

(1) *Obviously damaged or missing inventory items that are not reported at delivery.* Claimants are expected to list missing inventory items and obvious damage at time of delivery. Claimants who do not should be questioned. Obviously some claimants will simply not notice readily apparent damage. If, however, the claimant cannot provide an explanation or lacks credibility, payment should be denied based on lack of evidence that the item was lost or damaged in shipment.

(2) *Later-discovered shipment loss or damage.* A claimant has 70 days to unpack, discover, and report loss and damage that is not obvious at delivery. In most cases, loss and damage that is discovered later and reported in a timely manner should be deemed to have been incurred in shipment.

(3) *Damage to POV's in shipment.* Persons shipping POV's are expected to list damage on DD Form 788 (Private Vehicle Shipping Document for Automobile) when they pick up the vehicle. Obvious external damage that is not listed is not payable. Damage the claimant could reasonably be expected not to notice at the pickup point should be considered if the claimant reports the damage to claims personnel within a short time, normally a few days, after arriving at the installation.

(4) *Credibility.* Most claimants are honest. Most claimants objectively attempt to claim only what is due them. These persons are entitled to the presumption that what they list is honest, although it may not be correct. Some claimants lack credibility and their claims require careful scrutiny. Factors that indicate a claimant's credibility is questionable include amounts claimed that are exaggerated in comparison with the cost of similar items, insignificant or almost undetectable damage, very recent purchase dates for most items claimed, and statements that appear incredible. Such claimants should be required to provide more evidence than is normally expected.

(5) *Inspections.* Whenever a question arises about damage to property, the best way to determine a proper award is to examine the item closely to determine that nature of the damage. For furniture, undersurfaces and the edges of drawers and doors should be exam-

ined to determine whether the material is solid hardwood, fine quality veneer over hardwood, veneer over pressed wood, or other types of material. If the inspection is conducted at the claimant's quarters, the general quality of property should be determined. Claimants should routinely be directed to bring in vehicles and small broken items of value such as figurines for inspection, and inspections should be conducted on all large claims. Observations by repairmen and transportation inspectors are very valuable, but on occasion, claims personnel must go out of the office and inspect items themselves. Such inspections are necessary to reduce the number of reconsiderations and fraudulent claims and are invaluable in enabling claims personnel to understand the facts in many situations.

§ 751.10 Form of claim.

The claim should be submitted on DD Form 1842 (Claim for Personal Property) accompanied by DD Form 1844 (List of Property). If DD Forms 1842 and 1844¹ are not available, any writing will be accepted and considered if it asserts a demand for a specific sum and substantially describes the facts necessary to support a claim cognizable under these regulations. The claim must be signed by a proper claimant (see § 751.5) or by a person with a power of attorney for a proper claimant. A copy of the power of attorney must be included with the claim.

§ 751.11 Investigation of claim.

Upon receipt of a claim filed under the Personnel Claims Act, the claim shall be stamped with the date and receiving office, and be referred to a claims investigating officer. The investigating officer shall consider all information and evidence submitted with the claim and shall conduct such further investigation as may be necessary and appropriate.

¹Copies of these forms may be obtained by contacting the claims office or personal property office serving the installation where the claimant is stationed, or nearest to the point where the loss or damage occurred.