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POINT PAPER

8 January 1998

SUBJECT: Printing of Business Cards with Appropriated Funds

PURPOSE: Provide information about the current rules for printing business cards, and possible future policy changes.

FACTS:

Army policy, as articulated in Army Regulation 25-30, prohibits printing business cards using appropriated funds. Following direction from the Joint Committee on Printing in Congress, and consistent with long-standing Comptroller General opinions, the Army policy's only exceptions are business cards for military and ROTC recruiters, and contact cards for Army EOD units.

Recently, a Department of Justice (DOJ) Memorandum concluded that the purchase of business cards for agency employees who deal with outside organizations may be a proper expenditure from an agency's general appropriations. The DOJ Memorandum noted that while Comptroller General opinions are useful, they are not binding upon agencies in the executive branch. Thus, pursuant to the DOJ Memorandum, agency heads may determine whether the use of such cards would carry out the purpose of an appropriation.

It must be remembered that the Army policy set forth in AR 25-30 currently remains in effect, and must be followed, until such time as the policy is changed, or unless exceptions are granted on a case-by-case basis. AMC is now in the process of requesting that AR 25-30 be revised to allow the expenditure of appropriated funds for printing business cards for official purposes. In the meantime, Army Standards of Conduct Office (SOCO) guidance on the use of Government computers to print business cards may be helpful. SOCO has stated that such use of government resources is acceptable, when authorized by the appropriate supervisor, if the employee provides his or her own card stock, and if the purpose of the cards is to enhance the employee's job performance.

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