

Making purchasing more efficient and effective



The success stories of industry peers can help you optimize the value of Visa® commercial card integration in your own organization. This case study highlights how Visa Purchase cards can streamline operations.

Organizational Profile

Missouri National Guard

The Missouri National Guard provides trained personnel and equipment to protect life and property, and to maintain peace, order and public safety. The Guard responded to five severe weather situations during 2008.

Payments Challenge

Simplify purchasing and oversight in emergency situations

In responding to an emergency, it is critical that National Guard personnel can get the supplies they need quickly. Instead of spending time requesting purchase orders or finding vendors, the Guard needs to be able to focus on emergency response requirements. Without purchasing cards, troops would have to constantly contact the Procurement Officer for the Office of the Missouri Adjutant General National Guard to issue purchase orders and can be tied up for weeks.

Purchase Card Program Goals

Increase efficiencies for troops and streamline purchasing

With its purchase card program, the Missouri National Guard wanted to make life easier for the troops and ensure vendors receive fair treatment during an emergency. Both of these objectives help to ensure access to the necessary equipment and supplies to respond quickly and efficiently in any emergency situation.

Program Implementation

Ensure adequate coverage

The roll-out of purchase cards in the event of an emergency has a strict protocol. Rebecca John, Procurement Manager for the Office of the Missouri Adjutant General National Guard has oversight for 60 cards, 50 of which are set for emergency duty only. Cards for emergency duty are set at a \$1 limit and are in different locations throughout the state to ensure coverage. If an emergency occurs and more cards are needed in a specific area, they are transferred. John then increases the spending limits to \$25,000 and monitors usage on a daily basis to ensure she can increase, decrease or cancel cards as needed.

Organization Statistics*

Amount Card Spend

\$153,000 in a two-week period

No. of Personnel

>11,500

No. of Cards

60 (50 dedicated for emergency duty only)

*2008



Program Benefits

More efficient purchasing for better emergency response

When the region's worst flooding in 15 years resulted in mobilizing the National Guard in June 2008, emergency duty purchase cards were important resources helping to provide disaster recovery. According to John, "The cards were instrumental in helping the Guard troops hit the ground running, enabling them to protect lives and property." The cards were used over a two-week period and accrued \$153,000 in controlled spend on food, lodging, supplies and repairs.

Purchase cards were also used in the Guard's response to Hurricane Katrina. "We had troops in three states for emergency response and relief efforts. They needed to purchase bottled water, bulk fuel and supplies before leaving for duty and used the cards for meals and supplies while on duty."

Since the program implementation, the Missouri National Guard has found purchase cards to make life more efficient for troops and vendors, alike. "With purchase cards, vendors receive payment within three days, as opposed to having to wait for payment while invoices are processed and checks cut. And if a vendor is not in the state system, a paper-based payment program makes their wait for payment longer," says John. Before the card program, John had to work seven days a week, 14 hours a day trying to keep units in food, lodging and supplies by issuing purchase orders every day. Because troops were constantly moving, new vendors had to be contacted every few days. With purchase cards, the troops are more self-sufficient.

Want to learn more?

For more information about Visa Purchase card program benefits, contact your issuer or visit [visa.com/gov](https://www.visa.com/gov).

"The purchase card program has made my job easier."

REBECCA JOHN

PROCUREMENT MANAGER, OFFICE OF THE MISSOURI ADJUTANT GENERAL NATIONAL GUARD