

Issue 41: May

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Hello

The Expat Academy Round-Up ("EAR") gives you a handy summary of all that we've heard through our members and events this week.

Round-Up

Lots of fun being back in person for this Bite Size Briefing in London followed by some well attended networking drinks. Key topics included DE&I, sustainability, data integration, immigration update and short-term business travellers.

We also enjoyed a catching up with our US Network with a virtual Huddle and look forward to hopefully meeting in-person next time in November!



Intro

This update gives you real-time intel on what's occurring this week in super-charged Global Mobility circles. Its purpose is to help inform your decision making on technical issues. Consign it to the bottom of your briefcase and you're already out of date.

Current Challenges

-Companies are continuing to find the sharp increase in moves to be 'hitting like a bus'.

-The US is a key location for many, but with this comes the challenge of finding accommodation.

-Simultaneously, many are seeing an increase in European moves and into the UK.

-GM teams are under pressure with this move volume, plus project prioritisation, transformation projects and people movement in and out of GM teams.

Bite Size Briefing

Highlights from our expert partner sessions, covering a wide range of topics:

AIRINC – The 2022 Mobility Outlook Survey (MOS) showed the continued surge in **technology** being a priority focus point for GM teams. However, the number of companies treating it as a priority jumped surprisingly year-on-year – 56% to 70% from 2021 to 2022. Chat bots, digital assignment letters, the fact that remote working will not disappear as a challenge – these all point towards the desire for technology.

The pandemic gave us all some lessons learned: by building out remote working policies and tech to track employees accordingly, we can reduce the number of 'stuck' employees we knew nothing about.

DE&I remains high on the agenda. Consider how policies are worded and how that could affect potential applicants. If you start with 'no' instead of being open and flexible, you may immediately deter employees who would have been decent candidates.

If **sustainability** is not in your lap now, expect it to be soon. AIRINC's basket of goods has been modernised to reflect employees' eco choices and realities. For example, 'costs of streaming' replaces DVDs and fewer meat products make the list.

Weekly

Benchmarking

[Working from Anywhere Policy:](#)

The question was in relation to a member project on cross border working. Most participating companies do have a remote working policy in place with a typical 10–30-day allowance in a country where they have a presence. Typically, decisions are authorised by line managers/GM.

It's important to break down the facts behind the eye-catching headlines. 'Work from anywhere' often has its limits. One stipulation is that you already need to have the right to work in that country. So don't let employees get hoodwinked!

[Core/Flex Policy:](#)

When looking to understand what others have in place, it is important to understand that this may not always be called core/flex in every company. Most respondents had flexibility built in somewhere in their policies but may not list core elements and flexible elements; sometimes it may be more of a targeted package to that individual.

Click on the question titles to view the Q&A in full.



GM has always been reactionary but there is an opportunity to take by being more strategic when it comes to sustainability; don't wait for top-down direction when we know employees are already more aware and want better. Inform them of tangible things they can do, like choosing a better shipping method or even a furniture allowance instead.

AIRES showed us the other side of the tech conversation by highlighting that while it accelerated with COVID, the pandemic did show how much people wanted other people in the middle of a crisis. Tech cannot completely replace humans and total self-service is not necessarily the right path. The balance is getting tech to help people do their job better.

When it comes to RFPs, perhaps for a new relocation management company (RMC), data integration without data integrity is a waste – you just transfer bad data. Make sure your questions are specific to what you actually need and not just popular, vague questions.

Partner with companies who budget for continued innovation and not one-off catch-up innovation.

Global Expat Pay reminded us that this opportunity to be more strategic is just that – an opportunity, not a given. It's all about data; data is often the root cause of many challenges. When it comes to data and payroll, expats' first month or two make or break their faith in the GM team, so get the data right.

Magrath Sheldrick updated the room on current immigration. Notably, the priority service for those applying from outside the UK has been suspended.

86,000 UK visas had been applied for under the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme but there have only been 27,000 arrivals. Some family members are not getting their visas while others are, and they are not likely to travel separately.

For non-EU to the EU travel, advice is to plan 3 months in

advance if you need a Type C Schengen visa as there is very high demand right now and appointments are often required to be in-person with low availability.

Aside from Andy and Lynda's virtual relationship, we learned a lot from **BDO!** Mainly, if you want to keep a case in mind about short-term business visitors (STBVs), just remember the name 'Cedric!' When it comes to STBVs, you must get your data and tracking right (see the **data** theme here?!). If you don't have a grasp on this, HMRC – and other countries' authorities – can void entire agreements you have with them. Companies with tech in place are better placed.

Are you on top of your social security certificates of coverage too? If not, it's admin at the end of the day so find a way to get on top of it.



US Network Huddle

AIRINC and Magrath Sheldrick were once again key speakers, albeit to a different audience. One point made by AIRINC, which is useful to the core/flex question on the previous page is that flexibility is good, but with too much of it comes complexity. So 'guard rails' are also good, with some flexibility. In breakout rooms, we also discussed whether six GM policies are too much. Consensus seemed to be that it's a lot, but understandable as the world of business becomes more complex. Our crystal balls also predicted technology solutions, logistical challenges, cost of living challenges, and return on investment to be (continue to be) big GM topics in the next 18-24 months.

When it comes to US immigration. Magrath Sheldrick tell us that Biden has spent a lot of time trying to undo the work of Trump! Much has been aspirational rather than actioned, but expect more until the US midterms potentially

bring about a flip in the House of Representatives. The hope for the rest of 2022 is for consulates to increase capacity, backlogs to decrease, and gradual immigration reform.

Member Takeaways

Here is a summary of what members told us they took away from our latest events:

Armed with more data and ideas, GM teams now want to challenge their businesses more on incorporating DE&I and sustainability, not just into their policies but in all they do.

Technology and data (including data integrity and accuracy) are becoming more and more a necessity for doing business internationally rather than just a nice-to-have, especially when presentations like BDO's highlight the cost of not getting this area right.

Likewise, remote working doesn't appear to be going anywhere and in fact is increasingly becoming a talent attraction and retention tool. Without technology, data, and policies in place, companies will not be able to achieve their goal.

PS: Members who complete learning logs as part of MyGMPD have a valuable opportunity to reflect on what they have learnt from events and other learning formats. If you are keen to apply structure and discipline to your skills and knowledge development, we invite you to contact hello@mygmpd.com to find out more.

EAR for Yourself

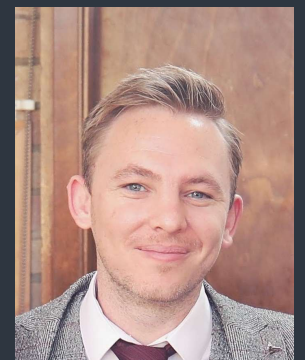
Come and boost your technical knowledge through one of our Network Huddles and put forward questions of your own. Sign up here for these and other events:

[European Super Huddle](#) – 23 May

[Essential Global Mobility Training Course](#) – 24 May

[Intermediate Training Course](#) – 26 May

Author



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