

# Tips for Avoiding Excess Cost When Shipping Personal Property

Katterbach Transportation Office

1. When planning your shipment(s), it is important you take every opportunity to avoid or limit potential excess cost. Excess cost exists when the cost for moving your property exceed the amount authorized by the Government. Many factors contribute to excess cost, including attempted pickup and/or delivery, increased valuation, excess storage, excess distance, and excess weight. The most common is excess weight. In many cases, excess cost is the result of poor or inadequate planning. This handout provides information to help you avoid unnecessary excess cost. Your transportation office should also have handouts on shipping mobile homes and boats. For additional information on any of the subjects mentioned, please see your personal property counselor.

2. During FY15, hundreds of Service Members received bills for excess cost related to shipment of personal property. These bills ranged from \$200 to \$16,058.00. The average excess cost bill was \$934.42. In many cases, excess cost could have been reduced or avoided through careful planning.

3. In order to **AVOID EXCESS COST** - Consider the following suggestions:

**a. DISPOSE OF UNWANTED ARTICLES:** Transportation costs could exceed the value of the article if an excess cost condition exists. Shipping unneeded items can be expensive since shipping costs vary from \$.50 to over \$5.00 per pound.

**b. CLAIM PROFESSIONAL BOOKS, PAPERS, AND EQUIPMENT (PBP&E):** Declare PBP&E if you have any, even if the estimated weight of your shipment is within your prescribed allowance. Declare PBP&E on your Application for Shipment/Storage (DD Form 1299) prior to pickup. After the fact declaration can only be accepted if a review show documented intent to declare PBP&E (separately identified, marked, and inventoried during the move). *Civilian employees have separate requirements, please ask your counselor for details.*

**c. REQUEST A REWEIGH:** If your shipment is picked up and exceeds your weight allowance, ask the destination transportation office to have the shipment reweighed. You are welcome to observe the weighing and reweighing of your shipment. Reweighing the shipment will not cause any increase in excess cost to you as our computations are based on the lower of the two weights.

**d. AVOID SHIPPING EXCESS UNACCOMPANIED BAGGAGE (UB):** Because of their expedited mode of travel, UB shipments are very costly and may result in substantially higher excess cost per pound. Avoid shipping unnecessary items in your UB shipment.

**e. MINIMIZE STORAGE-IN-TRANSIT (SIT):** SIT (temporary storage) raises the overall cost of the shipment, thus increasing your excess cost. If your shipment is overweight, have it delivered as soon as possible.

**f. WEIGHT RESTRICTED AREAS:** If you are moving to, from, or between administratively weight restricted areas, ensure any additional weight allowance authorized is requested, approved, and annotated on your PCS orders. The transportation counselor will advise if you are affected by weight restrictions.

**g. EXCESSIVE PACKING:** If you feel the carrier used excessive packing in your shipment, notify the destination transportation office prior to delivery. The transportation office can instruct the carrier to completely unpack the shipment and verify the weight of the packing materials.

**\*\*CAUTION\*\***

Once accomplished, this weight replaces the standard packing allowance. Experience has shown that actual packing materials normally weigh less than the standard allowance. Electing this procedure may increase your excess cost.

**h. ASK QUESTIONS:** Ask questions at FINANCE OFFICE **BEFORE** you move, no matter how insignificant they may seem. Correcting deficiencies or problems after the fact is almost impossible.

**i. WEIGHT ESTIMATES:** Remember, weight estimates made by carrier or transportation personnel are not binding. They are for planning purposes only. Excess cost is based on the actual weight of the shipment obtained on a certified scale.

**j. DOCUMENT LOSS AND DAMAGE:** Note any loss or damage on your DD Form 1840 at time of delivery. Annotate any damage discovered after the carrier has departed on a DD Form 1840R, which must be submitted within 70 days of the delivery date. If your shipment is overweight, please file your claim as soon as possible. Your excess cost may decrease because of missing or destroyed items in the shipment. **If your shipment moved under the Defense Personal Property Systems (DPS) Program, you must log into the Claims module in DPS and submit notice on-line within 75 days, or mail a copy of the Notice of Loss and Damage AFTER Delivery Form to the Transportation Service Provider.**

4. There is an appeal process open to you. If you receive a DD Form 139 (Pay Adjustment Authorization), contact your transportation office **BEFORE** you agree to pay the debt. You have four avenues of appeal:

**a. REBUTTAL** - Your first avenue is submitting a rebuttal to ABCMR through your local transportation office. You must state the reasons why you wish to dispute the debt.

**b. REMISSION** - Active duty members may file for remission of indebtedness through Financial Services Office. Only the uncollected portion of a debt can be considered for remission.

**c. BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS** - If you feel an injustice exists, your next step is a review by the Board for Correction of Military Records. Process a DD Form 149 (Application for Correction of Military Records) online at [www.arba.army.pentagon.mil](http://www.arba.army.pentagon.mil). Responses to your rebuttal and remission must accompany this application.

**d. DoD, Office of Hearings and Appeals (for Service Members) and General Service Administration Board of Contract Appeals (for Civilian Employees)** - Requests should be processed through the Finance Services Office.

5. It may take anywhere from 3 to 9 months before you receive notification of indebtedness for exceeding your entitlements. This delay is due to carrier billing procedures and the gathering of information worldwide by the Excess Cost Adjudication Function. Do not hesitate to use the above appeal process. And remember you may use an avenue more than once if all of your information was not considered. *Hold on to your shipping documents!*