Peak moving season for household goods now in effect

From COMFISCS Corporate Communications

SAN DIEGO - The peak season for arranging household goods (HHG) moves is now in effect at Commander, Fleet and Industrial Supply Centers worldwide Personal Property Shipping Offices (PPSO). PPSOs handle approximately 25,400 inbound and outbound shipments during this time of year.

Personal property staff members emphasize the importance of planning early and thoroughly to ensure the stress-free movement of personal property. Follow these tips for a successful move:

• Set up your move date as soon as possible upon receipt of Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders. The earlier the application is submitted, the more likely you will obtain the requested packing, pick-up, and delivery dates. But, keep in mind that the requested dates are not guaranteed.

• Do not cancel or enter into a rental agreement, or lease, buy or sell a home until you have verified with your Transportation Officer (TO) and the Transportation Service Provider (TSP) that your requested HHG packing, pick-up and delivery dates are confirmed.

• Avoid pickup dates between June 1 and July 15, if possible. During this timeframe, TSP capacity is stretched to its limit. Short notice cancellations are common due to the lack of TSP personnel and equipment. An unexpected cancellation can put you in an untenable situation with other activities scheduled around your HHG move.

• Submit your application using the Defense Personal Property System (DPS). DPS allows you and your spouse to self counsel, request HHG packing, pick-up delivery dates and file necessary damage claims directly with the TSP.

• Orders are not needed to register in DPS, so register now at www.move.mil. Once you are registered, go to the main page of the website and click on the 'Before You Move' link under 'DoD Service Members and Civilians' and review all the information via the links on the left side of the screen. After you register, it could take up to 72 hours to receive a DPS user name and password to schedule your move.

• If you are on sea duty and DPS is not available, you may use SMARTWebMove (SWM) by visiting the website https://www.smartwebmove.navsup.navy.mil/swm/.

SK2 Vivica Parker, a household goods counselor at FISC Yokosuka, helps MA3 Nathanial Benjamin plans his next PCS move. The peak season for arranging household goods (HHG) moves is now in effect. FISC Yokosuka personal property staff members emphasize the importance of planning early and thoroughly to ensure the stress-free movement of personal property.

Photo by Yohsuke Onda

• When you receive your orders review the 'It's Your Move' pamphlet at http://www.transcom.mil/j5/pt/dtrpart4/dtr_part_iv_app_k_1.pdf.

To avoid incurring debts for government-directed moves, here are some tips on staying with the authorized weight allowance:

• Be aware of authorized PCS weight allowances (see the It's Your Move pamphlet). A weight estimating tool is available at www.move.mil. Remember, neither the weight estimating tool or an estimate provided by the TSP is binding.

• After your HHG have been picked up, contact the origin transportation officer to get your actual certified HHG weight. If your HHG weight exceeds your authorized weight allowance, request a witnessed reweigh and ask the origin transportation office for advice. Know the weight of your shipment(s) before they are delivered.

• Dispose of unwanted articles. Shipping unnecessary articles is expensive.

• Claim professional books, papers and equipment (PBP&E), also referred to as pro gear. PBP&E should always be declared even if you don't believe you will exceed your weight allowance. Ensure the estimated weight is reflected on your DD Form 1299 prior to pickup. Check your inventory form periodically to ensure the PBP&E is annotated. PBP&E that is not segregated, marked and weighed separately will not receive credit. Pro gear may not be claimed after the fact.

Tips for Personally Procured Moves (PPM):

• If you are going to move yourself or direct hire a TSP, you must have orders in hand and complete a DD Form 2278 in DPS and have it signed off by the PPSO prior to taking any actions.

• You must also ensure that you get your certified weight tickets (both empty at origin and loaded at destination). If you fail to comply with all provisions of the program, you will not be paid. Use the weight estimating tool available at www.move.mil when estimating your PPM weight.

• Upon arrival at your new duty station, contact your TSP. Log into DPS and update any contact information and check the status of your shipment. You should also be able to verify the weight of your shipment. You are entitled to 90 days of paid storage. After that you will be billed, unless an extension for an unusual circumstance is approved by your PPSO.

• Make sure that upon delivery of your HHG you complete the Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS). Your participation in the CSS helps ensure only quality moving companies are used to move military members and their families.

• Damage claim submission is your responsibility. Should a TSP offer to submit a claim on your behalf, respectfully refuse the TSP and request all documentation associated with the move. Submit your claim via DPS. Submit either the notification of loss or damage at delivery or notification of loss or damage after delivery.

• Full replacement value protection now applies to all HHG shipments. It's important that you understand the meaning of this term — this does not necessarily mean you will receive the full replacement cost for every item destroyed, damaged or lost. The limitations for personal property lost, damaged or destroyed while in the care of the TSP are at least $5,000 per shipment or $4 times the net weight of the shipment, whichever is greater, up to a maximum of $50,000. If additional coverage is necessary, it is recommended that you purchase it from a private insurance company.

For more information or questions about HHG moves, send an e-mail to: householdgoods@navy.mil.

Connect with COMFISCS on Facebook at http://www.facebook.com/comfiscs.

Suicide prevention resources available online

A suicide prevention poster produced by the Defense Media Agency reminds people to ACT. ACT is an acronym used in suicide prevention to help people remember to: A - Ask the question, C - Care and help the person find T - Treatment.

U.S. Navy photo illustration by Defense Media Agency

From Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

MILLINGTON, Tenn. - The Navy released Naval Administrative Message NAVADMIN 178/11 June 9, reminding Sailors about the importance of suicide prevention and the resources available for commands as well as Sailors and their families.

Suicide prevention resources are more readily available than ever, according to Lt. Cmdr. Bonnie Chavez, Navy Behavioral Health Program director.

Every Navy homepage now has a direct Lifeline link to a live chat staffed by Veterans Affairs professionals. The national suicide prevention Lifeline number is 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255) and Sailors are urged to add this number to their phones and their family members' phones for quick access.

"Just like fire extinguishers and floatation devices, these phone and internet chat links can be life-saving tools if they are readily available when expert help may not be physically or emotionally within reach, or you need expert support to better help a shipmate in need," said Chavez.

A new Commander's Toolkit for Suicide Prevention is available for download at www.suicide.navy.mil. It contains a collection of guidance, checklists and templates to assist commands in assessing and directing unit efforts to save lives and support those affected by a tragedy.

"So far this year, nearly 700 troubled Sailors were reached by a shipmate, family member or leader who remembered to ACT," Chavez said.

ACT is an acronym used in suicide prevention to help people remember to: A – Ask the question, C – Care and help the person find T – Treatment.

While many have received help this year, 24 Sailors have been lost to suicide in the first four months of 2011.

"Our collective sympathy goes out to those who are personally grieving the loss of a friend and colleague to suicide," Chavez said.

For more information, visit the websites www.suicide.navy.mil or www.navynavstress.com.