

## MOVING DIRECTOR

### *Introductory Comments*

Purpose Statement: To pay the moving expenses of pastors, lay persons on the Conference program staff and any laypersons employed by the Conference from the Moving Expense Fund according to the rules of the Conference.

Accountability: The Conference Moving Director is appointed by, and is directly accountable to, the Cabinet. It is an unpaid, volunteer position. John E. Moffatt was appointed Moving Director starting January 1, 2001 and continues to serve.

Philosophy and Priorities: We use weight and packing limits as incentives to keep costs of moving as low as possible. These limits are intended to promote sorting and discarding, and do-it-yourself packing as the normal practice. Our present Conference policies benefit local parishes and pastors by reducing their need to plan and coordinate the simultaneous and sequential moves that arise from itinerancy. When moves are billed directly to the Conference, local parishes and pastors are freed from the need to make large cash payments on moving day or when the invoice arrives.

### *Information*

1. The Conference Moving Policy (Section 20.0.0 of the Conference Rules) describes how we support household moves for pastors and conference staff. Important limitations and cautions (Sec. 20.2.3 ff.) are included to help people understand the extent and limits of financial support from the Moving Expense Fund. The policy and current information is provided to persons who are moving. The Moving Director also advises persons who request an alternate professional mover, support for a self-move, or have unusual circumstances.
2. The Moving Expense Fund budget for 2004 was \$209,800. At the time of this report, with 94% of the charge-backs received, the net cost for the 81 moves supported in 2004 was \$210,183.22. The \$383.22 “over-run” (2/10 of 1%) will be more than offset by payments for the remaining charge-backs. Based on the cost of our professional moves within the Conference during 2004, the excess weight charge-back rate for 2005 will remain at \$29.00 per CWT (29¢ per pound).

Year	No. of Moves	Avg. Move Cost	Total Cost
2000	88	\$ 2,778	\$ 258,559
2001	80	\$ 2,717	\$ 217,368
2002	75	\$ 2,800	\$ 201,243
2003	75	\$ 2,601	\$ 197,552
2004	81	\$ 2,595	\$ 210,183

3. The total number of household moves, average move cost, and total cost for each of the past five years are shown in this table.
4. The weight allowance for household goods (HHG) and professional materials for a clergy household is 12,000 pounds; two-clergy households are allowed 15,000 pounds. In the following table the average weight for all moves and details on overweight loads for each of the past five years are shown. Before 2003 the charge-back rate was less than the average cost.

## 2005 Wisconsin Conference Journal

In effect, apportionments then subsidized overweight loads.

		-----OVERWEIGHT-----			
Year	Avg. Weight	No.	Avg. Excess	Rate/	Total Charge-
2000	10,893 Lbs.	30	2,735 Lbs	19¢	\$16,009.00
2001	9,867 Lbs.	20	2,075 Lbs.	20¢	\$ 8,366.00
2002	9,643 Lbs.	12	2,230 Lbs.	24¢	\$ 6,115.00
2003	9,430 Lbs.	17	3,093 Lbs.	30¢	\$15,773.10
2004	10,071 Lbs	19	1,661 Lbs	29¢	\$ 9,150.08

5. Conference Moving Policy says a packing allowance of \$200 is available for each pastor. Hence, starting in 2004, it is understood that two-clergy households have a total allowance of \$400. The average, number and total amount of excess and/or unauthorized (e.g. bulky item) packing costs for each if the past five years are shown in this table.

Year	Avg. Cost	No. Over	Total Charge-
2000	\$172	19	\$3,270.18
2001	\$227	22	\$4,807.68
2002	\$110	10	\$1,036.23
2003	\$201	16	\$4,047.57
2004	\$112	11	\$ 912.59

6. When the scale weight of a particular load of household goods (HHG) exceeds the conference allowance, any unused portion of an individual's packing allowance may be applied to the excess-weight charge. Any remaining charge-back for excess weight and/or excess packing cost is billed to the person moved. Although bookkeeping practices have not always made it obvious, these billings reduce the amount of conference apportionment dollars devoted to moving.

In a given year, the weight of household goods (HHG) for six to a dozen moves may exceed our allowance by 1,000 pounds. Families with two professional earners and retirement moves are often in this group. Transportation costs are proportionally greater and fuel surcharges apply to interstate moves. This is shown in the fact that, compared to the average of 29¢ per pound for a move in Wisconsin, an interstate move may cost over 70¢ per pound. For this reason, in addition to the usual packing cost and weight allowance limits, the Cabinet also sets a dollar limit on Moving Expense Fund support for interstate moves. The Director of Finance & Administration sends charge-back bills for costs in excess of that amount.

The following data show the number of moves and the total charge-back billings for each of the past five years.

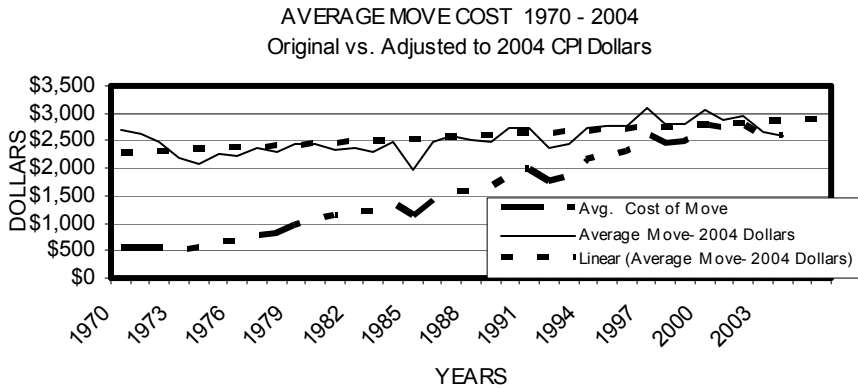
		Net charge-back
Year	No.	Total Billings
2000	36	\$11,893.30
2001	32	\$11,610.30
2002	16	\$ 6,608.46
2003	23	\$20,473.73
2004	20	\$10,993.50

7. Expenses (for postage, printer cartridges, envelopes & paper) submitted in 2004 by the Moving Director were \$140.52. The Chippewa-Heartland Regional office provided additional support in the form of FAX service, paper, and photocopying. Pre-paid telephone cards, are now used to assure a very low long distance cost. The great majority of communication with pastors, parish trustees, the Cabinet, and moving companies is done via the Internet. First class postage is used to mail invoices, reimbursement vouchers, the Moving Director's Evaluation survey, and occasional letters and documents. Our "Transportation Services Agreement" with Graebel Van Lines includes a provision that the invoice for a move will not exceed 110% of the non-binding estimate. A review of all Graebel 2004 invoices moves showed that billings for all moves at or above our weight allowance complied with this provision. In the few cases where the scale weight had been underestimated, we were billed no more than 110%. This was a substantial improvement over 2003.
8. Budget Requests are shaped by analysis of past experience. For instance, based statistics for the past 20 years, we might have as few as 73 or as many as 91 moves, but expect about 82 moves in 2005. In hopes that actual moves will be fewer, shorter, and lighter, the 2005 moving budget is \$209,800.

***Analysis & Comment***

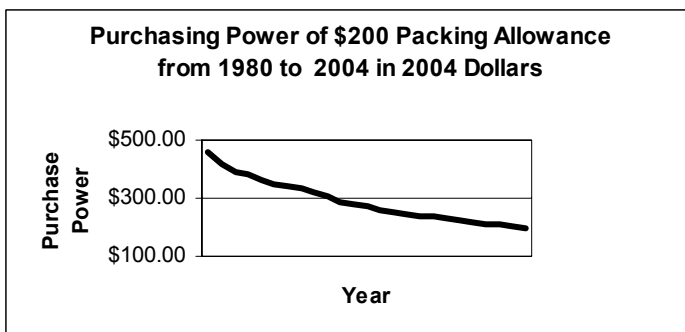
The fact that the average cost per move has declined in recent years must be partly explained by the conscientious efforts of clergy families to sort and discard items. We know that many also make one or more trips to their new location with a loaded car or minivan. Despite changes in the composition of clergy households and the popular notion that everyone has "more stuff," the yearly average of our household loads from 1973 to 2004 ranged from a low of 8532 pounds (in 1997) to a high of 10,893 pounds (in 2000). The overall, 31-year, average is 9,879 pounds!

Between 1970 and 2004, there has been considerable inflation in the dollar. For instance, the average cost to move one of our pastors in 1970 was \$550.00. Converted to 2004 dollars with a Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjustment, the move would cost \$2,682 today. This is shown in the following chart.



The thin, solid line at the top of the graph shows the average cost of our moves each year in terms of 2004 dollars. The heavy graph of “current dollar cost” climbing up from left to right shows that there has been considerable inflation. In addition to changes in the value of the dollar, there have been actual increases in three components of our moving cost: (a) labor, (b) corrugated cardboard prices, and (c) fuel prices. Fortunately, our two-year agreements provide some protection from abrupt seasonal increases because Graebel has waived all fuel surcharges for moves within Wisconsin. However, invoices for our interstate moves during the past three years have often had 3.5% to 6.5% fuel surcharges added to the transportation cost.

A second example of inflation is the deteriorating value of the conference packing allowance for household moves. In the 1970’s the Conference Journal suggested this allowance permitted professional packing of fragile glassware and dishes. Although kitchen and dining ware is less fragile these days, the current allowance is insufficient for much professional packing of fragile objects. The packing allowance was last increased in 1980 when it was set at \$200.00. The following graph illustrates how inflation has eroded it since then. Using the 2004 Consumer Price Index, it shows that the 1980 packing allowance was worth \$459 in today’s dollars!



Soaring health insurance costs are widely thought to be squeezing kindness and civility out of programs, salaries, pensions, and some congregations. So, it will not be easy to reverse the decline in this support for pastoral moves. Perhaps a modest increase can be managed before too long. Some adjustment seems to be due.

### ***Highlights and Accomplishments***

Transition Workshop: Each spring the Cabinet invites an expert [e.g., Rev. Dr. Mark Fowler, Director of Field Education at GETS] to lead a Transition Workshop for the pastors and spouses who will have a change in appointment. The daylong workshop covers personal, family, and professional concerns that arise when leaving one parish and entering another. The Moving Director is on hand to meet the folks who are moving, to clarify rules and policy, review the procedure for making damage claims, to confirm moving arrangements, to hear concerns, and to learn where action may be needed to assure timely departures and uneventful occupancy. In addition, Graebel Moving & Storage has also participated for many years. They donate the time of one or two experienced drivers to provide advice, answer questions on moving, and demonstrate ways to pack various household items. Pastors also appreciate the fact that the truck from Graebel also has a supply of cartons, tape, and packing paper that pastors can charge to their Graebel moving account and take home that day. .

Pastor's Moving Report and Moving Director's Survey: The Conference Moving Expense Fund supported 67 professional moves of households in 2004. Based the Moving Director's record and documents from the moving company, most of those persons were sent a one-page "Pastor's Moving Report" at the end of the year. The report for each move includes the loading and delivery dates, estimated and actual weight, allowances used, and whether or not any chargeback bill will be sent by the WAC. Since the Moving Director's Evaluation survey was also included with this report, it seems to have encouraged increased responses. There were more written comments than usual. The great majority of survey answers showed satisfaction with contacts, information, performance and the scheduling of professional moves. Although perhaps fewer in number, the most numerous complaints are about the accuracy of pre-move weight estimates. Since Graebel Movers has equipped its estimators with electronic units, pastors are more aware of the estimated weights, but written notification is still uncertain.

#### Plans for the Coming Year

1. The "Pastor's Moving Report," noted above, will be continued and made more timely.
2. In 2004 the Clergy Spouse Support Network (CSSN), growing out of Minister's Mates, was organized among clergy spouses. At the invitation of the CSSN, the Moving Director will continue to meet with their leadership team to find ways that we can work together and with the Circuits to provide support for clergy spouses and clergy families.
3. Postings on the Moving Director's page of the WAC web site will be reviewed and updated. Some additions are under consideration.
4. The Moving Director will consult with the Cabinet about proposing a schedule of increases in the packing allowance for Annual Conference action in 2006..

***John E. Moffatt, Moving Director***