



## DEFENSE TRAVEL MANAGEMENT OFFICE

### RSS Feed: Defense Travel Toolkit

#### ***Look for Duplicate Lodging Claims (For Distribution to AOs)***

Imagine that you paid for a side of guacamole, but discovered later that the restaurant billed you for two. You'd probably become angry and demand your money back. You might, in a moment of irrational judgment, even decide to order the sour cream next time.

A similar (but less tasty) problem is occurring on DoD travel vouchers. In FY13, thousands of DTS vouchers contained duplicate lodging claims. In other words, a traveler stayed in one hotel room, but claimed that room twice on their voucher. They weren't necessarily committing fraud; this kind of thing can happen to any undertrained traveler. Here's how:

- The traveler made lodging reservations in DTS, so...
- DTS automatically transferred the lodging costs to the traveler's voucher, but...
- The traveler, being undertrained, added a non-mileage expense for lodging (effectively billing the Government a second time), and...
- The Authorizing Official didn't catch it and approved the voucher.

**Note:** We're not talking about dual lodging, where a traveler has two hotel reservations simultaneously for mission-related purposes.

Sure – the traveler shouldn't have bungled their voucher (after all, who doesn't notice that they were overpaid by a couple hundred to a couple thousand dollars?). But as the AO, you earn your keep by catching these types of mistakes and safeguarding Government funds.

Here are some things you can do to stop duplicate lodging in its tracks:

- Coach your travelers to closely examine their vouchers, particularly the Preview Trip screen. If they pay even the remotest level of attention to detail, they'll see that they claimed lodging twice.
- Inform travelers that lodging is not a non-mileage expense. Lodging costs belong on the Per Diem Entitlements screen (in fact, DTS automatically puts lodging costs there when lodging reservations are made in DTS).
- You should view manually-entered expenses with intense scrutiny. If an expense type isn't listed in the Non-Mileage Expense Type drop-down, there's a pretty good chance that it's not a travel-related expense – or, as in the case of lodging, that it shouldn't be entered as a non-mileage expense.

When the Government pays twice for an expense, just like you with the guacamole, it's going to want the extra payment back. And remember that as the AO, if the Government can't collect its overpayment from the traveler, it may well come out of your pocket.

Still not sure you'll remember to look for duplicate lodging the next time you review a voucher? Don't worry – we have it as an item on our [AO Checklist](#).