

FEDERAL ETC UPDATES

Employee Transportation Coordinator



GSA PLANS TO INCREASE

TELEWORKING 40% BY 2010

TELEWORKING

GSA is making a solid pledge to teleworking over the next three years by committing to an astounding forty percent increase in employees who work from home. Lurita Doan, GSA Administrator, announced the new initiative in a keynote address at the 2007 Telework Exchange Town Hall Meeting and is hoping to establish GSA as a model for other federal agencies to follow.

GSA currently has ten percent of eligible workers teleworking one or more days per week. Doan noted that this number should be higher, given the significant benefits that workers can gain by teleworking.

GSA hopes to reach this goal by working with a dedicated team that will formulate a strategy and formal policy. Even new employees will be encouraged to telework, with the option advertised as one of the benefits of working for the agency.

GSA has led the effort to encourage employees to telework through the establishment of fourteen telework centers in Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia to allow long distance commuters to significantly shorten their trips to work.

GSA works closely with management to sell the concept of teleworking as a way to improve employee productivity. Studies by GSA have shown that teleworkers are often more productive than office-bound workers and in many cases more available than if they were in the office.

"Telework reduces energy use; cuts down on greenhouse gases; eases traffic; reduces our dependence on foreign oil; increases worker productivity; and saves taxpayer dollars," Doan said. "It also happens to be a great way to attract and keep a world-class Federal workforce."

The focus on telework is part of the Federal government's effort to recruit and retain high quality workers to lead the country into the future, as noted by panelists at the Telework Exchange Town Hall Meeting session, "Envisioning the Government Workforce of Tomorrow." According to Michael O'Leary of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing and spokesman for the Federal Managers Association (FMA), "Through proper training, telework will allow agencies and managers to create a flexible and modern workforce to compete with the ever-changing workforce demands." Keeping federal employment attractive to younger workers by keeping up with flexible work options available in the private sector is a critical need to ensure quality in government services.



TRANSPORTATION EVENTS



NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

Commuter Connections staff attended a Lunch and Learn event at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda on February 26th to encourage NIH employees to use vanpools. Commuter Connections' presentation included a session about the Guaranteed Ride Home program. Otherwise known as GRH, the program provides commuters who regularly (twice a week) carpool, vanpool, bike, walk or take public transit to work with a free and reliable ride home when one of life's unexpected emergencies arises. Commuters may take advantage of GRH up to four times per year to get home for unexpected emergencies such as a personal illness or a sick child. GRH can also be used when an employer requires unscheduled overtime.

GRH is designed to rescue commuters who are worried about how they'll get home when an emergency arises. Knowing there's a Guaranteed Ride Home allows one to use commuting options like transit and vanpools with peace of mind and confidence. Best of all, the GRH service is free! Commuter Connections was joined by representatives of VPSI, Inc. and Montgomery County Commuter Services. After the presentations, Commuter Connections answered employees' questions about the Guaranteed Ride Home program and other commuter services.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Approximately 250 military personnel and staff attended the Department of Defense's Transportation Fair held at the Pentagon on March 17, 2008 within the Pentagon Library and Conference Center. The event was organized by the Pentagon Parking and Transportation Working Group and offered a central location for attendees to learn about the various transportation options available. Feedback submitted through attendee comment cards suggested that the event was well received and that the information provided would make getting to and from the Pentagon a little easier and more affordable. Commuter Connections was joined by more than a dozen other transportation organizations including representatives from Arlington County, Fairfax County, the City of Alexandria and Loudoun County. Pentagon employees appeared to enjoy the opportunity to speak face to face with transportation coordinators about ways to alleviate the burden of commuting in the Washington area.

