Disaster Response Guidebook for Personal Property Management

DRAFT
October 23, 2006
Use of Agency Property for Disaster Response

As part of their mission, certain Agencies have specific authorities provided under law which authorize them to use property in the case of emergencies or to assist in disaster relief. Agencies may be directed by the President or the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide personal property to support emergency relief (for more information see Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended Public Law 106-390, October 30, 2000 and 44 CFR 206.5). Disaster Relief must be coordinated with the Federal Coordinating Officer appointed by FEMA (see 44 CFR 206.64). Agencies may use federal personal property to prevent loss of life or property even if the items were not acquired for this purpose (see FPMR 101-25.100).

- from the General Services Administration

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background on Disaster Response Guidebook ........... 3

PART TWO: DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS

2.0 Acquisition ............................................................... 8
   2.1 Purchase Cardholders: ............................................ 8
3.0 Receipt of Property .................................................. 9
4.0 Disposition ............................................................ 14
   4.1 Recycling Electronics Asset Disposition Services .................. 15
   4.2 Donations/Transfers/Loans to State and Local Governments ..... 16
5.0 Contractor Held Property: ........................................... 19
   5.1 Contractor Held Physical Inventories ......................... 20
   5.2 Contractor Held Property Disposals ....................... 21

PART THREE: GENERAL MANAGEMENT

6.0 Finance .............................................................. 22
7.0 Inventory ............................................................ 24
8.0 Board of Survey .................................................... 23

PART FOUR: QUICK START GUIDE

9.0 Acquisition ............................................................ 26
10.0 Receipt of Property .............................................. 27
11.0 Disposition .......................................................... 28
12.0 Contractor Held Property Disposals ....................... 29

APPENDIX: LIST OF KEY ACRONYMS
PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background on Disaster Response Guidebook

Hurricane Katrina (August 29, 2005) and Rita (September 24, 2005) devastated the Gulf Coast states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and Texas. After the President declared the Gulf Coast a major disaster area, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), who manages federal response and recovery efforts, tasked the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through its mission assignments, to support the hurricane relief efforts. EPA activated its Emergency Response Plan and implemented various processes and procedures to address the massive and unprecedented devastation resulting from the hurricanes.

EPA is the lead federal agency under the National Response Plan for Emergency Support Function (ESF) 10, which addresses hazardous materials clean up, including oil. FEMA considers EPA and the US Coast Guard (USCG) as an ESF-10 Implementation Team. Each Agency is given its own specific duties based on its mission. Funding for the hurricane clean-up work is sent by FEMA to EPA, and EPA in turn allocates funds to its partner, the USCG. According to FEMA, "the ESF establishes the lead coordination roles, the division and specification of responsibilities among Federal agencies, and the national and onsite response organization that may be brought to bear in response actions, including description of the organizations, response personnel, and resources that are available. This ESF is applicable to all Federal departments and agencies with responsibilities and assets to support state and local response to actual or potential discharges and/or releases of hazardous materials."
During a disaster response situation, EPA implements the National Incident Management System (NIMS) developed by FEMA (see Figure 1). NIMS provides a flexible framework for identifying the roles and communications structure for responding to a disaster situation. According to FEMA, while most emergency situations are handled locally, when there’s a major incident, help may be needed from other jurisdictions, the state and the Federal Government. NIMS was developed so responders from different jurisdictions and disciplines can work together to better respond to natural disasters and emergencies, including acts of terrorism. NIMS benefits include a unified approach to incident management; standard command and management structures; and emphasis on preparedness, mutual aid and resource management.

The Incident Command System (ICS), which is a part of NIMS structure, provides a standardized, onscene organizational structure in response to disasters. According to FEMA, the ICS is a management system designed to enable effective and efficient domestic incident management by integrating a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure, designed to enable effective and efficient domestic incident management. It is used to organize both near-term and long-term field-level operations for a broad spectrum of emergencies, from small to complex incidents, both natural and manmade. It is normally structured to facilitate activities in five functional areas: command, operations, planning, logistics, and finance and administration.

Personal property is generally managed under the Logistics Section (see Figure 2 for a typical ICS organization structure).

The Logistics Section is responsible for managing supplies, facilities, grounds support, communications, food, and medical services for the site in a timely manner. Depending on the size of the effort, the Logistics Section may be further divided into subcomponents to effectively manage the work load.

Responding to a disaster situation requires many resources, including personal property. This Disaster Response Guidebook for Personal Property Management provides guidelines for maintaining EPA’s assets throughout their lifecycle during disaster response efforts. FEMA’s NIMS Guide is available on-line at fema.gov/emergency along with other helpful information.
The EPA Personal Property Management Program consists of 24 Accountable Areas (AAs) across the country that manage property for their respective Program and Regional offices. Each AA is comprised of several Custodial Areas (CAs). Figure 3 illustrates where the AAs are located. AAs are not necessarily aligned with Programs and Regions; one Region may have several AAs, or there may be several Programs under one AA. It is important to remember that there may be overlap; AAs are established specifically for EPA's Personal Property Management Program. Each AA has an appointed Property Management Officer (PMO), Property Accountable Officer (PAO), and Property Utilization Officer (PUO); collectively, this group is referred to as the "Property Officers." In a disaster response situation, the PMO from the nearest AA will be responsible for coordinating the property management functions in conjunction with the Logistics Section Chief.
PART TWO: DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS

2.0 Acquisition

Based on the ICS structure, Property Officers will report to the Logistics Section Chief for guidance and instruction. All requests for personal property should be made on Form 213 RR “Resource Request Message” (see Figure 4). This form should be completed and returned to the Logistics Section Chief, who will forward a copy to the assigned Property Officer. Upon receipt, the Property Officer will search the excess inventory to determine if excess property is available. If property is available, the Property Officer will notify the Logistics Section Chief and arrange for delivery. If excess property is not available in the excess inventory, the Logistics Section Chief will take the necessary steps to acquire the resource.

The Property Officer will maintain a copy of the completed Form 213 RR requesting property for follow-up during the receipt phase. Often times the person requesting property is not onsite to receive the property at a later date, so it is important for the Property Officer to maintain copies of all initial requests for property in order to determine if there are any open items that have not been recorded and decaled. The Property Officer will also record the property request on a “Property Receipt Status Report” (see Figure 5 for an example). This will aid the Property Officer in reconciling property requests with property receipts.

All applicable GSA guidance applies during a disaster response situation; acquisition procedures must comply with federal laws and regulations.

2.1 Purchase Cardholders

Purchase cardholders should check with the assigned Property Officer for excess inventory before making new purchases of property. Purchase cardholders are required to record core data elements (item type, make, model, manufacturer, serial number, acquisition cost, etc.) on Form 213 RR and submit it to the Logistics Section.

Purchase cardholders should request decals for all accountable property purchased on their card from the onsite Logistics Section. This property should be decaled with an EPA or FEMA disaster decal. The Finance organization codes will identify whether the property is EPA or FEMA funded. Any questions related to the funding source should be directed to the OCFO.

At the Incident Command Center property passes are issued for all accountable property assigned to an individual. This is recorded on the Property Accountability Form (see Figure 6) that will be used at checkout.

3.0 Receipt of Property

Finance should forward a copy of all purchase orders, bankcard logs, and reports that reflect incidental spending/purchasing for property to the Property Officer on a weekly basis, so that property that did not go through central receiving can be traced and decaled. The Property Officer will reconcile the purchasing documentation with the Form 213 RR that requested property. The Property Officer will also follow up to reconcile any property requests that were not received, or purchased property that was not initially recorded.

A disaster response decal should be added to all accountable property during a disaster situation. EPA decals should be applied only to property purchased with the Agency’s funds. FEMA owned property should be marked as such by applying a special EPA issued FEMA decal. See Figure 7 for guidelines on recording and decaling property.
All EPA accountable property should be entered into IFMS by a certified Property Officer. Based on the terms specified by FEMA, some types of expendable property, such as batteries and light bulbs, may have to be tracked and accounted for. The property should also be captured in IFMS to ensure that the Agency maintains accountability for them. This includes both property that EPA has purchased with FEMA funds, and property that has been given to EPA by FEMA for use. Data should be entered into all the fields as under normal circumstances with the exception of the Room Number and the Building field. The Property Officer should enter "FEMA" as the Room Number and the location (i.e. city/state) in the Building field. It is also important for the Property Officer to maintain a voucher log and all documentation associated with the item(s) entered. The Custodial Area (CA) for this property is '888' for FEMA funded property and CA '000' for EPA funded property. Due to security considerations and training requirements, only Property Officers can input data into IFMS.

Figure 5: Form 213 RR Resource Request Message

Figure 6: Sample Property Receipt Status Report
4.0 Disposition

EPA property currently in CA '999' is available for excess. EPA excess personal property may be used on loan to support disaster response efforts and must be returned to EPA at the end of the mission.

The Logistics Section Chief will identify excess property and notify the property staff when it is ready to be disposed.

At the end of a disaster response effort, it may be determined that the property should be returned to FEMA. In such a case, the Property Officer should receive documentation from FEMA requesting the property to be returned. Prior to returning the property, all barcode labels should be removed and the item is disposed of in IFMS.

If the item(s) is to remain with EPA, FEMA must provide documentation stating that the item(s) is not required to be returned and will remain as EPA Property. At this point, the Property Officer will need to transfer the property out of CA '888' (for FEMA funded property) or CA '000' (for EPA funded property) to CA '999' (excess property) or to a custodial account within the Accountable Area if it is to go back into active use. This property will need to be decaled with the appropriate EPA decal, and the disaster response decal should be removed.
The PUO is responsible for completing all disposal forms for excess property. EPA excess personal property reported to GSA is listed in the GSAXcess® database (regardless of whether the reporting was done by means of a Standard Form (SF)-120 "Report of Excess Personal Property" or through GSAXcess®). This property is available for other federal agencies to claim for 21 calendar days. The federal agency that claims the excess personal property will complete an SF-122 "Transfer Order Excess Personal Property" and submit it to the GSA region in which the property is located. EPA PUOs should also follow this procedure or a direct transfer (see FMR 102-36.145) to claim excess personal property reported by other federal agencies.

4.1 Recycling Electronics and Asset Disposition Services
Under the Recycling Electronics and Asset Disposition (READ) services contract, EPA awarded several Governmentwide Acquisition Contracts (GWAC) to small businesses to help the Federal Government recycle or properly dispose of excess electronic equipment. EPA can use READ services to dispose of its excess electronic equipment without reporting to GSA for all property having the "S" disposal condition code, which indicates it is scrap. For other disposal condition codes, the excess electronic equipment must be reported to GSA for screening before disposal through READ services.

The READ services program evaluates each item and its components and then, in decreasing order of preference:

- Refurbishes and resells it, using the proceeds to offset costs;
- Donates it to charitable causes; or
- Recycles as much as possible and properly disposes of the remainder.

Due to EPA's mission to protect the environment, recycling electronics is the Agency's first choice for disposing of excess equipment as it prevents hazardous substances from entering landfills and the environment and extends the useful life of equipment through refurbishment and donation. Equipment can be donated to schools, nonprofit organizations, and lower-income families. READ services will also help federal agencies meet the requirements of Executive Order 13101, "Greening the Government through Waste Prevention, Recycling, and Acquisition." For more information about READ services, visit http://www.epa.gov/oam/read/index.htm.
4.2 Donations/Transfers/Loans to State and Local Governments

Property Officers can make the determination that surplus personal property may be donated to any state or local government or nonprofit organization deemed eligible by the State Agency for Surplus Property (SASP). Donations can only be made to SASP offices designated under state law to receive federal surplus personal property for distribution to eligible donees. Nonprofit organizations eligible for donations generally include, but are not limited to:

- Medical institutions, hospitals, clinics, and health centers;
- Drug abuse and alcohol treatment centers;
- Providers of assistance to homeless or impoverished families or individuals;
- Schools, colleges, and universities;
- Child care centers;
- Radio and television stations licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as educational radio or educational television stations; and
- Public museums and libraries.

Excess personal property that is not claimed during the 21-day GSA screening process is classified as surplus personal property and is eligible for donation to state and local public agencies and other authorized non-federal activities. Surplus personal property not selected for donation is offered for sale by GSA to the public by competitive offerings, such as sealed bid sales, spot bid sales, or auctions. If a written determination is made by the Property Officer that the surplus personal property has no commercial value or that the estimated cost of its continued care and handling will exceed the estimated proceeds from its sale, it may be disposed of by abandonment or destruction or donated to public bodies.

4.2.1 Donation of Surplus Property

After property has been reported to GSA and undergone the appropriate screening process, it can be donated to eligible state and local governments. The Property Officer can request an expedited screening of the personal property to ensure a timely donation during a disaster response situation. Property is eligible for donation only after it has been declared surplus by GSA. See FMR 102-37.30 and FMR 102-37.100 for more details.

4.2.2 Transfer of Excess Property

Agencies can transfer excess personal property to other federal agencies that have been authorized to support disaster response activities (FMR 102-36).

Personal property can only be transferred to state and local governments after the 21-day screening process ends. If the property is not claimed by other federal agencies, surplus personal property can be transferred to any state or local governments requesting its use. An authorized official from the local or state government must prepare an SF-123 “Transfer Order Surplus Personal Property” and forward it to the appropriate GSA office for approval or disapproval. If the request is approved, GSA will prepare and forward disposition instructions to the AA holding the property. If the request is not approved, GSA will forward other disposal instructions.

Agencies may transfer computers and research equipment directly to an educational institution to conduct technical and scientific education and research activities (15 USC 3710). Agencies may transfer computers directly to pre-K through 12th grade schools and educational programs through the Computers for Learning Program (Executive Order 12999 and FMR 102-36.475).
4.2.3 Loans to State and Local Government – GSA

Agencies may directly loan personal property to state and local governments with or without compensation to assist in a disaster response situation. This loan can be made to the Agency’s excess property prior to reporting to GSA (see FMR 102-36.370 for details). For more information search Federal Management Regulation at [http://www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov).

5.0 Contractor Held Property

All property purchases made by contractors must be approved in advance by their Approval Official. Contracting Officers should review the purchasing log before authorizing purchases to ensure that separate purchase orders are not issued to the same vendor. Once the property is received by the contractor, the contractor’s property system should be able to flag property that was purchased with FEMA funds. All invoices for purchases of property under a contractor will be sent to the Finance Section for review. The Finance Section should maintain records of what has been purchased with FEMA funds in case these items must be returned.

Contractor responsibilities, as they relate to contract personal property, are as follows:

- Accounting for all contract personal property in their possession;
- Establishing and maintaining a property control system to control, protect, preserve, and maintain all contract personal property;
- Maintaining and making available the records of all contract personal property until relieved of such responsibilities by the Contracting Officer;
- Conducting periodic physical inventories; and
- Reporting excess or loss, damaged, or destroyed contract personal property to the Contracting Officer.
5.1 Contractor Held Physical Inventories

It is important to note that although property has been acquired to support a disaster response effort, the contractor must still comply with all requirements to properly track and account for all contractor acquired and government furnished property. In addition, the Contracting Officer has the right to request an inventory at any time.

The contractor shall maintain current inventories on each contract administered. The Contracting Officer must modify contracts as needed to identify all property furnished by the Government. The Project Officer must monitor and review the results of the physical inventories conducted by the contractor for all government property held by the contractor. A copy of each inventory shall be furnished to the appropriate Contracting Officer. The Project Officer should modify and maintain current records of all government-furnished property and provide the Contracting Officer with copies of the inventories conducted for each contract administered, including subcontractors’ inventories.

5.2 Contractor Held Property Disposals

Contractor held property is disposed of in several ways. EPA owned property should be disposed of through the assigned Property Officer. FEMA owned property should be returned to FEMA upon request. If FEMA does not want its property returned, it should be disposed of through the Defense Contracting Management Agency (DCMA). All contractor acquired property should be disposed of through DCMA.

1. The contractor will provide a list of Government property that is "potentially" excess to its contract requirements to the Contracting Officer.

2. The Contracting Officer and the Project Officer will determine if the Government property can be used for other contractual requirements or should be maintained within the Program Office. If so, the Contracting Officer will issue a contract modification documenting the transfer. The Project Officer will also notify the Property Officer of the transfer.

3. If the Contracting Officer and Project Officer determine that the Government property cannot be used on another contract or within the Program Office, the Contracting Officer will issue a modification transferring the Government property from the contract back to the Agency.

4. The Project Officer will coordinate disposal instructions with the Property Officer.

5. The Property Officer will arrange the pick-up of the government Property from the contractor for disposition or reuse.
PART THREE: GENERAL MANAGEMENT

6.0 Finance

IFMS is the official system of record for recording and reporting all property. All property purchased in a disaster response situation will be recorded as either CA '888' for FEMA funded purchases, or CA '000' for EPA funded purchases.

Finance establishes a unique organization code for each mission assignment to identify funding sources. The Budget Object Class (BOC) is 31 for personal property. All charges, both related to what will be reimbursed by FEMA and that which will be paid out of EPA appropriated funds (and not reimbursed by FEMA) must have an organization code that identifies the charges related to a particular mission assignment. It may be appropriate to charge non-payroll expenses (such as contracts, purchase cards, travel, etc.) using the organization codes established for the particular disaster response. However, if Offices expect to be reimbursed through a FEMA mission assignment, those expenses must be coordinated through the Regional Office for prior approval. If approval is not obtained, the originating Office will have to cover costs from their own programmatic funds.

7.0 Inventory

All EPA personal property, including property acquired to support a disaster response effort, is accountable and should be included in the annual physical inventory. All EPA personal property must have an EPA decal to identify it as EPA property. In order to successfully keep track of records, an audit trail should be created in order to account for all inventory located at the disaster response scene. The following should be done on a quarterly basis by the Property Officer to ensure that the property records are accurate:

1. Review inventory report;
2. Conduct physical inventory;
3. Review property records;
4. Review offsite property passes;
5. Check with Logistics Chief for any employee transfers or reassignments.

Conducting the annual inventory of accountable, sensitive, and capitalized property is an important responsibility. Although disaster response property is outside of the normal scope for Property Officers, this property is still accountable to the EPA as part of its physical inventory. Conducting a physical inventory allows reconciliation of property listed in the core financial system.

Extensions for reporting an accountable property inventory should be requested in writing to the Agency Property Management Officer (APMO). Capitalized inventories are reported to OMB on an annual basis, and must be completed on time. There will be no extensions for capitalized property inventories.
8.0 Board of Survey

The EPA's Board of Survey (hereinafter the "Board" or BOS) serves as a fact-finding body concerning the circumstances and conditions of each case in which Government property is declared lost, damaged or destroyed (LDD) on a Report of Survey form (EPA Form 1740-12). The Board is charged with determining the extent of the loss to the Government, employee liability and a means for the formal removal of property from an inventory. To determine whether an individual(s) should be held liable or relieved of liability, the contributory facts must be developed from a thorough review of facts and circumstances surrounding the occurrence of loss, damage or destruction. The BOS must ensure the facts are fully disclosed, the interests of the Government are fully served, and the rights of the involved individuals are fully protected. The Board of Survey's responsibilities include the following:

- Conducting a thorough investigation and examining all evidence that is presented;
- Providing recommendations to remove property declared LDD from IFMS; and
- Determining whether the employee(s) involved are at fault for the LDD property.

It is important to note that Property Officers are accountable for all property assigned to the AA, including property acquired to support a disaster response effort. Therefore, controls should be in place to safeguard EPA's assets. For more information about the EPA Board of Survey, consult the EPA Board of Survey Guidebook available on the EPA Property Management Intranet at http://intranet.epa.gov/oas/fmsd/property.
PART FOUR: QUICK START GUIDE

9.0 Acquisition
1. As part of the ICS structure, the Property Officer will be carbon copied on the procurement request from the Planning Section to Logistics Section on Form 213 RR "Resource Request Message."
2. The Property Officer will search the excess inventory to determine if excess property is available. If property is available, the Property Officer will notify the Logistics Section and arrange for delivery.
3. The Property Officer will file Form 213 RR requesting property for follow-up during the receipt phase.

9.1 Acquisitions by Purchase Cardholders
1. Purchase cardholders should check with the assigned PMO for excess inventory before making new purchases of property.
2. Purchase cardholders are required to record core data elements (item type, make, model, manufacturer, serial number, acquisition cost, etc.) on the Form 213 RR and submit to the Logistics Section.
3. Purchase cardholders should request disaster decals for all sensitive property purchased on their card from the onsite Logistics Section. This property should be decaled with the EPA or FEMA disaster decal based on the funding source.
4. Property passes are issued to a staff member by the Property Officer or Logistics Section staff for all accountable property assigned to an individual. This is added to the staff member property sheet that will be used at checkout.

10.0 Receipt of Property
1. Finance should forward all purchase orders, bankcard logs, and reports that reflect incidental spending/purchasing for property purchases to the Property Officer on a weekly basis so that property that did not go through central receiving can be traced and decaled.
2. The Property Officer will reconcile the purchases received with the Form 213 RR that requested property. The Property Officer will also follow up to reconcile any property requests that were not received, or purchased property that was not initially recorded.
3. A disaster response decal will be added by the Property Officer or Logistics Section staff to all accountable property in a timely manner. EPA decals should be applied only to property purchased with the Agency's funds. FEMA owned property which is purchased with FEMA funds should be marked as such by applying a special EPA issued FEMA decal.
4. All EPA sensitive property should be entered into IFMS. This includes property that EPA has purchased with FEMA funds. The data should be entered into all the fields as normal with the exception of the ‘Room Number’ and the ‘Building’ field. The Property Officer will enter ‘FEMA’ as the ‘Room Number’ and the location (i.e. city/state) in the ‘Building’ field. The Property Officer will maintain a voucher register and all documentation associated with the item(s) entered.
5. Due to security considerations and training requirements, only Property Officers can input data into IFMS.
11.0 Disposition

1. EPA property currently in CA '999' is marked for excess. EPA excess personal property may be used on loan in support of disaster response efforts and must be returned to EPA at the end of the mission.

2. At the end of the effort, it may be determined that property purchased with FEMA be returned to them. If this is the case, the Property Officer should receive documentation from FEMA requesting the property to be returned. Prior to returning the property, make sure the barcode labels are removed and the item(s) are voucheded and disposed of in IFMS.

3. If the item(s) are to remain with EPA, FEMA should provide documentation that they do not require the return of the property. At this point, the property will need to be transferred out of CA '888' for FEMA property or CA '000' for EPA property to CA '999' (excess property) or to a custodial account within the Accountable Area for use. This property will be redeployed with an EPA decal.

4. The Logistics Section Chief will identify excess property and notify the Property Officer of its disposal once the inventory is complete.

12.0 Contractor Held Property Disposals

1. The contractor will provide a list of Government property that is "potentially" excess to its contract requirements to the Contracting Officer.

2. The Contracting Officer and the Project Officer will determine if the Government property can be used for other contractual requirements or should be maintained within the Program Office. If so, the Contracting Officer will issue a contract modification documenting the transfer. The Project Officer will also notify the Property Officer of the transfer.

3. If the Contracting Officer and Project Officer determine that the Government property cannot be used on another contract or within the Program Office, the Contracting Officer will issue a modification transferring the Government property from the contract back to the Agency.

4. The Project Officer will coordinate disposal instructions with the Property Officer.

5. The Property Officer will arrange the pick-up of the Government Property from the contractor.
# APPENDIX: LIST OF KEY ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Accountable Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>APMO</td>
<td>Agency Property Management Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOC</td>
<td>Budget Object Code</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOS</td>
<td>Board of Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Custodial Area</td>
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<td>DCMA</td>
<td>Defense Contracting Management Agency</td>
</tr>
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<td>EPA</td>
<td>Environmental Protection Agency</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Emergency Support Function</td>
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<tr>
<td>FCC</td>
<td>Federal Communications Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMA</td>
<td>Federal Emergency Management Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSA</td>
<td>General Service Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWAC</td>
<td>Governmentwide Acquisition Contracts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICS</td>
<td>Incident Command System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFMS</td>
<td>Integrated Facility Management Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDD</td>
<td>Lost, Damaged, or Destroyed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIMS</td>
<td>National Incident Management System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCFO</td>
<td>Office of Chief Financial Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>OMB</td>
<td>Office of Management and Budget</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAO</td>
<td>Property Accountable Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>PMO</td>
<td>Property Management Officer</td>
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<td>PUO</td>
<td>Property Utilization Officer</td>
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<td>READ</td>
<td>Recycling Electronics and Asset Disposition Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>SASP</td>
<td>State Agency for Surplus Property</td>
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<tr>
<td>USCG</td>
<td>United States Coast Guard</td>
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For information related to personal property, contact:
The Office of the Chief Financial Officer,
Director, Office of Financial Management
(202)-564-2030.

All finance related issues should be directed to: