

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

41 CFR Part 300-80

RIN 3090-AG88

[FTR Amendment _____ 1998 Edition]

Federal Travel Regulation; Travel and Relocation Expenses Test Programs

AGENCY: Office of Governmentwide Policy, GSA.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: The General Services Administration (GSA) is proposing to amend the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) to add authority to implement sections of the Travel and Transportation Reform Act of 1998 (Pub. L. 105-264, October 19, 1998), which authorizes Federal agencies to conduct travel and relocation expenses test programs when determined by the Administrator of General Services to be in the interest of the Government. This change will permit agencies to test new and innovative methods of reimbursing travel and relocation expenses without seeking a waiver of current rules or authorizing legislation. It will also assist the Government to determine whether such innovations provide advantageous and effective travel and transportation costs and processes.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before April 12, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be sent to Ms. Sharon Kiser, Regulatory Secretariat (MVR), Office of Governmentwide Policy, General Services Administration, 1800 F Street, NW, Washington, DC 20405. E-mail comments may be sent to *RIN.3090-AG88@gsa.gov*.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jim Harte, Travel Team Leader, Travel and Transportation Management Policy Division (MTT), telephone 202-501-0483.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On October 19, 1998, the President signed into law the Travel and Transportation Reform Act of 1998 (the Act) (Pub. L. 105-264). This proposed change will implement the provisions of the Act authorizing travel and relocation expenses test programs designed to enhance cost savings or other efficiencies that may accrue to the Government.

A. Executive Order 12866

GSA has determined that this proposed rule is not a significant regulatory action for the purposes of Executive Order 12866 of September 30, 1993.

B. Regulatory Flexibility Act

This proposed rule is not required to be published in the **Federal Register** for notice and comment; therefore, the Regulatory Flexibility Act does not apply.

C. Paperwork Reduction Act

The Paperwork Reduction Act does not apply because the proposed rule does not impose recordkeeping or information collection requirements, or the collection of information from offerors, contractors, or members of the public which require the approval of the Office of Management and Budget under 44 U.S.C. 501 *et seq.*

D. Small Business Regulatory Reform Act

This proposed rule is also exempt from congressional review prescribed under 5 U.S.C. 801 since it relates solely to agency management and personnel.

List of Subjects in 41 CFR Part 300-80

Government employees, Travel and transportation expenses.

For the reasons set forth in the preamble, it is proposed that 41 CFR part 300-80 be added to read as follows:

PART 300-80—TRAVEL AND RELOCATION EXPENSES TEST PROGRAMS

Sec.

- 300-80.1 What is a travel and relocation expenses test program?
- 300-80.2 Who may authorize such test programs?
- 300-80.3 What must be done to apply for test program authority?
- 300-80.4 How many test programs may be authorized by GSA throughout the Government?
- 300-80.5 What factors will GSA consider in approving a request for a travel or relocation expenses test program?
- 300-80.6 May the same agency be authorized to test travel and relocation expenses programs at the same time?
- 300-80.7 What limits are there to test programs?
- 300-80.8 What is the maximum duration of test programs?
- 300-80.9 What reports are required for a test program?
- 300-80.10 When does the authority of GSA to authorize test programs expire?

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 5707, 5710, 5738, and 5739.

§ 300-80.1 What is a travel and relocation expenses test program?

It is a program to permit agencies to test new and innovative methods of reimbursing travel and relocation expenses without seeking a waiver of current rules or authorizing legislation.

§ 300-80.2 Who may authorize such test programs?

Only the Administrator of General Services may authorize an agency to conduct such tests when the Administrator determines such tests to be in the interest of the government.

§ 300-80.3 What must be done to apply for test program authority?

The head of the agency or designee must design the test program to enhance cost savings or other efficiencies to the Government and submit in writing to the Administrator of General Services (Attention: MTT), 1800 F Street, NW, Washington, DC 20405:

- (a) An explanation of the test program;
- (b) Specific provisions of the FTR to be tested (travel and/or relocation);
- (c) An analysis of the expected costs and benefits; and
- (d) A set of criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of the program.

§ 300-80.4 How many test programs may be authorized by GSA throughout the Government?

No more than 10 travel expense test programs and 10 relocation expense test programs may be conducted at the same time.

§ 300-80.5 What factors will GSA consider in approving a request for a travel or relocation expenses test program?

The following factors will be considered:

- (a) Potential savings to the Government;
- (b) Applicability of results to other agencies;
- (c) Feasibility of successful implementation;
- (d) Number of tests, if any, already authorized to the same activity;
- (e) Whether the request meets the requirements of § 300-80.3;
- (f) Other agency requests under consideration at the time of submission; and
- (g) Uniqueness of proposed test.

§ 300-80.6 May the same agency be authorized to test travel and relocation expenses programs at the same time?

Yes, if authorized, both test programs may be conducted by the same agency at the same time.

§ 300-80.7 What limits are there to test programs?

None. When authorized by the Administrator of General Services, the agency may pay any necessary travel or relocation expenses in lieu of payments authorized or required under chapters 301 and 302 of this title.

§ 300–80.8 What is the maximum duration of test programs?

Each test program may be continued for a period of up to 24 months from the date the test is authorized to begin.

§ 300–80.9 What reports are required for a test program?

Two reports are required:

(a) The Administrator of General Services must submit a copy of an approved test program to Congress at least 30 days before the effective start date of the authorized test program.

(b) The agency authorized to conduct the test program must submit a report on the results of the test program to the Administrator of General Services and to Congress within 3 months after completion of the program.

§ 300–80.10 When does the authority of GSA to authorize test programs expire?

The authority to conduct test programs expires on October 20, 2005.

Dated: January 26, 1999.

G. Martin Wagner,

Associate Administrator, Office of Governmentwide Policy.

[FR Doc. 99–3222 Filed 2–9–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6820–34–P

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**47 CFR Part 73**

[MM Docket Nos. 91–221 and 87–8; DA 99–281]

En Banc Hearing Regarding Local Television Ownership Rules

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: The Commission will hold an *en banc* hearing concerning the issues raised in connection with the Commission's pending review of its local television ownership rules. The purpose of the hearing is to educate and inform the Commissioners, FCC staff, and the public about differing perspectives on whether the Commission's local television ownership rules should be modified to respond to ongoing changes in the mass media industry.

DATES: Friday, February 12, 1999, from 9:30 a.m. to noon.

ADDRESSES: The Commission's new headquarters building at 445 12th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20554, Room TW–C305.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Robert Somers, Federal Communications Commission, Washington, DC 20554.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Federal Communications Commission will hold an *en banc* hearing on Friday, February 12, 1999, from 9:30 a.m. to noon in the Commission meeting room, Room TW–C305 of the Commission's new headquarters building located at 445 12th Street, SW, Washington, D.C. The hearing will concern issues raised in connection with the Commission's pending review of its local television ownership rules.

The purpose of this *en banc* hearing is to educate and inform the Commissioners, FCC staff, and the public about differing perspectives on whether the Commission's local television ownership rules should be modified to respond to ongoing changes in the mass media industry. The Commission's pending proceeding on this issue is part of a larger examination of these and other broadcast media ownership rules first initiated by the Commission in 1991, and more recently guided by the statutory directives of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

In its pending Local Ownership proceeding, the Commission has proposed modifying the "TV duopoly" rule, which prohibits the common ownership of more than one TV station in a local market, and the radio-television cross-ownership rule, which prohibits the common ownership of radio and TV stations in a local market. It has also sought comment on the appropriate grandfathering policy for TV local marketing agreements ("LMAs") that may become attributable under the Commission's proposed revisions of the rules which govern attribution of broadcast ownership interests.

The hearing will consist of presentations to the Commission by two panels. The first panel will be composed of legal scholars, economists, political scientists, and Wall Street observers. This panel will provide the Commission with a general perspective on the relevant trends in the mass media industry, the purposes for a free over-the-air broadcasting system, the future consequences of economic changes, and the role of the FCC in regulating broadcast ownership. The second panel will focus more specifically on the proposed rule modifications with perspectives from parties who have been actively involved in these issues. Although there are other ownership issues currently pending before the Commission, this hearing will focus solely on the issues raised by the "TV

duopoly" and radio-television cross-ownership rules and the related TV LMA grandfathering policy.

The *en banc* is open to the public, and seating will be available on a first come, first served basis. A transcript of the *en banc* will be available 10 days after the event on the FCC's Internet site. The URL address for the FCC's Internet Home Page is <<http://www.fcc.gov>>.

The *en banc* will also be carried live on the Internet. Internet users may listen to the real-time audio feed of the *en banc* by accessing the FCC Internet Audio Broadcast Home Page. Step-by-step instructions on how to listen to the audio broadcast, as well as information regarding the equipment and software needed, are available on the FCC Audio Broadcast Home Page. The URL address for this home page is <<http://www.fcc.gov/realaudio/>>

Federal Communications Commission.

Charles W. Logan,

Chief, Policy and Rules Division, Mass Media Bureau.

[FR Doc. 99–3333 Filed 2–9–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration****49 CFR Part 571****Denial of Petition for Rulemaking; Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards**

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Denial of petition for rulemaking.

SUMMARY: This document denies a petition for rulemaking submitted by the Coalition of Small Volume Automobile Manufacturers (COSVAM). COSVAM requested that small volume automobile manufacturers be given additional time to comply with the phase-in of the upper interior head protection requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 201, *Occupant Protection in Interior Impact*. Specifically, COSVAM requested that the agency initiate a rulemaking proceeding to create alternative compliance dates to address concerns of manufacturers producing or importing 10,000 vehicles per year or less. The petitioner based its request on the argument that compliance costs for such manufacturers would be disproportionately burdensome. NHTSA denies this petition because the agency