Fleet** by identifying and replacing vehicles with less costly vehicles and standardizing vehicle types to meet agency mission requirements.
- **Step 3: Lease vs Buy Analysis**: Evaluate leased and owned vehicles and identify vehicles for replacement through GSA Fleet Leasing using the Pay-as-you-go model.
- **Step 4: Vehicle Replacement Cycles**: Perform Lifecycle Cost Analysis to determine if it is better to lease or purchase when vehicles are available for replacement.
- **Step 5: Capital Acquisition Plan**: Determine future budget requirements to properly finance an optimal fleet with top management support.
- **Step 6: Transportation Alternatives**: Creatively identify and implement alternatives to support agency requirements and provide great service.
- **Step 7: Motor Pool**: Allocate vehicles to the Pool for vehicle sharing and reducing GHG emissions.

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Cover Story

WWW.NPMA.ORG
CONCLUSION

This article in its entirety discussed the problem of managing an optimal fleet profile, conducting periodic vehicle allocation methodology studies and an annual physical inventory, provided thought leadership on strategy, insight on fleet requirements that require action, the need for top management support, attracting competent fleet management personnel, and establishing a defined path to an optimal fleet profile. Federal agencies must treat Logistics functions seriously just as they do for operational missions. This is how wars are won, through Logistics support and doing the right thing to enable fleet management personnel to manage an optimal fleet profile, achieve organizational strategic goals and objectives when federal fleet vehicles are always on the move!

Endnotes


vii 41 C.F.R. Part 102-5.60, How long are initial determinations effective; https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=8f85e783277209c9a3a37f9e9fa3b+4d1&mc=true&node=pt41.3.102_65&rgn=div5#se41.3.102_65_1100; Retrieved 27 July 2020.

viii 41 C.F.R. Part 102-5.100, May we use home-to-work transportation for other than official purposes?; https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=8f85e783277209c9a3a37f9e9fa3b+4d1&mc=true&node=pt41.3.102_65&rgn=div5; Retrieved 27 July 2020.


ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Mr. Holland’s career in property and logistics management spans 40 years as a contractor employee and consultant to the Federal Government. He has led several federal property and asset management and logistics projects for the Department of Homeland Security, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Intelligence Community (IC), applying experience, voluntary consensus standards, and industry leading practices to program deliverables. Mr. Holland has authored and coauthored several property-related articles, policies, procedures, plans, and manuals on personal property management and fleet management. His articles are published in The Property Professional and the NPMA Journal of Property and Asset Management. Mr. Holland’s credentials include a bachelor’s in business administration with honors and concentration in acquisition and contract management from Strayer University. He holds a Certified Professional Property Manager (CPPM), Certified Federal Fleet Specialist (CFFS), and ISO 55000 A55K certifications, specializing in federal and contract property disciplines, and is recognized as an NPMA Consulting Fellow. Mr. Holland is a principal in LMI’s supply chain management sub-service line, leading its property management practice, and supports the national security market.
DOD FAILS THIRD AUDIT, 
BUT SEES PROGRESS WITH COST-SAVINGS

By Lauren C. Williams

The Defense Department completed its third audit of its nearly $3 trillion enterprise, but it still has a ways to go before it passes one. DOD is expecting seven clean or unmodified opinions. Results from four audits are expected to be completed by December 15, 2020 and March 25, 2021, including one for the Defense Information Systems Agency, two Navy funds, and one for DOD’s inspector general office.

Thomas Harker, DOD’s acting comptroller and chief Navy budgeting official, told reporters DOD likely wouldn’t pass an audit until 2027. But he argued that the pursuit to find money-saving opportunities was worth the journey.

"When we look at the return on investment for the process improvements that we’re making, around accountability for property accountability, for inventory, that type of thing, we’ve identified more than $700 million in savings based on these process improvements,” Harker said at the Nov. 16 press briefing.

The complete article can be found at https://fcw.com/articles/2020/11/18/dod-audit-improvements-norquist.aspx

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Property Management (PM) covers everything from buildings, automobiles, planes, weapons, furniture, and computer equipment. These are the items to be controlled in your PM system. For Cybersecurity, the properties to be controlled or managed are the items that can be exploited via cyber intrusion.

PM is also designated as Asset Management (AM), Item Management, Configuration Management, or information technology (IT) Management.

The PM system should support the entire family (departments) of your organization from administration to engineering, executives, and all staff. PM should be understood from the “lowest common dominator” to the highest level... in other words, from the janitor to the company owner.

A PM system, spreadsheet, or database is how your property is controlled in a specific organization. This becomes critical because you have all types of property, and each item of property has its own identity, and some fit in multiple categories. We will focus on how PM effects and benefits the Cyber.

### Asset Management Process

Steps to achieve a successful PM capability

- Does an assessment review your environment to see what items you have that meet the Cyber requirement?
- Review your inventory, and PM system to see if it contains the following:
  - **Item Number/barcode/RFID** – Your company applied number.
  - **Location** – Room, floor, building - any reference that will inform you where the item is located.
  - **Nomenclature or description** – A description of the item, laptop, modem, thumb drive, etc.
  - **Manufacture** – Name of the company that made an item, not the vendor, or where the item was purchased.
  - **Part number** – The manufacturer’s part number
  - **Serial Number** – The manufacturer’s serial number
  - **Date of purchase**
  - **Purchase price**
  - **User or steward** – Name of the person who has custody of item.

The software should be accounted for with this added data:

- **Version Number**
- **Installation Date**
- **Required memory**
- Ensure your policy or company handbook includes the point of contact (POC) for PM and direction on how to notify them of asset changes, movements, modifications, losses, and additions.
- Make sure your assets are marked or identified by company ownership, separate from customer or Government ownership, and personal ownership.
- Perform periodic audits of assets, at a minimum annually, and when there is a personnel change.
- Have all assets assigned to a steward or person. Keep idle (non-used/stock) items to a low level.
• Never use assets between business thresholds (business/Government contracts/personal).
• Keep good records, from acquisition to disposal (cradle to grave).

All asset items that store memory or data and connect to the www or the network MUST be accounted for...cost is NOT a factor. The smallest thumb drive or memory card is to be controlled. (Ensure cell phones and mobile devices are included.)

In the Cyber domain, PM requirements are critical. With the emerging of the Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC), soon your emphasis on good PM will be emphasized. It will appear at levels 3 and 4. At these levels your PM must have the capability to locate and track key items during a cyber issue.

For guidance and reference:
https://www.iso.org/standard/55088.html
https://www.acquisition.gov/sites/default/files/current/far/html/FARTOCP45.html
https://www.acquisition.gov/dfas/part-245-government-property
https://www.acq.osd.mil/cmmc/docs/CMMC_ModelMain_V1.02_20200318.pdf

FEDERAL PROPERTY:
FORMAL POLICIES COULD ENHANCE FDA’S PROPERTY MANAGEMENT EFFORTS


FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION LABORATORY EQUIPMENT

Three FDA regulatory centers help ensure the safety, security, and effectiveness of medical products. These centers had $200 million in property-related expenses in FY 2019.

We found that the centers did not consistently collect, analyze, and verify the accuracy of information needed to manage personal property, such as scientific and laboratory equipment and office furniture. Effective management of property can help ensure sound decision-making and minimize resource waste.

GAO found that from fiscal years 2012 through 2019, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) obligated a combined total of $14.7 billion to support operations at the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, and the Center for Devices and Radiological Health. During this period, 56 percent of the three centers’ total obligations came from user fees, which FDA negotiates with and collects from regulated industries (e.g., manufacturers). The other 44 percent of the centers’ total obligations came from regular appropriations. On average, property-related expenses represented 12 percent of the centers’ total annual obligations; approximately half of property-related expenses were for rent.

In managing their personal property (e.g., scientific equipment, computers, and office furniture), these centers did not consistently use quality information related to three phases of asset management:

1. Planning for property needs;
2. Operating and maintaining property; and

GAO is making four recommendations to FDA and GSA, including that FDA establish and implement formal policies to use quality information to plan for, operate and maintain, and review performance of personal property used by the three centers. The agencies agreed with the recommendations.

The complete article can be found at https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-20-689#summary

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Rodney Wellington, CPPA, is currently working as a contractor to the Department of Defense. He has worked in the inventory/Asset management industry since 1985 and is a member of the Harbour Lights Chapter.
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YEP. IT'S STILL THERE!

RIGHTSIZING EXPECTATIONS FOR MEETING CONTRACTOR SELF-ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS UNDER FAR 52.245-1

By Tom Ruckdaschel, CPPM, CF, Federal Center Chapter & Dr. Douglas N. Goetz, CPPM, CF, MIAM, Ohio Valley Chapter
Several years ago, a small Government contractor was asked to describe its self-assessment process. The contractor employee immediately turned to look at the one (and only) item of Government-furnished special tooling in its possession, and said, “Yup, it’s still there.” Such is the environment Government officials and many small business contractors find themselves. Prior to the 2007 revision to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) part 45 and its associated clauses, many contractors, particularly larger contractors with complex contract and program requirements, adopted internal self-assessment programs.

Programs such as Contractor Self Oversight (CSO) and the old Air Force Contract Management Division’s Contractor Management System Evaluation Program (CMSEP) were common. ISO 9000 and ISO 55000 have a self-assessment requirement. These efforts led to the inclusion of self-assessment language in FAR 52.245-1; the development and publication of ASTM standard E2936-13 “Standard Practice for Contractor Self-assessment of U.S. Government Property Management Systems,” came shortly thereafter. Neither the FAR clause nor the ASTM standard distinguishes between large or small businesses. Indeed, the application of contractor self-assessments requirement was and is usually treated as a “one-size-fits-all requirement.”

According to a recent Federal Register Notice, from 2017 to 2019, the Department of Defense (DoD) awarded approximately 16,966 contracts to an average of 4,009 unique small entities (small businesses). In fiscal year 2018, defects in the area of self-assessments were number three in the top 10 listing of corrective action requests (83 of 905). It would seem, therefore, that contractor self-assessments are a focus area affecting both large and small businesses alike. It is fair to say, larger firms typically have greater resources and can absorb Government requirements more readily than small businesses. By extension, small businesses are impacted disproportionately.

Small business contractors with relatively small amounts of Government property (okay, non-sensitive property) typically do not need robust internal review programs to meet the requirements of FAR 52.245-1. Of course, there are always exceptions. Instead of elaborate self-assessment programs, small business contractors may find the occasional walk-through or spot check just as effective. And THAT is the focus of this article – the potential depth and breadth of reviews! So, let us look at the terms used in the Government Property clause, FAR 52.245-1, as they pertain to contractor self-assessment programs and their application.

**The Requirement for Self-Assessment -- FAR 52.245-1(b)(4)**

“The Contractor shall establish and maintain procedures necessary to assess property management system effectiveness, and shall perform periodic internal reviews, surveillances, self-assessments, or audits.”

The clause language applies universally. However, it surely does not apply equally. Like much of FAR 52.245-1(b)(4), it is written in performance-based terms, i.e., the text of the clause describes generally what needs to be done, but does not enumerate how (or when) things should be done. This was and is intentional given the diversity of contractor systems and contract terms. At issue, however, are the following: 1) what is the actual self-assessment requirement; 2) how is it being implemented; 3) how is the Government evaluating compliance; and 4) is compliance being reasonably and consistently applied.

**PROCEDURES AS A STARTING POINT**

FAR 52.245-1(b)(4) is written as a quite intentional sequence of events: first, the contractor must establish procedures; second, the contractor must maintain those procedures; and third, ostensibly sometime later on, the contractor must assess the adequacy of those procedures. The sentence, a clausal requirement, is frequently misinterpreted as requiring all contractors to have a large-scale self-assessment program, akin to a Government property management systems analysis. Yes, we can assume that the large defense contractor will have a self-assessment program that is complex and detailed. Other contractors, small contractors specifically, may have very limited internal reviews based upon numerous variables including the amount and type of Government property in their possession, as well as the size and nature of their work. In fact, a questionnaire recently developed by the Defense Contract Management Agency asks contractors to provide a “copy” of their internal review, surveillance, self-assessment, or audit. Presumably, failure to provide a “copy” would lead to the dreaded Corrective Action Request or “CAR.” We’ll cover this concept in greater detail later in this article.

**THE TERMS RELATING TO “SELF ASSESSMENT”**

In truth, the clausal requirement offers a variety of means, e.g., internal reviews, surveillances, self-assessments, or audits, for contractors to perform what is essentially an internal control requirement. The FAR does not define internal reviews, surveillances, self-assessments, or audits, for such terms are within common usage. No doubt, the FAR drafters saw fit to only provide examples of the broad range of reviews conducted by industry. Still, the following definitions are useful when discussing the requirements of FAR 52.245-1. For purposes of clarity or the legal concept of “certainty of terms” let’s provide some definitions for these terms.

- **Internal Reviews** – “a formal assessment or examination of something with the possibility or intention of instituting change if necessary.”
- **Surveillances** – A generic term that has many uses, but applied here to the monitoring of behavior, activities, or information for the purpose of information gathering, influencing, managing or directing.
- **Internal Audit** – “Internal audits evaluate a company’s internal controls, including its corporate governance and accounting processes. These audits ensure compliance with laws and regulations and help to maintain…”

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accurate and timely financial reporting and data collection. Internal audits also provide management with the tools necessary to attain operational efficiency by identifying problems and correcting lapses before they are discovered in an external audit.\textsuperscript{vi}

- Internal Auditing – “Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organization’s operations. It helps an organization accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes.”\textsuperscript{vii}

- Self-Assessment – “Contractor self-assessment as ‘an auditing, assessment, review or surveillance program implemented by a contractor to identify, evaluate and take corrective action on compliance and operational risks resulting from business practices for government property management.’” – ASTM 2936-13

A visual representation of the levels of complexity and detail applicable to a self-assessment might look like Figure 1.

Suffice to say, there are a variety of ways to conduct internal reviews—from simple reviews to more complex internal audits such as those required by Generally Accepted Audit Standards (GAGAS) or Generally Accepted Government Audit Standards (GAGAS) or the Sarbanes Oxley Act of 2002. Given its use in Government contracting, for purposes of this article, the term (contractor) “self-assessment” will be used throughout the remainder of this article.

**TAKEAWAYS**

Take away #1: FAR 52.245-1 requires Procedures as part of a Property Management System. One point of fact often lost in translation, is that prior to performing a self-assessment, a procedure or procedures must exist, i.e., developed, written, and published within the company. The existence of the procedure is the necessary predication for what comes later, the actual assessment. Contractors new to FAR property management requirements and without existing procedures, may find that meaningful self-assessments cannot be accomplished. Clearly, there is nothing to assess, at least not yet. Their Property Management System and its procedures are not yet mature. Self-awareness is the issue in these circumstances, not self-assessment.

Take away #2: The language at FAR 52.245-1(b)(4) is sequential: Procedure development and publication must come first. As stated previously, contrary to what seems to be the prevailing view, the FAR clausal requirement does not require contractors to create a formal self-assessment program. The clause only requires contractors to perform periodic self-assessments. The clause language is quite intentional as it offers a diverse industry of small and large contractors with both large and small amounts of property and a variety of contract types, program requirements, system complexity and the flexibility and scalability needed to conduct its self-assessments.

Often enough, we see many new contractors publish their procedures only to immediately embark on a formal self-assessment program. Without a history of performance and application of these procedures what is there to assess? This may not be the most efficient use of the contractor’s time, for some identified defects may be the result of a lack of procedures, procedures that were just published. As a result, contractor personnel might end up chasing their tails.

Clearly, the contractor’s internal drafting and policy/procedure publication effort is in itself a self-assessment process; and its newly published procedure is the completed deliverable of a self-assessment process. Whether the procedure is adequate, i.e., contains or addresses relevant and applicable contract terms and conditions is working as intended, is another matter entirely.

Take away #3: Procedure development is a self-assessment in and of itself. While the FAR clause does not require contractors to establish a formal self-assessment program, many contractors go to great lengths to establish one (often enough, due to the Government’s misguided misinterpretation of the requirements of the clause.) But in addition to the need for a procedure, there is another requirement. That is, the procedure, to include the processes therein must not only exist, i.e., be published, it must also be relatively mature and stable. Clearly, a new procedure must be properly seasoned, i.e., it needs time to mature, a “sea trial” of sorts is necessary to determine its accuracy and overall adequacy.

Indeed, it would prove very challenging and not very practical to perform a self-assessment with a procedure that is only a few days old. For one, if tested statistically sufficient samples may not be available in the short term to perform proper sampling. Moreover, the procedure needs time to grow, i.e., stabilize and mature. How long? As is often said, “it depends.” There are many factors to consider:

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**HEIRARCHY OF SELF ASSESSMENT**

![Figure 1.](image-url)
size of the contractor, contract type, contract periods of performance, program requirement and system complexity.  


The FAR at 52.245-1(b)(1) allows the use of Voluntary Consensus Standards (VCS). As such we can use a VCS to provide us guidance as to application. As a reminder, procedure development is, in itself, a self-assessment process. Publication or implementation of the procedure is the “deliverable” or platform by which the contractor can gauge whether its processes are properly documented and working as intended. Clearly, a stable and mature procedure must be in place for a formal self-assessment to occur. ASTM E2452-12 Standard Practice for Equipment Management Process Maturity (EMPM) model offers us insight on the right approach—contractor processes meeting or exceeding Level 1 (structured) or Level 2 (consistent) would appear to offer a framework to make such decisions:

- Level 1: Processes that have been defined and are understandable, documented, and capable of being repeated.
- Level 2: Processes that are prescribed and consistently performed at the organizational level with consistent results.

Takeaway #5: Interaction with other Business systems.

For DoD contracts, contractors must also look to other business systems, i.e., Accounting, Material Management and Accounting, Purchasing, Earned Value Management and Estimating. In a previous article, co-authored by Ruckdaschel and Mikhelson, the “… interconnectedness of contractor business systems is important because government auditors and other overseers do not limit their work to the imaginary borders of whichever system they may be reviewing.”

Accordingly, the interfaces to other business systems make them, too, fair game for review. A deficiency in one system may cause, or may have been caused by, deficiencies in other systems. Thus, it is in the interest of both Government and contractor to create an environment of continual process improvement versus needless corrective actions.

CONCLUSIONS

It is important to note then that this requirement for “periodic internal reviews, surveillances, self-assessments, or audits” must be tempered and tailored to the individual entity, both in the development and implementation of procedures and methodologies. The depth and breadth of application may and does vary based upon numerous variables that have been enumerated in this article -- and that need to be considered in the development of any procedures, both procedures dealing with the entire system, and the procedures used in the self-assessment process. Using the old adage, “One size does NOT fit all!” Internal and external reviewers or auditors need to understand this concept and not try to apply only one rigid framework to this contractual requirement.

Endnotes

i ISO 55000 uses the term “Assessment” versus self-assessment.

ii FRN/Vol. 85, No. 169 /Monday, August 31, 2020 / Proposed Rules 53761

iii https://www.gao.gov/archive/1996/ns96106.pdf The Government property requirements were listed as a “cost driver” in this Coopers and Lybrand Study

iv Google’s English dictionary is provided by Oxford Languages - https://rb.gy/wlkbn

v A diligent review of the printed literature on “Internal Audits” failed to find a definition for this term. This definition is from https://www.investopedia.com/terms/i/internalaudit.asp, with a retrieval date of 20 November 2020.

vi Institute of Internal Auditors webpage www.theia.org


ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Tom Ruckdaschel, CPPM, CF, is an independent consultant specializing in Federal Government Contract Property Requirements & Related DoD Business Systems. Tom has over 35 years’ experience in property management and was a major contributor to the FAR Government property rewrite effort and related DoD FAR supplement rules.

Dr. Douglas N. Goetz, CPPM, CF, MIAM, is an Industrial Property Management Specialist, Property Administrator, Professor at the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT), and Professor at the Defense Acquisition University (DAU). He is President of GP Consultants LLC, a prolific writer, dynamic speaker, award winning Professor, and a talented game show host. After forty years of experience in Defense Contract Property Management, having travelled all over the world – through the capitals of dozens of countries and into areas of conflagration, read that war zones – Dr. Goetz is recognized as a true expert in the property profession.
What Story is Your Property Data Telling?

A Parody of Property Accountability and Alice in Wonderland

By: Jamie Holguin, Los Angeles Chapter

Working as a Property Administrator can often make one feel like Alice in Wonderland, falling down a hole of data so nonsensical it would not feel out of place in a Lewis Carroll novel. Much like Carroll’s titular Alice in Wonderland, I jumped in feet first, leaving the safety of working in a library for a fast-paced whirl of data, jargon, and acronyms of Personal Property Accountability (PPA). As a taxonomist and a metadata librarian, I looked forward to the conversations the property data would reveal. However, instead of being informative and revealing, I entered a different conversation. Imagine, if you will, the dialogue between Alice, the Mad Hatter, and the March Hare. Each character represents an aspect of a Property Accountability record: The March Hare and the Mad Hatter are the data and financial aspects of Property Accountability information respectively, while Alice is the customer to PPA, knowing what she is looking for, but not finding what she expected. Here is dialogue between these three characters.

March Hare: …You should say what you mean.

Alice: I do; at least - at least I mean what I say -- that’s the same thing, you know.

Mad Hatter: Not the same thing! Why, you might just as well say, ‘I see what I eat’ is the same as ‘I eat what I see’!

March Hare: You might just as well say that “I like what I get” is the same thing as “I get what I like”!

In this conversation, Alice, the March Hare, and the Mad Hatter play riddles with words, and yet the same words rearranged in different order have a different meaning.

A comparison can be drawn between their conversation and the organization of data. Although on first glance data may appear to be simple, a closer look reveals its complexity; and when not captured in proper order it can be a challenge for the user to locate or identify what is being sought after. This could send the user down a proverbial ‘rabbit hole’ muddling through stress-filled hours of searching for the unsearchable – looking for something the user believes should be present and identifiable, but sadly, is not! When working with small or large data sets there can be much expressed in a short amount of time, and yet there may be no useful information conveyed at all.

In today’s technically savvy working environment, accurate data collections begin early in the property lifecycle process – the planning process. For most of us, the “rubber hits the road” with the procurement processes. It is assumed that property records should-be and are received as ordered, confirmed as received, and extra-ordinary.”iii Considering a self-assessment of personal property record as telling the story, reading the data is just that, “pursuit of excellence.” Hence, with the “pursuit of excellence” as the challenge before us, we must constantly ask ourselves if we are reporting personal property-related data accurately; and, are we maintaining our fiduciary and stewardship responsibilities of what is being reported back to NASA? In this respect, a self-assessment can prove to be a daunting task, especially when reading the story of the property data record line-by-line for accuracy. This is an illuminating task that - when read without rose colored glasses - reveals the (true) story of the property record. Knowing that storytelling is a way to connect, to see to the other side, storytelling is an invitation to an unknown world. Storytelling applies to everything in life, including data.

Just as Alice had no shame wandering through Wonderland, bumbling and stumbling the entire time, so we humbly look at the good, bad, and the ugly of a business practice. In Alice’s world, “for every cause, there is an effect.” For every problem, there is a solution. It could be hypothesized that Alice might have met Winston Churchill before she fell down the rabbit hole, as his advice seems to resonate in each door she walked through in Wonderland. Churchill stated “to improve is to change; to be perfect is to change
often.” This might have eased all her grief while aiding in her problem solving each step of the way. We should capitulate, it is likely not possible to be perfect every time when performing a self-assessment and reviewing for data integrity, but the objective is to take up the challenge, learn from mistakes, and go forward toward correction while assessing that errors found are not systemic. Refocusing on our story, as Alice searched for which direction to go, she stumbled upon the Cheshire Cat. Alice: “Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?”

The Cheshire Cat: “That depends a good deal on where you want to get to.”

Alice: “I don’t much care where.”

The Cheshire Cat: “Then it doesn’t much matter which way you go, for eventually you will end up somewhere.”

The Cheshire Cat offers a very true and frustrating response. The impulse is to ask more questions: keep asking questions, then questioning the questions (not part of the Lewis Carroll novel, but fitting just the same). However, the ‘how did it get there?’ and the ‘why is it like that?’ at this point is irrelevant! It is what it is, so let’s begin. That circling conversation with the Cheshire Cat was an eye-opening dialogue that could have stirred Alice from a slumber of what to do and how to go about the task. Putting perspective on our self-assessment, some questions asked prior to starting the process:

• What story is the data telling us?
• Is the story of the data trustworthy?
• Is the data revealed clearly identifiable?
• Is the story reliable, authentic, have integrity, and is it usable?

(Hint: Contextual linkages should provide an understanding of the transactions that created the property record (acquisition/valuation) and the use of the property (the using project, the property custodian, the property administrator, or, reutilization and disposal.)

As Alice continually wandered aimlessly after the proverbial White Hare, entrapped in a hallway facing locked doors, she came upon a new scenario: How do I go through that tiny door? (peering through the doorway keyhole) to get to the garden on the other side? How could she possibly go through the door when she was too big? Alice felt overwhelmed, a feeling which many share when embarking upon a self-assessment. However, like Alice, those examining data will often have a solution come to them, even if the solution at first seems daunting. For Alice, it is the “Drink Me” potion, which she fears may not be safe to drink. However, when she does drink from the potion, “she finds that it tastes absolutely delicious (it had a flavor of cherry tart, custard, pineapple, roast turkey, toffee, and hot buttered toast, all mixed up).” Alice had nothing to fear after all. Like Alice discovered, although the self-assessment won’t taste nearly so sweet, one may find that it is not as bad as they had feared. In the story, upon drinking the potion Alice finds herself shrinking down to only ten inches high. Similar to Alice, it will feel overwhelmingly large to manage a self-assessment and any necessary data cleanup. It may make you feel like you are that 10-inch tall person. Stick to it, the feeling will pass! It might cause your eyes to cross and blur, and unlike Alice, there is no Queen of Hearts (another nonsensical character) chasing after you, screaming “Off with her head!” At times you may relent as Alice did, stating, “I almost wish I hadn’t gone down that rabbit-hole! – and yet – and yet – it’s rather curious, you know, this sort of life!”  

However, in the end, you will know that the data’s integrity, consistency, and reliability will create the same feeling Alice felt when she finally was able to open the door that was a challenge to get through initially – Alice had to find her correct balance between being too large, and getting too small. Alice was able to enter the garden.

A few more questions to ask before attempting a self-assessment for guidance:

• Can our customers readily identify what is being offered in this process?
• Do we know exactly what we are disposing of, utilizing reliable data to build disposal records?
• How much excessive time and energy is put into pulling property, to build a sale or scrap, only to discover the description does not match the property, requiring additional effort to correct or restart?
• Are all the components required for the disposal accounted for? (Problems may arise when items are really ‘children’ to a ‘parent’ item not yet in the disposal process.)

• Where are the other components, and should they have been included?

Telling the complete and accurate story of the property record is freeing. Imagine this – it is like putting on glasses for the very first time! It will ultimately be a solution in correcting inaccuracies, and, strengthening the integrity and authenticity of the property record.

Through this story of our self-assessment it supports our Mission Statement. “How we conduct our business is as important to JPL, and to our ultimate success, as what we do.” We will also continue to inspire the world through our stories and our journey into space.” I hope you are inspired to go forth and “Dare Mighty Things.”

Endnotes
iv Carroll, Lewis, Alice’s Adventures
v Ibid
vi Ibid
vii Mission Statement Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Jamie Holguin, is a Material Management Administrator at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology. She started her career at JPL in the Library, Archives, and Record Center, while completing her Masters in Library Information Systems from San Jose State University. During her 14 years at JPL, Jamie has served in the taxonomy and metadata librarian, as well as, original cataloging of text, audio, and electronic resources. Transitioning to Property Accountability was an organic move that proved strategic to JPL. Homing in on her organizational and electronic data base expertise, Jamie converted a time-consuming paper heavy position into electronic process, reducing processing time of year end reporting from 6-8 weeks to 5-7 days.
With all that 2020 had in store for us, it is time to have some fun in 2021. This new column will be a fun trivia feature to guess the Property/Fleet Management Professional. Each issue of The Property Professional will give you some highlights and clues to name that NPMA member. The answer will then be revealed in the following issue of the magazine.

**SO PUT ON YOUR THINKING CAPS AND GUESS WHO?**

**PROPERTY CAREER HIGHLIGHTS**

This individual was the Property Chief at NAVPRO Lockheed Sunnyvale which became DPRO Sunnyvale. They were also the Property Chief at the Strategic Weapons Facility Atlantic (SWFLANT) at Naval Submarine Base, Kings Bay, GA and Navy Property Book Officer at SWFLANT. This individual was the Industrial Division Team Lead, where their team was responsible for the care and maintenance of nine production buildings, seven small ordnance magazines, and 41 nuclear missile motor magazines. This individual was recognized with the Meritorious Civilian Service Award in 1990; the Top 10 in DLA Award for Contract Management in 1991; and Outstanding Contribution to EEO Program from 1987 – 1990. Lastly, they received the Special Act of Service Awards in 1984, 1991, 1996 and 1998 (2).

**NPMA CONTRIBUTIONS**

This individual has been an NPMA member for 35 years. They have been a Contributing Writer and/or Editor for seven Certification Manuals. They have served as Chapter Officer in both the Bay Area and Kings Bay Chapters. This individual was Chairman of the 1995 Eastern Region Seminar and the 2001 NES. They have held NPMA positions as VP of Professional Development and Director for both Professional Development & Membership. This individual has presented at several NPMA workshops and seminars including the 1992 Western Region Seminar, 1995 and 1996 Eastern Region Seminars and National Education Seminars in 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, and 1999. This individual has also been a key contributor to The Property Professional magazine.

**NPMA RECOGNITION**

This individual is a Certified Professional Property Manager and Consulting Fellow. They have also had the distinct honor of receiving the following NPMA awards.

- The Andrew C. Anderson Lifetime Achievement Award
- The Carl Iannacone Tribute Award
- The President’s Award

**NPMA FUN FACTS**

This individual has come to earn the nickname “Bubbles” by a few NPMA members and is the only member allowed to call Dr. Doug Goetz, “Dougie.”
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Submissions due MARCH 31, 2021 for the Following NPMA Awards:

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• Andy C. Anderson Lifetime Achievement Award
• Carl Iannacone Tribute Award
• Rookie of the Year
• Chapter of the Year
• Outstanding Members
• Federal Property Person of the Year
• Fleet Management Award

Award Submission Webinars:
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NPMA Individual Awards
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Watch the Newsflash for registration links!
DEAR EXPERT PANEL,

I am totally confused about doing my reviews as my peers tell me I have to use Statistical or “Random” sampling when doing my reviews of our Property/Asset Management System. I thought all I had to do was go out and find problems? Can you help me understand these terms?

SIGNED – STUMPED BY STATISTICS

DEAR STUMPED,

Yes, we can! Though this topic REALLY requires some in-depth study and reading and even full-blown coursework over a few semesters! There are a lot of algebraic fundamentals involved before we even talk about sampling. And we cannot teach you all of that information in a one page answer, but we can help you understand the difference in these concepts. And yes, before we can get to “sampling,” there are other constructs you must understand – the processes applied to property, proper definition of a population, and confidence level to name a few items. But we are going to limit our discussion to “SAMPLING!”

So, let us have at it! Simply put, we will address two (2) methodologies used in selecting items from a population subject to review. One requires rigid application in its selection methodology; one allows personal judgment to come into play.

STATISTICAL SAMPLING (also known as Random Sampling):

You say, “I just look at a bunch of records and pick the ones I like!”

No, THAT is NOT random sampling! Some guidance – “A random sample is one in which every possible combination of items in the population has an equal chance of constituting the sample. The only way an auditor can be confident a random sample has been obtained is by adopting a formal methodology that is designed to do this (p. 391).”¹

In other words, you have a population of 3500 items – for example – records. You need to select a set number of sample items in your sample in a RANDOM FASHION! This does not mean selecting the first 34 items or even those items you like. Rather, it is best to use a RANDOM NUMBER TABLE or a more contemporary action – a computer program to select those random numbers. There are a number of web-based programs out there, e.g., www.randomizer.org or www.random.org are two of those programs.²

Using the random numbers selected, you align these random numbers with your population listing. One of the reasons we use a RANDOM selection process is to eliminate bias in our selection process. Line the numbers up – pretty simple. Analyzing the RESULTS of your review using Random Samples requires careful analysis – but the additional thought here is that using random numbers allows you to GENERALIZE these results BACK to the population from which your samples were drawn.

JUDGMENT SAMPLING:

In a classic text Vance and Neter describe judgment sampling as, “A Judgment ... sample is one where the selection of specific sample items depends to a large extent upon individual judgment, or where judgment decisions are made about portions of the population for which the sample did not obtain the necessary information... Judgment samples may at times be quite useful, but their results cannot be evaluated on the basis of the sample by statistical methods” (p.17).³

So, you use YOUR JUDGMENT here, selecting as few or as many sample items as you determine for your sample. This is especially useful when there are not large listings or transactions being reviewed. For Example – reviewing storage areas would/may lend itself to a judgment sample vis-à-vis tens of thousands of records for property. Oh, and one small difference between a Random Sample and a Judgment Sample – the results of a Judgment Sample may NOT be generalizable to the population from which it was selected.

Statistical Sampling – requires RANDOM selection of the sample items from a population and is generalizable to that population. Judgment Sampling allows the reviewer (or we will even use the auditor as in the DCMA Guidebook⁴) to use one’s PROFESSIONAL judgment in selecting sample items!

And how about we throw in another evaluation technique – coming not from the world of statistical research or audits but from the worlds of qualitative research. And that is Purposeful or Purposive selection. This last one is a tough one to really get a handle on. I really like the explanation provided in the “Old” DoD Property Manual, 4161.2-M. Like other old stuff, I am sure that it is floating around out there on the web. It was rescinded in 2010, but this explanation is probably the best for our purposes. It states, “Purposeful is the process by which known, suspected, or reported conditions of a critical or substantial nature are used to select areas, items, or actions for review to determine the possible adverse systemic impact. It is especially critical, when using purposeful sampling, that items being researched have the potential for significant systemic impact. When the reviewer determines the potential exists for systemic impact, conditions or...
items shall be reviewed to determine whether or not a systemic deficiency exists.”

In other words, something BIG has happened that draws one’s attention to this event or mishap or occurrence that one wants to look at, analyze and determine if this was a singularity – or had the potential for other occurrences of the same ilk.

Order of Application – Definitely RANDOM SAMPLING is the most useful application in our environment – Property and Asset Management. Judgment Sampling has its uses as a second course of events. Purposive or Purposeful selection – save that for the most experienced property professionals!

This is NOT a simple basic concept so I would encourage you to dig deeper into these topics and study the enormous amount of literature and teaching materials out there on the web – and potentially even taking courses in statistics to acquire additional depth and breadth of knowledge in this area.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,
YOUR EXPERT PANEL

Notes
ii Be careful about these programs as they potentially generate duplicate numbers which you need to be careful about
iii Vance and Neter (1956) Statistical Sampling for Auditors and Accountants

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CPPM CERTIFICATION REVIEW
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MAY 28 // ONLINE

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The Fundamentals of Personal Property Management is designed to teach the basics of property management, cradle-to-grave, including how to effectively manage personal property. Topics include acquisitions, receiving, identification, storage and warehousing, movement, maintenance, physical inventory and more.
**SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP IN PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

**MARCH 22 // COLUMBUS, OH (PRE-SES)**

In today’s workplace many organizational leaders struggle with finding the right set of tools and people to sustain a healthy and thriving work environment. The age-old reason for low morale, breakdowns in communication as well systems and processes, and wide-spread inefficiencies lends itself to placing blame on the lowest hanging fruit, leadership!

In this course, students will learn the importance of emotional intelligence, the psychology and impact of situational leadership, the fundamentals of applied mentorship and soft skills, and diversity and inclusion. They will be introduced to the construct and the psychology behind the Inclusive Quotient otherwise known as the new IQ, and other leadership theories and innovative approaches that will equip leaders and property managers alike and examine ways to build pathways toward sustainable leadership in property management.

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**ARMY NEEDS TO ANALYZE OTA USE, WATCHDOG REPORT FINDS**

By Lauren C. Williams

The Army has more than doubled its use of rapid acquisition authorities to speed tech modernization in recent years, but it may not be getting the most out of them due to lack of a "consistent, coordinated" sharing of lessons learned.

A Government Accountability Office report released Oct. 1 found that Army organizations, such as Army Contracting Command and Army Futures Command, aren’t adequately implementing lessons learned from using other transaction authorities (OTAs) and other alternative approaches to rapid prototyping and research contracts.

"Army organizations overseeing alternative agreements and approaches demonstrate elements of five leading practices for lessons learned but overall lack consistent, coordinated use of these practices," which includes information collection, analysis, validation, archiving, and sharing, according to the report.

While it wasn’t explicitly mentioned in the report, GAO’s analysis is a reminder of Congressional and Army leadership concerns of potential over and misuse of other transaction authorities. GAO, however, did find that the Army used other transaction authorities, specifically for prototypes, more than other types of alternative acquisition agreements, including grants and cooperative agreements.

GAO recommended that the Army secretary directing Army Futures Command collaborate with Army Contracting Command and Army Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology to regularly analyze data for prototype other transaction agreements. The recommendations also call for the Army to regularly analyze how it’s using OTAs and other agreement types such as grants and research-focused OTAs.

The complete article can be found at [https://fcw.com/articles/2020/10/02/army-ota-oversight.aspx](https://fcw.com/articles/2020/10/02/army-ota-oversight.aspx)
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