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DOAS' Virtual Surplus Property Operation Receives Distinctions Including "Top Seller"

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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January 21, 2010, Atlanta, GA - The Georgia Department of Administrative Services (DOAS), Surplus Property Division, was recently named one of eBay's "Top Rated Sellers," an honor bestowed by eBay to sellers in recognition of consistently high customer ratings. This distinction is the latest of a string of achievements garnered by the department with its transition into a completely virtual and customer-oriented operation. As the first virtual comprehensive state surplus department in the nation, DOAS Surplus Property is receiving attention for its cutting-edge efforts to cut operational costs, while still maintaining quality customer service.

All "Top Rated Sellers" on eBay have a track record of providing great customer service and consistently meeting eBay's performance excellence standards. To become a preferred seller, merchants must regularly receive at least a 4 out of 5 star rating by their customers. Additionally, vendors must sell more than \$3,000 in merchandise and complete a minimum of 100 transactions annually to be considered for the honor. Surplus Property averages \$2 million in annual sales and has sold goods worldwide to buyers in 43 states and nine countries—selling more than 119,000 items annually. State assets sold recently include a Cessna Citation jet, 40 tons of scrap road signs, horses, and thousands of cars and trucks. DOAS' achievement of eBay's "Top Rated Sellers" distinction is of particular importance, considering the division only recently transitioned into online operations in 2008.

A need to be more efficient, to better serve surplus customers, and to respond to unfavorable economic conditions is what prompted a change in Surplus Property's business model. In the past, DOAS' Surplus Property Division held warehouse auctions several times a year and sold most items to residents local to one of 3 warehouses previously operated. A Cost of Goods analysis revealed that a conversion to a virtual business model would streamline operations, reduce operational expenses, create a more fluid inventory of available goods, and expand the customer base. Accordingly, warehouse inventories were liquidated and the warehouses were shuttered saving the state well over \$1 Million annually.

A year later, DOAS Surplus Property Division is thriving—redistributing and disposing of everything from office furniture, livestock, automobiles, aircraft, even ferryboats—all online. The transformational decision to close all warehouses and to sell the state's surplus property on eBay, GovDeals, and Public Surplus, has helped DOAS reap numerous rewards. In addition to the dollar savings generated for the state, through a new virtual business model, DOAS Surplus Property maintains a 99% customer satisfaction eBay rating and has received the 2009 Outstanding Program Award from the National Association of State Chief Administrators, recognizing the significant transformation in operations and the efficiencies achieved.



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“Surplus has effectively transitioned into a completely virtual operation that conducts ‘in-place disposals’ and moves information, not material to what is now a worldwide market,” says DOAS Commissioner Brad Douglas. “Our ability to provide efficiency and convenience for all our customers, through posting items on sites like eBay and others, along with the use of PayPal to receive payment for the state’s surplus goods, allows customers to purchase goods from the state with all forms of credit in a secure environment that also reduces costly back-end administrative work. The virtual business model is a win-win that will benefit the State of Georgia and its many customers for years to come.”

The Department of Administrative Services is the business solutions arm of state government that provides consultative and reliable, value-added products and services to state of Georgia agencies, colleges and universities. A “customer focused, performance driven” organization, DOAS seeks to help state entities avoid redundant costs by supplying the administrative assistance needed to focus on their other mission-related business. Services include centralized state purchasing and associated training, management of the state’s fleet, risk management and the redistribution and disposal of state personal property.

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