



# OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE SERVICE MEMBERS' PCS EXPERIENCE

In general, the International Association of Movers believes that an adaptive and modernized tender-based program is the best way to keep improving the moving experience for service members. After six years from the first request for bids to execution, the Global Household Goods Contract (GHC) never moved even 10% of shipments in any period. Meanwhile, the tender program kept delivering. Its decentralized model continually adapted by shifting resources, filling gaps, and keeping shipments moving no matter the challenge. Even when HomeSafe Alliance suddenly returned 5,700 shipments in the middle of peak season, the tender system flexed to get the job done. That's real flexibility.

Furthermore, the tender program is far better positioned to deliver both immediate, incremental improvements to the moving experience and longer-term, more substantive adjustments. In a tender environment, DoD can collaborate with the broader industry to develop changes that meet customer needs without significantly disrupting industry capacity. When a change disrupts the industry, it disrupts the customer. These two outcomes are inseparable.

By contrast, under a FAR contract, DoD's contractual relationship with only one or a small number of contractors limits its ability to gather input on program improvements. In 2019, IAM leaders developed eight white papers addressing industry concerns associated with a FAR-based contract solution for DoD personal property moves. We shared these papers with the JTF Commander on 24 June 2025, and they are available here for reference: [White Papers - IAM](#).

For more specific opportunities on how to improve the PCS experience for service members and their families, we respectfully submit the following suggestions:

## IAM Recommendations to PCS JTF Problem Statements

### 1. Innovative Commercial Practices

*Industry is ready to partner with DoD to bring proven innovations and practical improvements to the Personal Property Program.*



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## Incentivize Performance and Innovation

DoD should incentivize the specific performance and capabilities it wants movers to adopt. During Industry Day, we highlighted the Defense Transportation Tracking System (DTTS) as an example. When DTTS program managers wanted TSPs to track trailers separately from tractors for arms, ammunition, explosives, and other sensitive shipments, most TSPs either did not have this capability or were not using it in the intended way. DTTS addressed this by authorizing an assessorial payment for shipments that successfully used trailer tracking. This incentive helped both large and small TSPs invest in the necessary equipment, knowing they would receive additional funds to offset implementation costs. Once the capability became widespread, DTTS removed the assessorial, and trailer tracking became part of normal operations. A similar approach could be used to accelerate adoption of capabilities such as electronic inventories or location sharing. Offering a temporary surcharge for shipments that successfully use these technologies would encourage competition among movers, provide the economic means for adoption, and help integrate these capabilities into standard operations over time. While customers may initially experience different service levels, the long-term result would be broader access to the enhanced capabilities DoD wants to see in the program.

## Upgrade Business Rule Change Process

DoD should require that major proposed changes to business rules be modeled in advance to validate that they will achieve the desired outcomes. This modeling must assess the likely impact on industry costs, available capacity, and the quality of service to the moving customer. Leveraging AI, internal DoD think tanks, and existing external partnerships, the Department has the capability to conduct this analysis before implementation. This would ensure changes are data-driven rather than speculative. Without this step, DoD risks unintended consequences. For example, changes to best value scoring in DP3, according to industry feedback, may have increased DoD's costs while awarding more shipments to lower-quality TSPs. A robust pre-implementation modeling requirement would help prevent such outcomes and safeguard both industry stability and service member satisfaction. Domestic Common Financial & Administrative Control (CFAC) is another potential major change that could reduce the quality capacity available to DoD. Without clear objectives or impact modeling, it risks unnecessary disruption. Early collaboration with industry is essential to avoid unintended consequences.

## Protect the Stability of the International Program

Over the past six years of attempting to implement a FAR solution for the moving program, most of TRANSCOM's attention and adjustments have focused on the domestic side of the market. The international program has received far less focus, which we believe reflects its relative stability and consistency. International moves involve numerous steps, complex relationships, and specialized expertise developed over years by experienced international



forwarders. This complexity has allowed the program to function effectively and reliably. While continuous process improvement should always be a goal, major structural changes to the international segment are not immediately necessary. Policymakers should exercise caution before re-engineering a part of the program that is already working well, as sweeping changes risk disrupting established processes and the high level of expertise that currently supports successful international moves.

## 2. Professional Workforce Incentives

*A skilled, stable workforce is critical to delivering high-quality moves and sustaining program performance.*

### Workforce Development

The PCS JTF has asked how to incentivize and retain a professional workforce for packing, loading, and delivery. The moving industry recognizes this as one of its most pressing challenges, and we welcome DoD's active engagement in addressing it. A skilled, stable workforce is essential to service quality, readiness, and customer satisfaction in the Personal Property Program. IAM has long recognized the need for continual training and education to raise the professionalism of movers worldwide. We offer online training modules that are regularly updated based on industry needs and member feedback, giving movers access to practical, relevant education. In addition, through IAM's charitable affiliate, the [Global Moving Foundation](#), we are already working to strengthen the industry's workforce by offering educational scholarships, training grants, and skill development opportunities aimed at improving mover capabilities and professionalism. We would welcome engagement or recommendations from the PCS JTF on how the industry can address workforce challenges through the Foundation. A collaborative approach could ensure targeted, effective training initiatives that attract, develop, and retain a qualified workforce, ultimately improving the quality and reliability of service for every move.

## 3. Program Structure, Pricing, and Claims

*Transparent, fair, and data-driven structures are essential to building trust and sustaining service quality.*

### Competitive Range Methodology

In November 2023, IAM submitted a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA request 24-0017-F) request to TRANSCOM seeking the methodology (not specific rates or ranges) that TRANSCOM J9 uses to establish its competitive rate ranges ("rate reasonableness" as referred to by industry). Despite multiple follow-up requests, no response has been provided. This lack of transparency fuels industry concerns that J9 may not use a defined methodology or reference established indices when setting rate ranges for annual filings.



Prior to industry rate filing under the tender program each year, IAM recommends a thorough review to ensure reasonable adjustments are made to both rate ranges and baseline rates. On 1 August 2025, IAM submitted a [white paper to the PCS JTF](#) detailing several cost factors that have affected movers between 2020 and 2025. During Industry Day, a PCS JTF representative asked whether industry could identify the cost factors most impacting their businesses. We believe a collaborative process bringing together DoD and a cross-section of industry stakeholders, including local agents and both domestic and international TSPs could produce a list of key cost factors that DoD should track to better understand the economic pressures facing the moving industry.

### Center Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction should be the primary measure used to evaluate movers in the DoD moving market. Moving directly impacts readiness and retention, so requiring every service member to complete a satisfaction survey for each move is essential to identifying quality movers and improving service. The current return rate of 20 percent or less does not provide the feedback needed to identify the highest-quality movers or determine whether rule changes have improved outcomes. Surveys must be administered at the right time and ask questions that align with what DoD wants to evaluate.

### Ensure Fair and Accurate Claims Satisfaction Scoring

Survey metrics must fairly measure mover performance. Movers frequently report low claims satisfaction scores even when they resolved claims promptly, professionally, and to the member's full satisfaction. This suggests the metric reflects the existence of a claim rather than the quality of how it was handled. Overall move satisfaction should capture the disappointment of having a claim, while the claims metric should assess the timeliness, professionalism, and outcome of the claims process. Movers who handle claims effectively should receive scores that accurately reflect that performance.

### Demand Smoothing

DoD should consider spreading PCS moves more evenly throughout the year rather than concentrating them during the summer peak. This "demand smoothing" approach could leverage significant unused capacity during off-peak months, reduce strain on resources, and improve outcomes for service members. Careful planning, industry collaboration, and modeling of operational impacts would be essential to ensure the strategy is both practical and beneficial to all stakeholders.

## 4. Commercial Industry Ideas

*DoD can strengthen the program by engaging with industry to identify practical solutions that enhance performance without unnecessary burden.*



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## **Review and Reduce the Regulatory Burden on Movers**

The PCS JTF expressed interest in benchmarking the DoD moving market against other moving markets. While this can be valuable, it is important to recognize that no other market matches the DoD in volume, regulatory depth, or oversight. The DoD customer is already the most protected moving customer in the world, with unmatched rules, regulations, oversight, and dedicated personnel managing the process. However, the tendency to create or expand rules in response to specific incidents, with the intent to ensure a situation never happens again, has over time produced an overly prescriptive regulatory environment. This can stifle innovation, discourage new entrants, and limit excellence. DoD should shift its focus from continually adding prescriptive rules to establishing broad, outcome-based performance requirements and holding movers accountable for customer satisfaction. This approach would place the responsibility on industry to deliver high-quality service, compete effectively, and innovate through improved processes and new technologies, while still ensuring strong customer protection.

## **Good Faith Engagement and Collaboration**

DoD should establish structured, ongoing collaboration with the moving industry to drive meaningful improvements to the Personal Property Program. Both DoD and industry share the same goal: delivering the best possible moving experience for service members. The two outcomes of customer satisfaction and a healthy, capable moving industry are inseparable, and achieving one without the other will ultimately lead to failure. We recommend creating formal mechanisms to seek industry input on proposed changes, ensuring that improvements benefit both the customer and the industry's ability to deliver quality service.