

**WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS SERVICES (WHS)
ACQUISITION AND PROCUREMENT OFFICE (A&PO)
OSD/WHS PURCHASE CARD PROGRAM**

PURCHASE CARD ALERT NUMBER 61

(Issue date: 8 July 2009)

THIS ALERT IS APPLICABLE TO:

APPROVING OFFICIALS



CARDHOLDERS



SUBJECT: Purchase Card On-Line System (PCOLS) Transition - Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

The purpose of this Purchase Card Alert is to provide answers to questions we've received regarding the OSD/WHS Purchase Card Program transition to PCOLS. Please also see Purchase Card Alert #60, issued 19 June 2009. The Questions and Answers are at Attachment 1.

Additional questions and answers will be posted on the OSD/WHS Purchase Card Program Website at <http://www.whs.mil/APO/PurchaseCard/index.cfm> Please check it frequently as we work through the PCOLS transition.

Please address PCOLS inquiries to Claudia.Colvin@whs.mil or Janette.Ray@whs.mil.

We hope you will continue to tell us when we are doing a good job of satisfying your needs as well as when we need to improve our efforts. You may submit your comments through the ICE Program at [ICE Purchase Card Program](#) or send directly to the Program Manager at Claudia.colvin@whs.mil.

PURCHASE CARD ONLINE SYSTEM (PCOLS) Q&A'S

Why are the Approving Official's supervisors of record suddenly being involved in the P-Card process?

Under the OSD/WHS Purchase Card Program, there has always been a requirement for the Approving Official's supervisor to sign and certify the application form to nominate an Approving Official. Under PCOLS, this nomination process will be done electronically (Common Access Card (CAC) enabled) through Enterprise Monitoring and Management of Accounts (EMMA) and Authorization, Issuance and Maintenance (AIM).

What exactly will the Approving Official's supervisor need to do under PCOLS?

The AO supervisor will be required to verify his/her address information in DEERS and, under EMMA, nominate Approving Officials to populate the existing p-card hierarchy and repeat the nomination process each time an Approving Official changes. Under AIM, the AO supervisor will give final approval of the Approving Official, approve the Resource Manager nomination, approve Cardholder nominations and suggested spending limits.

Will the Approving Official's supervisor be involved in the Data Mining/Risk Assessment segment of PCOLS?

Under Data Mining/Risk Assessment (DM/RA) the Approving Official's Supervisor will be cc'd on the e-mail identifying each flagged transaction and will be notified if the Approving Official fails to respond to the flagged transaction.

How many transactions will be flagged under DM/RA on an average AO account?

We've been told by the DoD PM's office that an average of 4% of their total yearly transactions will be flagged for further investigation.

Can someone else "act" as the Approving Official's supervisor of record for PCOLS purposes?

The answer to this question is "No". If the Approving Official's supervisor will not be involved in PCOLS, then purchase card support must be obtained elsewhere in the organization or pushed to a lower level in the organization. Please contact an A/OPC to discuss your purchase card hierarchy if you need assistance.

Will the AO Supervisor be required to attend any training?

There is an on-line Defense Acquisition University (DAU) tutorial covering PCOLS that is scheduled to be released in the next couple of weeks. One module is specific to the AO supervisor. It will take approximately one hour to complete. Training will not be mandatory for the AO Supervisor role, but it will be strongly encouraged and critical for PCOLS system navigation.

Will PCOLS training be mandatory for the Approving Officials and Cardholders?

Yes, training will be mandated for the Approving Official and Cardholder roles.

If our organization makes the decision to not involve the Approving Official's supervisor and to completely close our purchase card account, how will we fulfill our requirements at or below the micro-purchase level?

The following excerpt from the DFARS makes use of the purchase card mandatory for purchases at or below the micro-purchase threshold.

“DFARS 213.270 Use of the Governmentwide commercial purchase card.

Use the Governmentwide commercial purchase card as the method of purchase and/or method of payment for purchases valued at or below the micro-purchase threshold. This policy applies to all types of contract actions authorized by the FAR unless--

(a) The Deputy Secretary of Defense has approved an exception for an electronic commerce/electronic data interchange system or operational requirement that results in a more cost-effective payment process;

(b)(1) A general or flag officer or a member of the Senior Executive Service (SES) makes a written determination that--

(i) The source or sources available for the supply or service do not accept the purchase card; and

(ii) The contracting office is seeking a source that accepts the purchase card.”

Our organization would like to restructure our P-Card hierarchy to eliminate the involvement of the individual who is currently the Approving Official's Supervisor or change the structure in some other area. What should we do?

The A/OPC's in the Purchase Card Program Office are scheduling appointments to discuss the current purchase card hierarchy and to offer suggestions for alternative structure or sources of p-card support. Please contact an A/OPC for assistance.