GENERAL SERVICES ADMINSTRATION
Washington, DC 20405

August 31, 2008

Federal Travel Regulation
GSA Bulletin FTR 08-10

TO: Heads of Federal Agencies

SUBJECT: Reimbursement for actual subsistence expenses, and waivers of certain provisions of the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) (41 CFR chapters 301 and 302) for temporary duty (TDY), or relocation travel of employees to areas impacted by Hurricane Gustav.

1. What is the purpose of this bulletin? This Bulletin informs agencies that certain provisions of the FTR governing the authorization of actual subsistence expenses for official travel (both TDY and relocation) are temporarily waived as a result of Hurricane Gustav, because it is expected that finding lodging facilities and/or adequate meals may be difficult, and distances involved may be great resulting in increased costs for per diem expenses.

2. What are the effective dates of this bulletin? The provisions in this Bulletin are effective from the date of the Presidential declaration affecting the states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Texas (August 30, 2008) and will remain in effect until August 30, 2009 unless extended or rescinded by this office.

3. What is the background of this bulletin? As a result of the expected flooding and damage that could be caused by Hurricane Gustav, agencies should consider delaying all non-essential TDY and relocation to the affected area for a period of 30 days. This is especially important with relocation travel because the 120-day maximum for TQSE cannot be extended due to statutory restrictions. Given the flooding and damage caused by the storm, we cannot effectively determine the extent to which the ability to secure lodgings will be compromised. In this case, each agency may determine whether this Bulletin applies to travel to areas which are impacted by Hurricane Gustav.

4. What should I do as a result of this Bulletin? If TDY and relocation travel to areas affected by Hurricane Gustav cannot be delayed due to mission requirements or personal hardships then the following applies:

(a) For TDY travel: Section 301-70.200(f) of the FTR requiring an agency determination in each individual case that reimbursement under the actual

expense method is appropriate is hereby waived. Thus, agencies may authorize actual expense reimbursement for per diem expenses on a blanket basis for employees traveling to areas affected by Tropical Storm Gustav. Additionally, FTR section 301-11.7 states that the maximum per diem reimbursement rate is determined by the TDY location. For employees assigned to the affected areas where lodging is not available, the provisions of FTR section 301-11.8 state that the agency may authorize the per diem rate for the location where lodging is obtained. In all cases, the provisions of FTR section 301-11.303 limiting actual expenses not to exceed 300 percent (rounded to the next higher dollar) of the applicable maximum per diem rate for the locality concerned remains in effect.

(b) For relocation travel: For temporary quarters subsistence expense (TQSE), FTR section 302-6.9 requiring that temporary quarters be in reasonable proximity to the new official station is hereby waived for the areas affected by Hurricane Gustav. The maximum limit of 120 days that TQSE may be authorized remains in effect pursuant to FTR section 302-6.104.

(c) In addition, the following provisions of the FTR are waived:

i. FTR section 302-6.102 which limits the per diem reimbursement to the standard CONUS rate for TQSE. Agencies may authorize subsistence expenses at the locality per diem rate under the provisions of FTR section 301-11.101 or as an actual expense reimbursement allowance under FTR sections 301-11.300—301-11.306.

ii. For House-hunting trips, FTR section 302-5.13 limiting the reimbursement of subsistence expenses to the lodgings-plus method to allow for reimbursement under the actual expense allowances under FTR sections 301-11.300—301-11.306.

5. Maximum Rates. As a result of Hurricane Gustav, agencies may approve actual subsistence expense reimbursement, not to exceed 300 percent of the applicable per diem rate, without further justification for employees performing official travel to areas affected by Tropical Storm Gustav.

6. Who should I contact for further information? Mr. Patrick McConnell, Acting Program Director, Travel Management Policy at (202) 501-2826.

8/31/08

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