



# ASMC Gulf Coast Chapter Newsletter

Dec  
2023

## ASMC Gulf Coast Chapter

**P.O. Box 1756  
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Mrs. Deborah Washington

## President's Corner

Written by Mrs. Deborah Washington, President

As we approach the festive season and the end of another remarkable year, it is with great joy and gratitude that I extend my sincerest thanks to each one of you. The members of the Gulf Coast Chapter of the American Society of Military Comptrollers (ASMC) have once again demonstrated unwavering dedication, professionalism, and excellence in the pursuit of financial management within the defense community.

Throughout this year, your commitment to fiscal responsibility and sound financial stewardship has been nothing short of inspiring. In the face of challenges, uncertainties, and changing landscapes, you have stood resilient and united, contributing significantly to the success of our military endeavors.

As we take a moment to pause and reflect on the achievements and milestones of the past year, it is evident that you have played a pivotal role in ensuring the effective allocation and management of resources. Your expertise has been a cornerstone in supporting the readiness and capability of our military, ensuring that they remain prepared to face any challenges that may arise.

As we gather with our loved ones during this holiday season, I would like to extend my warmest wishes to you and your families. May this time be filled with joy, laughter, and cherished moments that create lasting memories. Your dedication to duty and sacrifice do not go unnoticed, and I am grateful for the sacrifices that you and your families make to safeguard our nation.

*President's Message Continued Next Page...*

## President's Corner continued...

Looking ahead to the coming year, I am confident that you will continue to set the bar high, pushing the boundaries of excellence and innovation in military comptrollership. May the new year bring you renewed energy, fresh perspectives, and continued success in all your endeavors.

Thank you for a year filled with accomplishments, collaboration, and shared purpose. ASMC is a beacon of excellence, and I am honored to be a part of this great community.

Wishing you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas, a joyful holiday season, and a Happy New Year filled with prosperity, good health, and continued success.

Best Wishes,

Deborah



### December is National Stress-Free Family Holidays Month

As the holidays roll around again, strive to make a commitment to taking care of yourself—and not just heroically decorating, cooking, hosting, spending and socializing. The wisdom of seeking balance can make a big difference.

- A recent OnePoll survey of 2,000 adults found that 67 percent report placing unnecessary pressure on themselves to engineer the “perfect” holiday.
- To reduce holiday stress, try to be more realistic about what you can do during this time. Don’t aim for perfection; simplify and downsize wherever possible.
- Ask for help with tasks. Gracefully decline some invitations and look after yourself instead.
- Don’t harshly criticize yourself or get into heavy debates with others during the holidays. Strive to keep things cool.
- If the same slightly-stuffy family holiday rituals are now a burden for you, break patterns and try celebrating in new ways.

Visit [www.AFPC.AF.MIL/EAP](http://www.AFPC.AF.MIL/EAP) or call your Air Force EAP at 1-866-580-9078 (TTY 711) for helpful resources.



### Retiree Update

The arrangements for mentor matching are almost set. The next steps are to get President and VP approval of the program charter and communication plans for connecting mentors with those seeking one. I’m still gathering mentor biographies that will be part of the upcoming charter and procedures announcement. Mentor matching will start in mid-December, with initial meetings planned in January. I’m inviting all our mentors to join us at the luncheon this month.

If you have questions regarding the mentors or the program details, you can contact me via the chapter mailbox, [gulfcoast.asmc@gmail.com](mailto:gulfcoast.asmc@gmail.com). Use “Mentoring Program” in the subject line. I’ll follow up personally with you.





## Program News



## Past Meeting Summary

Our last chapter meeting was held at the Clubhouse Grill in Fort Walton Beach, FL on 15 Nov 2023 from 1100-1200. To recharge the workforce and sharpen our FM skills our chapter played “FM Jeopardy” led by Brianna Hoppel. The chapter reveled in team spirit and spirit de corps. The team building skills they learned today will help with how they serve the warfighter both in the office and down range. Teams were formed and all participated and competed knowing the real reason they were there was to energize and form new groups to learn from, “Mentorship!” The entire group was focused, and heavily engaged in the friendly competition of being the first group to hit the buzzer. Teams had to ensure they worked cohesively and gave only one response, of course, in the form of a question! This development session was about staying reenergized, learning from one another, and emerging team spirit. The real winner in FM Jeopardy is the Warfighter!!! Well educated Defense Financial Managers give the warfighter great service all the time!





# Community News



## Care Packages

Two more CARE packages for deployed FMers were sent out the Monday before Thanksgiving.

If you would like to donate to care packages that go to our deployed FM members, please contact Patrick DeWitt.

*Thank you for being the reason someone smiled!*



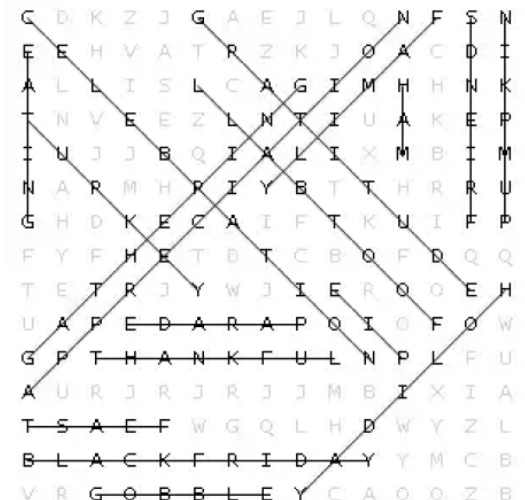
The 37th annual Holiday on the Harbor Boat Parade is scheduled for 6 p.m. Dec. 10 on Destin harbor.

Registration is now open for the boat parade, sponsored by the Destin History and Fishing Museum.



The Destin Boat Parade is set for 6 p.m. on Dec. 10 on Destin harbor. The Destin Log

## Answers to November's word search Thankful and Blessed



# Awards

Let's recognize those hard-working individuals from Eglin and Hurlburt! Those individuals and teams that win at the Gulf Coast Chapter level will then be nominated at the National level. To nominate an individual or team at the Chapter level, please complete the form located on our ASMC Chapter website (<http://www.gulfcoastasmc.org/Awards.html>) or by going directly to the form (<http://www.gulfcoastasmc.org/docs/Chapter%20Awards%20Nomination%20Form.docx>) and email it back to the Awards Committee. ASMC award nominations will be due **18 December 2023**.

While the Awards Committee will submit the Chapter winners for the National Awards, that does not stop you from submitting nominees to the National level as well. The link for the National ASMC Awards page can be found here: (<https://asmc.secure-platform.com/a/organizations/main/home>)

Award categories include:

Accounting  
Finance  
Finance Systems/Digital Transformation  
Auditing  
Budgeting  
Comptroller/Deputy Comptroller  
Intern/Trainee  
Contractor Support  
Resource Management  
Acquisition/Cost Analysis



Team Achievement – Financial Systems/Digital Transformation Award  
Team Achievement - (Small: 2-10, Large: 11-20 members)

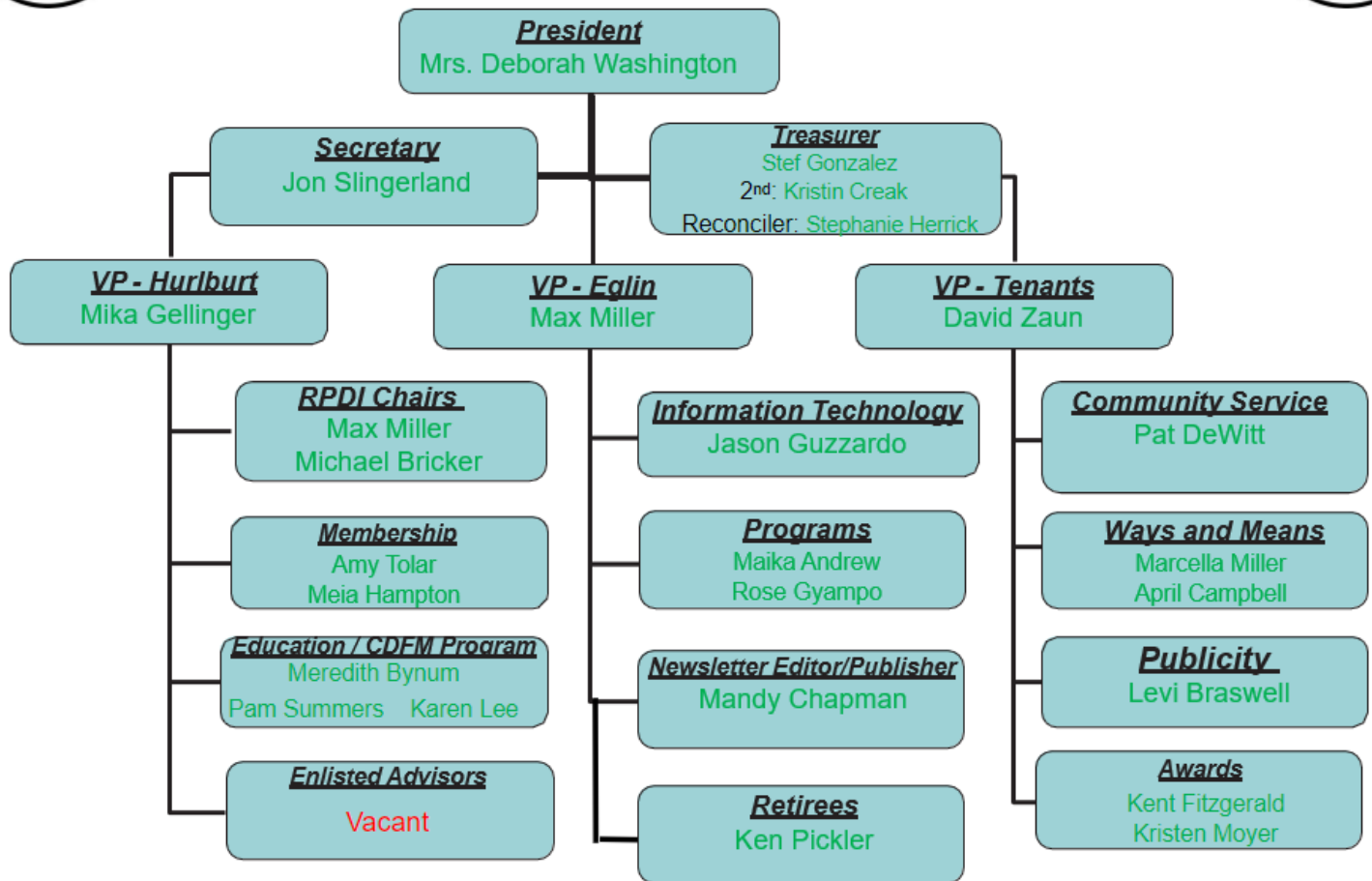
More information can be found at <http://www.gulfcoastasmc.org/Awards.html>

Please reach out to Kristen [kristen.moyer.1@us.af.mil](mailto:kristen.moyer.1@us.af.mil) or Kent [kent.fitzgerald@us.af.mil](mailto:kent.fitzgerald@us.af.mil) if you have any questions.

# Org Chart



## 2023-2024 Gulf Coast Chapter



As of September 2023

## Christmas

G B M R T C E E Y C Y L T S F  
 K I G V A K C J T O Z E A G A  
 B F F N E W I P Q B E M Y S M  
 U K D T B R O K B E T T R V I  
 S Y G R S R J A R S S H H O L  
 T C X T R C E T I O C P N R Y  
 O J O L L Y R R R T S K G K K  
 C N M X D E H F T R I L B S Y  
 K A E M S C S E V L E N L I S  
 I L R A R E E D N I E R S E R  
 N O R K T F E S T I V E Q E B  
 G R Y D V N M O V A V A G Q L  
 L A E L M Q A Y M O H R P C B  
 L C B T B R K S S N O W M A N  
 F N N A Z G J V U H U B X R M

Directions:

Find the word in the puzzle.

Words can go in any direction.

Words can share letters as they cross over each other.

Bells  
 Christmas  
 Festive  
 Jolly  
 Rejoice  
 Stocking

Candy  
 Elves  
 Frosty  
 Merry  
 Santa  
 Tinsel

Carol  
 Family  
 Gifts  
 Reindeer  
 Snowman  
 Tree

Answers to word search will appear in the next newsletter **6**



### The “411” on Continuing Resolution Authority

Written by

Kimberly Brewer

On October 1, 2023, the Department of Defense (DoD) embarked on FY24. While all of us in the Financial Management (FM) career field would have appreciated a signed DoD Appropriations Act, we once again settled for Congress passing a Continuing Resolution Authority (CRA), which was subsequently signed by the President. The initial CRA funded the DoD from October 1, 2023, through November 17, 2023. As the initial CRA was coming to an end, a second CRA was passed, this time funding the DoD through February 2, 2024.

If you have been around the FM community for a bit, you are likely all too familiar with a CRA and the ins/outs, dos/don'ts, etc. For those who need a quick refresher, hopefully this article gives you a greater understanding of CRA and what it means to you as a FM analyst.

First, what is a CRA and why do we need it? A CRA provides the legal authority to continue operations when Congress has neglected to pass the annual Appropriations Act(s). It typically covers a specific time period. Without this authority to obligate funds, government agencies are required to shut down.

Second, what limitations come with a CRA? When it comes to funding, a CRA allows government agencies to continue operations at a level or rate that does NOT exceed the prior year, providing funds for projects and activities subject to the same terms and conditions specified in the prior FY's enacted appropriations acts. Other limitations include no new starts, no production increases, and no unauthorized projects or activities (Military Construction and Family Housing projects, and any activities requiring specific authorizing legislation).

Continue next page...

## FM Article Continued

Finally, how does the DoD and Air Force implement a CRA? The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense Comptroller (OUSD(C)) publishes memo guidance for CRA implementation outlining the specific language of the public law. Next SAF/FMB provides guidance to the major commands reiterating the language and OUSD(C) guidance. SAF/FMBO and SAF/FMBI may also provide additional written guidance for specific appropriations. OUSD(C)/P&FC prepares an apportionment request to OMB based on specific CRA guidance contained in the Law. The funding request is calculated using the prior year appropriation, the amount in the President's Budget request, known congressional action, and the number of days the CRA will be available. Once the apportionment is signed, SAF/FMB appropriation managers will issue budget authority, which will eventually make its way down to your program/budget office. This cycle continues until a DoD Appropriations Act is signed into law.

The aforementioned paragraphs provide a quick overview of what a CRA is, why it is needed, and the CRA implementation process. Hopefully, this information will prove valuable as you navigate through the current CRA period and remainder of FY24.







## Program/Speaker Lineup

### Future Meetings

“Holiday Party”  
13 Dec 2023  
1100 @ Luke’s  
Place, Eglin AFB

“FM DT”  
11 Jan 2024  
With Mr. Jeff  
Decocker  
Time/Location  
TBA

Past Meeting  
“FM Jeopardy”  
15 Nov 2023  
With Brianna  
Hoppel  
1100 @ Club House  
Grill, FWB

# National ASMC Events



## Program/ Budget Summit

January 18 12PM - 6PM ET Arlington, VA  
[<https://asmconline.org/event/2024-program-budget-summit/>]

ASMC presents a two-part event with the perfect mix of work and play: The Program/Budget Summit (P/BS) and the 75th Anniversary Reception. Learn how five key trends will impact defense financial management in the year ahead. Those trends include: PPBE Reform, Defense Reform, Audit, Talent Management, & Digital Transformation.

Stay to celebrate 75 years of ASMC! Following the day’s programming, join us for an evening to remember and look back on ASMC’s legacy as a guiding light for the field of defense financial management and what lies ahead for the organization and the industry. Space is limited - sign up today!

## Fiscal Law

Jan 30 - Feb 1 8AM - 4PM ET Virtual  
[<https://asmconline.org/event/fiscal-law-30-jan-1-feb-2024/>]

## PDI 2024

May 29 - 31 Phoenix, AZ  
[<https://asmconline.org/event/pdi-2024/>]

# Member News



## **Chapter Holiday Party**

The holiday party is on Weds, 13 Dec from 11:00-2:00 at Luke's Place. It is a Holidays Around the World Pot-Luck. Sign up to bring your favorite holiday food by using link provided in email. Bring a \$20 gift to participate in the left and right game. RSVP via e-mail voting buttons by Wed, 6 Dec.



Did you or someone you know recently move to another organization at Eglin? If so, you or someone you know might have dropped off the ASMC distro. Be sure to send an email to [aac.asmcgulfcoast@us.af.mil](mailto:aac.asmcgulfcoast@us.af.mil) so you don't miss any future communication and announcements.



## **RPDI News**

The 2024 April RPDI is in the works. Max Miller and Michael Bricker are our RPDI chairs. The RPDI will take place on 17 Apr 2024 at Hurlburt Field Soundside. If you have any topics or suggestions to make this event great, Please contact Max Miller at [max.miller.2@us.af.mil](mailto:max.miller.2@us.af.mil) or Michael Bricker at [Michael.bricker@us.af.mil](mailto:Michael.bricker@us.af.mil)



New to the Eglin AFB FM team? Visit the link below to enroll to be an ASMC member. Select Gulf Coast Chapter or log into your account to transfer to our chapter.

Contact Amy Tolar, membership chair, for more information or to be added to the ASMC distro. <https://asmconline.org/membership/>

## **Christmas gift wrapping volunteers**



**Weds Dec 6<sup>th</sup> – 1200 – 1400  
(need 2)**

**Weds Dec 13<sup>th</sup> – 1000 – 1200  
(need 4)**

**Thurs Dec 14<sup>th</sup> – 1200 – 1400  
(full)**

**Weds Dec 20<sup>th</sup> – 1200 – 1400  
(need 2)**

# Members Spotlight

Congratulations to our fellow Gulf Coast Chapter ASMC members from the 350th SWW FM team who won the ACC Comptroller Organization of the Year Award.

Published Dec. 1, 2023  
By Staff Sgt. Ericka A. Woolever  
350th Spectrum Warfare Wing  
EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla.



The 350th Spectrum Warfare Wing Financial Management (FM) team earned Air Combat Command's Major General Alfred K. Flowers Comptroller Organization of the Year, an award given for outstanding achievements in financial management and for significant impact on the mission, as well as effective management of resources for the organization.

The award also recognized the best finance office within the major command for their accomplishments throughout the year.

"I am incredibly proud of my team for stepping up to the challenge," said Jenna Hyde, 350th SWW/FM comptroller. "Most financial managers are used to walking into established organizations and inheriting battle rhythms, products, etc., but in the 350th SWW financial management shop, we had to create that, and my team rose to the challenge and answered the call."

The FM team is comprised of two military members and eight civilian employees, responsible for two groups, eight squadrons and three detachments spread across four geographically separated installations.

In a short period of time, the 350th SWW/FM built a high performing team, an accomplishment they should be very proud of, explained U.S. Air Force Col. Josh Koslov, 350th SWW commander.

The team embraced mission command, built internal and external collaborative teams, and drove massive change, explained Koslov.

"Our biggest accomplishment has been establishing a positive rapport with both internal and external stakeholders, said Hyde. "We have garnered their trust, by 'doing what we said we would do, when we said we would do it.'"

The FM team bridged a knowledge and information gap among internal and external stakeholders. Through this, they were able to secure contract awards of \$100M which were critical to electronic warfare requirements and furthering the warfighter's edge in the Electromagnetic Spectrum.

"We're the financial management team for the newest wing in the U.S. Air Force," said Hyde. "We take pride in our work and understand the responsibility that we have. Failure is not an option for us. We are both honored and humbled that Air Combat Command selected us as the MAJCOM recipient of such a prestigious award!"

The FM team also managed \$27M Civilian Pay for 610 employees and developed FM strategy to maximize incentives, enabling recruitment increase of 40% for hard-to-fill career fields.

"I am incredibly proud of our team and their outstanding achievement," said Koslov. "Their effective management of resources has had a significant impact on our mission, and I have no doubt that they are one of the best teams out there."



# National ASMC News

ASMC Newsroom

News, Defense Financial Highlights

## A Successful 2023 Data Analytics & Decision Support Conference

By Rich Brady

October 30, 2023

Data Analytics & Decision Support (DA/DS) 2023 virtual conference was a great success with nearly 550 attendees. Thank you to all our speakers and presenters for sharing their insights and knowledge about Financial Management in the Age of Generative AI.

As was highlighted throughout the sessions, this is an exciting time for the defense financial management community, in both the public and private sectors. We need to remain optimistic about the future, understand what is within the realm of the possible, and work together to bring these digital capabilities...responsibly and ethically...to our organizations. Data is increasingly an appreciating asset...and it is also a competitive advantage.

Thanks to all our sponsors who made DADS 2023 possible – **Decision Lens, Definitive Logic a ManTech Company, Iberia Advisory, RMA Associates, LLC, Management Concepts, and Significance.**

And thanks to all our participants today for:

- Your support to ASMC
- Your Excellence in Defense Financial Management
- And your commitment to National Defense

A special thank you as well to those who made the switch from virtual to in-person to join your fellow defense financial managers for an evening reception in Alexandria. It was a beautiful evening – with both a sunset and gathering to continue discussions on AI and meet face-to-face.

On demand access will be provided to registrants soon.

OCTOBER 26, 2023

DATA ANALYTICS &  
DECISION SUPPORT  
VIRTUAL CONFERENCE



*Financial Management in the Age of Generative AI*

# National News

Federal News Network

## **Pay agent renews calls for ‘major legislative reforms’ to federal pay**

By Drew Friedman

October 10, 2023

The Biden administration is once again calling for “major legislative reforms” to a federal pay system that many experts say has been broken for decades.

The General Schedule, the system that pays roughly 1.5 million civilian federal employees, is in need of an overhaul, the President’s Pay Agent said in its annual report, published Tuesday.

Specifically, the three-person pay agent, composed of Office of Personnel Management Director Kiran Ahuja, acting Labor Secretary Julie Su and Office of Management and Budget Director Shalanda Young, said the GS system’s use of locality pay doesn’t account for different occupations, for which salaries can widely vary.

“The current pay comparison methodology used in the locality pay program ignores the fact that non-federal pay in a local labor market varies substantially between different occupational groups,” the pay agent said in its October 2023 report. “As currently applied, locality payments in a local labor market may leave some mission-critical occupations significantly underpaid while overpaying others.”

As agencies begin to formalize their AI programs and look at where to scale up pilots and use cases, federal and industry leaders point to prioritizing based on outcomes. Learn insights from DHS, NSF and VA, as well as Pegasystems in our new ebook.

The conversation around federal pay reform is far from new. The Biden administration has made nearly identical and repeated calls for a restructure to the pay system since its first pay agent report in 2021. But it’ll take action from Congress to address the long-standing issue, according to the pay agent.

Previous pay agents, including those from both the Obama and Trump administrations, have similarly suggested the government should consider “reforms to the white-collar federal pay system,” a 2015 report from the pay agent said. The Trump administration advocated for a revision to the GS system in 2020.

“As has been noted in earlier pay agent reports and discussed in other venues, we believe there is a need to consider major legislative reforms of the GS pay system,” the pay agent said in the October 2023 report.

In 2022, federal workers earned about 24% less in wages alone than their non-federal colleagues — a gap that grew since the last calculation of 22.5% in 2021, according to the Federal Salary Council. The council measures these disparities by comparing base pay rates of GS employees with the wages for their non-federal colleagues in similar roles and experience levels and who work in the same geographic region.

Some experts disagree that federal pay falls behind that of the private sector. When accounting for the value of benefits, and not just wages alone, some economists and groups such as the Congressional Budget Office said that federal employees are actually overpaid.

But similar to the pay agent, many federal advocacy groups and unions have called for significant changes to, or even a full replacement of, the GS system.

Challenges with the GS system can additionally complicate agency recruitment and retention. Many federal chief human capital officers (CHCOs) said that the GS pay system is the “single greatest obstacle” for agencies when competing with the private sector for new talent and retaining high-performing employees. It’s a particularly acute challenge for hard-to-fill positions, such as those in IT and cybersecurity.

Earlier this year, the Biden administration hinted at recommending a legislative fix to pay compression, an effort that would address at least part of the challenge of the GS system. Pay compression is a phenomenon that curbs salaries for some senior-level GS employees due to legal pay caps.

So far, there has not been an actual proposal from the Biden administration, and it remains unclear when or if a proposal will come forward.

Continue next page...

# National News

## **A “substantial impact” on agency budgets**

At the same time that the government faces these pay challenges, the cost of addressing the wage disparity is also growing rapidly

The pay agent’s latest report estimated that it would cost \$22 billion to bring GS federal salaries in line with the private sector. In its 2022 report, that estimate was \$19.2 billion.

The previous two pay agent reports from the Biden administration said the cost is a “significant consideration.”

But this year’s report took a more direct stance and said the cost would “have a substantial impact on agency budgets.”

Many of these challenges go back decades. In 1990, Congress passed the Federal Employee Pay Comparability Act (FEPCA). The law was originally designed to eliminate what federal economists observed to be a growing pay gap between non-federal and civil service salaries.

FEPCA authorized the government to reduce the public-private wage gap to 5%. But since 1994, no president has fully implemented FEPCA and instead has opted for “alternative pay plans.”

In August, President Joe Biden followed this same path as his predecessors and announced an alternative pay plan for a 5.2% pay raise in 2024. The pay raise will not become official until Biden signs off on an executive order at the end of the year, and there is still time for Congress to potentially offer up an alternative raise.

Over time, the continued use of alternative pay plans has led many federal pay experts to question whether FEPCA and the methodology used to set locality pay ever truly made sense.

“The underlying methodology for locality pay of relying on one singular locality rate covering a locality pay area has lacked credibility since the beginning of locality pay in 1994 to such a degree that the statutory formula for closing pay gaps has been overridden either by Congress or by successive presidents every year since that first year,” the pay agent said in its 2023 report.

## **A few tweaks to Seattle’s locality pay area**

Within the current bounds of the GS pay system, the pay agent announced upcoming plans to expand one existing locality pay area.

Jefferson and Clallam counties will soon be added to the Seattle-Tacoma, Washington, locality pay area, according to the pay agent.

The pay agent typically extends existing locality pay areas in instances where any county in the “Rest of U.S.” locality pay area is surrounded entirely by other counties in another higher locality pay area. In this instance, the pay agent determined that applies to the two counties outside Seattle.

OPM must still approve the change through the rulemaking process. It’s unclear when exactly the change will take effect, but it could happen as soon as 2024, depending on how long that process takes.

The planned expansion follows after the addition of four new localities for 2024. In June, OPM published proposed regulations to establish four new locality pay areas:

- Fresno-Madera-Hanford, California
- Reno-Fernley, Nevada
- Rochester-Batavia-Seneca Falls, New York
- Spokane-Spokane Valley-Coeur d’Alene, Washington-Idaho

The additional locality pay areas will likely yield slightly bigger raises for close to 33,000 federal civilian employees. OPM plans to implement the changes in time for the planned 2024 pay raise in January.