About the Defense Travel Management Office

The Defense Travel Management Office was established to serve as the single focal point for commercial travel within the Department of Defense to establish strategic direction, set policy, and centrally manage commercial travel programs and station/housing allowances. DTMO maintains central oversight for commercial travel management, travel policy and implementation, customer support and training, DoD travel charge card program management, functional oversight of the Defense Travel System, and station and housing allowances.

Inside

Travel System Modernization Update
Learn about the new effort to modernize DoD travel and what is being done to sustain the current Defense Travel System.

It’s Coming: The Government Travel Charge Card Transition
In November 2018, the current Government Travel Charge Card contract will expire. As part of the transition, all cardholders will receive a new travel card. Learn what you can do now to prepare.

Top Post-Pay Audit Errors
The Defense Finance and Accounting Service conducts monthly Improper Payment reviews for DTS. Learn what you can do to help us combat errors.

2018 Excellence in Practice Award Winners
Each year we recognize top DoD travel professionals who have excelled in travel program management. Learn who earned this year’s top awards.

Travel Managers in Action
Read a selection of tips and best practices from this year’s Excellence in Practice Award nominees.

A Message from the DTMO Director

The weather in Metro DC doesn’t seem like it, but Spring is upon us. And that is a good time to provide you with an update of some big things to come. For those of you who attended DoD Connect and GovTravels last month, you know it’s going to be a busy Summer. In this edition, you’ll learn more about two of our most critical and largest efforts – Travel System Modernization and the transition to SmartPay 3. In the last edition, we provided an update on the DoD Travel System Pilot that ended and the Cross Functional Team to Improve Travel (CFT-T) that began. I’m excited to report that the CFT-T is working quickly to acquire a prototype capability to replace DTS. The transition to the new SmartPay 3 Government Travel Charge Card will have far-reaching impact on the entire Defense travel enterprise. It is vital that we get every detail of this massive undertaking right. If that’s not enough, even though we will be retiring DTS in a few years, expect to see more improvements coming soon to our legacy system, including the ability to book lowest logical airfare, more user interface screen updates, and functionality for flat rate per diem calculation. Also inside, read more about GovTravels and our Excellence in Practice Award winners. There is some great work getting accomplished in the field. Our strategic focus continues to maximize travel policy understanding, improve delivery of travel services, and optimize cost effective travel. Over the next few months, I encourage you to monitor our website for more opportunities to learn more about these and other strategic and operational efforts.

— William Mansell, Director, DTMO
Travel System Modernization Update

In the last edition of the Dispatch, we told you how lessons learned from the DoD Travel System Pilot that ended last November are informing the next phase of Defense Travel Modernization. The Cross Functional Team to Improve Travel (CFT-Travel) remains on the fast track and is quickly headed toward the acquisition of a prototype capability to eventually replace the legacy Defense Travel System (DTS). This article provides an update of CFT-Travel progress and what to expect next as the Department modernizes its aging travel system.

The Deliverables

With joint executive leadership from the Chief Management Officer, Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel & Readiness), and the DoD Chief Information Officer, CFT-Travel brought renewed focus, collaboration, and resources to Defense Travel Modernization. The Deputy Secretary of Defense tasked CFT-Travel to streamline and optimize the processes, mechanisms, and approaches to execute Temporary Duty (TDY) travel for DoD civilian and military Service members delivering simplified travel policy, an evaluation of alternative technical solutions, and an acquisition strategy. CFT-Travel has delivered all three.

Policy Simplification

Prior to the establishment of CFT-Travel, DTMO was already fully engaged in policy simplification, restructuring and completely rewriting the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR). Simple travel policy is a major driver to modernization and DTMO will continue to standardize and simplify policy where possible to enable the application of industry leading technology and best practices. CFT-Travel further elevated the policy simplification effort to ensure it supported and aligned with the resulting acquisition strategy for modernization. To support CFT-Travel, the DTMO policy team created an Appendix B in the JTR. Appendix B provides condensed policy guidance on travel and transportation allowances that will facilitate the implementation of a commercial technology solution. The first draft, published March 1, identifies travel and transportation allowances payable for short-term business travel for DoD Civilian employees and Service members within CONUS. Future iterations will expand to include additional types of travel like Long Term TDY, Group Travel, Government Funded Leave Travel, Permanent Duty Travel, and Evacuation Travel. This iterative approach aligns to the Defense Travel Modernization Acquisition Strategy described below, with short-term business travel as the first increment of that strategy.

Travel-As-A Service Capability

CFT-Travel employed the Department’s new Business Capability Acquisition Cycle (BCAC) framework to evaluate alternative technical solutions. BCAC enables a more rapid, tailor-able approach to planning the acquisition of DoD business systems. Guidance to CFT-Travel from DoD executive leadership was clear: DoD can no longer afford to develop its own highly customized and expensive to maintain business systems. The “buy vs. build” decision was pre-determined. In addition, as the DoD Travel System Pilot demonstrated, any technology solution acquired must minimize customization while leveraging the flexible configuration of modern commercial travel and expense technology.

CFT-Travel took this approach one step further. Instead of buying just a system, the Department would ask industry to deliver an end-to-end travel-as-a-service capability to support DoD travelers. In a keynote address
to the GovTravels symposium in March (see article, page 8), Mr. John Bergin, the DoD Business Technology Officer leading the Department’s IT reform efforts remarked, “We are going to ask industry what can you do for government travelers?” He added, “And we are looking for a full scope offering.” That capability, including Travel Management Company support services, is expected to reduce the overall cost of travel and empower travelers and authorizing officials to make travel decisions that benefit their organizations. In addition to reducing overall costs, the new capability must:

- Reduce process and workflow complexity, decreasing the time and effort spent by travelers, authorizing officials, and administrators planning travel and reimbursing travel expenses
- Meet DoD audit readiness requirements
- Improve customer satisfaction
- Align to commercial/industry best practices

After the Secretary of Defense received a brief on the progress of CFT-Travel, Mr. Bergin noted this comment from General Mattis: “Why isn’t this done yet?” With that sense of urgency in mind, CFT-Travel set out to develop an acquisition strategy to more rapidly deliver this new travel-as-a-service capability to DoD travelers. As Mr. Bergin observed in his keynote remarks, “We really have a great opportunity at this point in time to take and implement change.”

Defense Travel Modernization Acquisition Strategy

The Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition & Sustainment) delegated Milestone Decision Authority for Defense Travel Modernization to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Acquisition). The ASD(A) approved the Defense Travel Modernization Acquisition Strategy in March. It supports the vision of CFT-Travel to acquire a travel-as-a-service capability providing industry leading travel services and support to the Department. It establishes an overarching acquisition strategy that delivers the capability in a phased, incremental approach. The first phase will validate this acquisition approach prototyping travel service solutions using the newly streamlined JTR, Appendix B for short term business travel.

The strategy includes the use of the Department’s “Other Transaction Authority,” provided by Title 10, Section 2371b of United States Code. Use of that authority results in an Other Transaction Agreement (OTA) with the selected vendor(s). An OTA is an acquisition instrument that allows agencies to enter into transactions “other than” a standard Government contract, grant, or cooperative agreement. An OTA offers significant advantages to rapidly deliver a new capability:

- OTAs broaden the technology base by reaching innovators not readily available to the DoD
- Prototype Projects under $50M can be competitively awarded within 90-120 days
- Prototype Project awards cannot be protested
- OTAs enable a seamless transition from prototype to production
- Open to large and small businesses
- Offers flexibility in treatment of Intellectual Property
- Promotes public/private collaboration
- Accepts all “colors” of funding (appropriations)
- Allows Government program managers to maintain full project control

To execute the acquisition strategy and resulting OTA, the Department teamed with the C5 Consortium, an arm of the U.S. Army Armament Research, Development and
Engineering Center (ARDEC) created to utilize DoD’s Other Transaction Authority.

What’s Next?

The Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) is designated as the Program Management Office for Defense Travel Modernization. Craig “Scott” Smith is the recently appointed Program Manager. Scott comes to DMDC from the former Acquisition, Technology, & Logistics (AT&L) organization. He is the primary author of the DoDI 5000.75 that outlines the Business Capability Acquisition Cycle (BCAC). He also brings prior experience supporting the legacy Defense Travel System. He is working closely with DTMO, the Defense Digital Service, the C5 Consortium, and other key DoD stakeholders as CFT-Travel moves into the Business System Acquisition, Testing, & Deployment Phase of the BCAC.

The C5 Consortium is composed of leading commercial companies and other institutions interested in responding to DoD’s technology needs. The first step in the OTA process is a Request for White Papers (RWP). The RWP is sent to all of the C5 members. The RWP usually includes DoD’s Capabilities Need Statement and high level functional requirements. Interested members will respond to the RWP with white papers limited to 10 pages. C5 members received the Defense Travel Modernization RWP on March 30 with responses due April 19. As this edition of the Dispatch goes to press, CFT-Travel is evaluating those white paper responses.

From the RWP, CFT-Travel will select a subset of C5 members to provide a technical demonstration of their capabilities. CFT-Travel will evaluate those technical demonstrations and further down-select to one or more C5 members to respond to a Request for Prototype Proposals (RPP). From the RPP responses, CFT-Travel may select one or more C5 members to negotiate an Other Transaction Agreement to develop a prototype. If the prototype is successful, DoD can directly enter into a contract to move the prototype project to production.

As Scott Smith recently commented, “These are exciting times for DoD acquisition leaders as we rethink how to meet warfighter and business needs in today’s technology environment. It’s the perfect time to tackle Travel Modernization with a user-centered, incremental approach.”

DTS Sustainment

While the Department is moving forward with a modernized travel system, it is still necessary to sustain the current travel system. Below is an update on several of the initiatives currently underway:

- **Lowest Logical Airfare** – This release, broken into two parts, will enable lowest logical airfare to be displayed in DTS, thereby allowing users to easily find and book restricted airfares directly in DTS without need to contact a TMC for assistance. Part one of the release will display restricted airfares for non-GSA City Pair markets for CONUS and OCONUS travel and travel to a single destination TDY location. **Timeline: Part 1 is targeted for Summer 2018.**

- **Java Framework UX/UI updates** – This release will include updates to the look and feel of the remaining DTS user interface screens. This includes updates to the voucher screens, debt management, and route and review. **Timeline: late Summer/Early fall 2018.**

To stay informed of DTS releases, continue to monitor the DTS homepage, TraX announcements or the DTMO website.
It’s Coming: The Government Travel Charge Card Transition

In March, the General Services Administration (GSA) announced the award of the DoD Government Travel Charge Card task order under the SmartPay 3 master contract to Citigroup®. This task order will support the mission needs of over 1.7 million travelers and facilitate a potential $65 billion in charge card and related payment transactions over the course of the contract which runs through 2031.

Although Citi is the GTCC bank under the current SmartPay 2 DoD task order, the new SmartPay3 contract means that all current GTCCs, both Individually Billed Accounts (IBAs) and Centrally Billed Accounts (CBAs), must be reconciled and closed out, and new accounts created and new cards issued.

What’s Next

Over the next few months, DTMO will work closely with the ensure a smooth transition to the new task order. DoD GTCC Component Program Managers (CPMs) are finalizing transition plans for their respective organizations and will begin providing additional information to the field. Additionally, DTMO has established several integrated project teams and subordinate committees for key facets of the transition including training, communications, data integration, travel system functionality and related systems, and more. Teams and committees will meet regularly to further define business requirements, address issues and brainstorm solutions, and develop strategies for ensuring all aspects of the transition are completed in a timely, organized, and efficient manner.

In the upcoming months, you can expect information to be disseminated by your component, DTMO, and Citi. DTMO and Citi are jointly developing a communications strategy that will provide important guidance, timelines, SmartPay 3 program enhancements, and best practices for the transition. Your primary point of contact for transition is your Agency Program Coordinator (APC) who will be guided by their respective CPM.

(Continued on page 6)
How to Stay Prepared

While the transition is still months away, taking action now will help ensure a smooth transition. Below are some actions to take now as well as everyday best practices for being a good cardholder.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to Do Now</th>
<th>Everyday Best Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cardholders</strong></td>
<td><strong>Know your APC</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure your correct contact information is on file with Citi and is updated in your DTS profile</td>
<td>• Review statements and pay undisputed charges in full by the statement due date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Register for CitiManager® access to maintain your account on-line</td>
<td>• Be vigilant and monitor statements and promptly dispute unidentifiable transactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sign up for CitiManager® alerts</td>
<td>• Take required cardholder training every 3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Let your APC know if you have any long term TDY travel and/or Permanent Change-of-Station (PCS) scheduled that will overlap the transition period</td>
<td>• Sign your Cardholder Statement of Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Determine if you have a restricted or standard card</td>
<td>• In-out process promptly with your APC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Register for Citi’s paperless billing statements to have access to your statement immediately</td>
<td>• Cardholders with restricted cards should advise their APC of pending official travel periods to activate/deactivate their card and potentially increase your credit threshold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure your account is in good standing (no delinquent balances) and pay all undisputed outstanding balances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure travel vouchers have been filed and split-disbursement is properly selected for payments to your SP2 GTCC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cardholders with a restricted account should contact their APC to inquire about upgrading to a standard account</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **CBA Managers/ Specialists** | **Work closely with your APC and CPM** |
| • Update CBA Manager/Specialist contact information in CitiManager | • Reconcile, certify, and pay CBAs promptly |
| • Reconcile and zero out CBAs | • Review account thresholds for needed increases/decreases |
| • Close out CBAs no longer needed in SP3 | |
| • Schedule and review mandatory CBA Aging Analysis Reports and CBA Delinquency Reports to aggressively address track payment progress and address/resolve delinquent accounts | |
| • Monitor payments, process transfer transactions, resolve negative balances, and pay applicable prompt payment fees | |
Defense Travel Dispatch

Defense Travel Administrators

- Remind travelers and ensure to keep their DTS profile information up-to-date
- Know who your organization APC is and work closely with them throughout the transition
- Stay abreast of transition communications and timelines regarding SP3 and traveler/DTS impacts

Agency Program Coordinators

- Know who your higher level APC and CPM are
- Review hierarchy level names and update for organization name changes
- Close out hierarchies no longer needed
- Maintain and update APC profiles in Citi’s Electronic Access System (EAS) profiles
- Remove APCs no longer needing EAS access
- Keep up-to-date on transition activities and timelines/actions to be completed
- Schedule and monitor CCRS reports (GTCC Regulations required and supplemental)
- Review personnel losses reports and separations reports to close, deactivate, or transfer accounts
- Recommend restricted cardholders upgrade to a standard account with higher credit thresholds
- Review EAS Returned Mail Reports and contact cardholders to update mailing addresses
- Remind cardholders to keep DTS profile information up-to-date
- Identify accounts that currently have a credit balance and notify cardholders to contact Citi for a credit balance refund
- Work with APCs to update and maintain GTCC information (both card numbers and expiration dates) in DTS
- Maintain and update hierarchies (IBA and CBA) to roll-up/consolidate lower level hierarchies – use Aging Analysis Reports to review the ratio of cardholder accounts to hierarchy level
- In-out process and transfer cardholders
- Sign up for CitiManager® alerts to manage SP2 accounts
- Review pre-suspension and delinquency reports and advising cardholders of delinquency and resolution

Additional information on the GTCC transition will be published in the upcoming months. In the meantime, continue to monitor the DTMO website www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/govtravelcard.cfm.
Recap of GovTravels 2018 Symposium

In early March, the National Defense Transportation Association held its annual GovTravels Symposium at the Hilton Mark Center in Alexandria, VA. GovTravels serves as a forum where Passenger travel professionals from government and industry gather to meet, learn, and collaborate on regulations, technology, challenges and best practices in government travel. This was the second year that the Defense Travel Management Office co-sponsored this event.

GovTravels 2018’s agenda included many noteworthy guest speakers and information sessions that focused on this year’s theme, “The Future of Government Travel.” Of particular interest was keynote speaker, Mr. John Bergin, Business Technology Officer for the Department of Defense Chief Information Officer who provided a good overview of the challenges the Department is facing with travel system modernization. The first day of the event also included a panel discussion led by Mr. Tony D’Astolfo, CEO at Deem, Inc. The panel included government and industry executives who participated in a wide-ranging discussion on “Government Travel at a Crossroads.” Representing the Department was Mr. Bill Mansell, DTMO Director, who provided more insight into the challenges, opportunities, and overall direction the Department is going with regards to travel. Other guest speakers that day included LTG Russel L. Honoré, USA (Ret.) who led the Joint Task Force responding to the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. His presentation was both inspiring and motivating as he challenged us to do routine things well, don’t be afraid of the impossible, and be prepared to be criticized. The second day included a panel discussion on the impact of natural disasters and other emergencies on travel managers and industry suppliers, followed by a presentation of the Implications of Travel industry trends. Both days included a wide selection of professional development breakout sessions hosted by DTMO, GSA and the travel industry.

For those unable to attend this year’s event, a video recap of Mr. Bergin’s keynote address, the panel discussion as well as other guest speakers’ presentations are available at: www.ndtahq.com/multimedia-archive/videos. Slide presentations are also available through the event agenda at: www.ndtahq.com/gov-travels/agenda.

We look forward to co-sponsoring this event next year and further expanding our presence in the years to come. Additional information on GovTravels can be found on the National Defense Transportation Association’s website at: www.ndtahq.com/events/gov-travels.
Help Us Combat Missing Lodging Receipts

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) conducts monthly Improper Payment reviews for DTS, which are shared with all DoD Services and Agencies. These reviews identify the top five common errors and Missing Lodging Receipts is now one of the top three errors for DoD, behind Flat Rate Not Paid Correctly and Airfare Paid without Receipt. To help mitigate this, it is important to remind travelers about the new features of the Expense screen and how they work. Travelers must still pull the documents over into the Substantiating Documents section, or align it to their hotel stay. Travelers are also required to upload lodging receipts for their TDY. Just because a user books lodging through DTS does not mean they do not have to attach a receipt. Please do your part to help us lower improper payments – encourage travelers and Authorizing Officials to ensure these documents are proper and attached to the claim. Remember, Authorizing Officials can be held precuniarily liable.

New DTS Expense Screen
New additions to the Expense screen include:

- Trip Workbook for documents
- Substantiating Documentation
- Expense are shown on one page

Substantiating Documents
Documents can be added by uploading the plus icon and following the prompts. Travelers can also “drag and drop” the image directly into the area.

*Note: Maximum file size is 2MB per file.*

What is the Trip Workbook?
It is a tool used to import documents with multiple pages. It allows users the ability to crop or edit images.

Key Points to Remember:
- Travelers are the only one who can view the workbook documents
- Travelers must transfer finished images; images are not automatically attached to the voucher
Handling CTO Submit Errors

The CTO SUBMIT status indicates that DTS submitted the traveler’s reservation request for quality control (QC) by the Travel Management Company (TMC). TMCs are required by contract to book reservations within the next business day after receiving the request, so any authorization that has remained in a CTO SUBMIT status for longer than that time period is considered “stuck.”

There are many reasons why an authorization may become “stuck” at CTO SUBMIT, but the three most common causes are:

- The TMC has not finalized the traveler’s reservations.
- DTS experienced a system failure.
- The TMC finalized the traveler’s reservations, but a problem occurred when they placed the traveler’s reservations on their outbound queue.

If one of these unfortunate events happens to one of your organization’s travelers, don’t panic. First, check to see if the traveler has allowed the TMC the contracted time frame to work the request. TMCs have until the next business day to work the record. For example, if a request was submitted at 11:45am on Monday, the TMC has until 11:45 am on Tuesday; or, if a request was submitted at 3pm on Friday, the TMC must work the request by 3pm on the following Monday.

If you suspect a document is stuck at CTO SUBMIT, your best troubleshooting technique is to contact the Travel Assistance Center (TAC). Since the TAC has visibility of both DTS functionality and all TMC reservation systems, they can pinpoint the reason the authorization is “stuck” and provide you with a resolution.

Unless the TAC specifically refers you to the TMC, do not contact the TMC directly to troubleshoot the issue. Depending on your TMC contract, the TMC may charge a “touch” fee for providing assistance, which can be expensive. Furthermore, the TMC does not have oversight of DTS – so if DTS is the source of the problem, the TMC cannot “un-stick” the authorization, but they may still add on the TMC fee for making the attempt.

Did you know that the Travel Assistance Center now offers a live chat capability to address “CTO Submit” issues. To access Live Chat, go to the DTS homepage or the Login Help > Live Chat button on the DTMO Passport login screen. Live chat with the TAC is available Monday through Friday from 8:00AM-6:00PM ET.

Remind travelers:

- To wait until after an entire business day has passed before declaring an authorization “stuck”
- Not to wait until the last minute before contacting the TAC for assistance if they have a document stuck at CTO submit

Did you know that the Travel Assistance Center now offers a live chat capability to address “CTO Submit” issues. To access Live Chat, go to the DTS homepage or the Login Help > Live Chat button on the DTMO Passport login screen. Live chat with the TAC is available Monday through Friday from 8:00AM-6:00PM ET.

DTAs can use the Routing Status report in the DTS Report Scheduler to stay on top of authorizations that may require TAC intervention. Simply run the Routing Status report weekly, look for authorizations that have been in the CTO SUBMIT status for more than the designated time period, and contact the TAC before the trip gets jeopardized.
THE CHAMPION: Kyong Park, U.S. AFRICOM Systems and Accounting Branch, Comptroller Division

The Champion Award recognizes a Lead Defense Travel Administrator whose wisdom, guidance, and commitment to their Organization DTAs has made a fundamental and long-term positive impact on their travel program. This year’s recipient is Kyong Park for support of U.S. AFRICOM Systems and Accounting Branch, Comptroller Division.

Ms. Park is directly responsible for the successful execution her organization’s travel program, supporting a 4-Star Headquarters and over 3,000 personnel conducting US AFRICOM’s critical missions in Stuttgart, Germany; the continent of Africa; Baumholder, Germany; and Intelligence personnel stationed at Royal Air Force Molesworth, England. US AFRICOM executes nearly $30M in official travel requirements annually.

Ms. Park provides mentorship, training, support and guidance to a travel team of 150 approving officials, 25 FDTAs, and 15 ODTAs. Her dedication and full understanding of the Joint Travel Regulation, DTS, and GTCC program contributed to the Command's efforts to build relationships with our African partner-nations through exemplary support for training events, conferences, and official visits.

Kyong Park fully embraces her role as the Lead Defense Travel Administrator and mentor to 15 ODTAs. Ms. Park makes it a priority to stay in constant communication with her ODTAs, providing feedback on their performance and giving recommendation for their travel program improvements. Her inquisitiveness has allowed her to continue to grow personally and professionally. She is constantly honing her skills as a financial manager and a travel expert.

(Continued on page 12)
Ms. Park's care and dedication to the ODTAs' professional development was evidenced by her implementation of a robust ODTA training program. This was a groundbreaking initiative in US AFRICOM’s 10-year history. The training program adheres to commonly recognized academic standards by providing training objectives, lesson plans, and an assessment to measure students’ progress. The ODTA training program consists of a two-hour initial/annual ODTA training with a course completion certificate and a graduation ceremony hosted by a Tier II SES. The ODTA training program also includes monthly training meetings covering a wide range of travel topics ensuring ODTAs are kept abreast of changes to travel policies and internal operating procedures. Ms. Park’s initiative to create this ODTA training program was highly lauded by her leadership and the headquarters staff at large. ODTAs continuously praised Ms. Park’s efforts to provide this mentorship forum where they can continue to hone their travel management skills. Ms. Park fully believes in the train-the-trainer concept and is constantly ensuring her ODTAs are equipped with the tools and resources to run their own training programs. Additionally, she always finds time to visit other offices to provide one-on-one or group training tailored to the respective customer’s needs.

In addition to her training program, Ms. Park established an organizational e-mail box ensuring herself and back-up LDTAs can promptly respond to ODTAs requests for assistance. She is also establishing a DTS portal leveraging the newly created Command SharePoint Portal. She provides monthly updates to Directorate Chiefs of Staff and ODTAs with DTS metrics such as delinquency rates, voucher submission timeliness, and other official travel information that needs to be relayed to the staff. Ms. Park provides mobile training support, making herself available to visit the Directorates personally and provide training to the staff as requested. She takes advantage of any open forum to disseminate DTS-related information ensuring the staff has the latest guidance.

**THE ELITE:** Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command System Center, U.S. Navy Pacific Travel Services Office – San Diego, CA

The Elite Award recognizes a local help desk team whose superior efforts resulted in continuous improvement and outstanding customer care. This year’s recipient is the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command System Center, U.S. Navy Pacific Travel Services Office.

SPAWAR Systems Center Pacific’s mission requires a significant amount of travel that would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of the Travel Services Office (TSO). The staff of seven is responsible for providing DTS help desk support, performing the functions of Organizational Defense Travel Administrators (ODTAs), reviewing 100% of DTS vouchers prior to approval, performing the duties of travel card Agency Program Coordinators (APCs), and generating civilian PCS/TCS cost estimates and orders. In FY 17, the team provided help desk support to 4,443 DTS users, reviewed an average of 1,640 vouchers monthly for accuracy and compliance with regulations, provided travel card support to 3,554 cardholders, and generated 102 PCS/TCS cost estimates and orders.

The Travel Services Office (TSO) has worked hard to streamline and standardize their processes including developing a 124-page desk guide that contains detailed procedures for nearly every...
function performed. Checklists have been implemented for multi-step processes (for example, check-outs) for quality assurance. Email drafts and standardized voucher return remarks are used whenever possible to ensure clear and consistent communications with customers. TSO also utilizes a database to automate the sending of Unsubmitted Voucher notices to travelers. All staff members have completed the DTS Travel Certificate Program and attend all TAC outreach calls to ensure they are up to date on the latest travel issues, changes and workarounds. All of these tools have helped to optimize the performance of the Travel Services Office.

Customer communication and information availability is a priority for the Travel Services Office. TSO sends monthly travel advisories that cover current travel issues and any changes to DTS or travel regulations to All-Hands functions. Additionally, urgent issues are communicated through All-Hands emails and are posted to the TSO and command blogs. TSO has created a comprehensive website that contains vital information for employees on all aspects of travel at SSC Pacific. The travel card and DTS FAQ sections are particularly helpful to customers. Through advisories, emails, and the website, TSO strives to provide employees at all levels the latest travel information in a clear and concise manner.

In FY17, TSO made great strides to ensure every traveler and AO had all necessary training. More than 600 employees, in six locations, attended classroom travel training in FY17. The team began with training at the new employee orientation in which information is presented to introduce new employees to the Travel Services Office and provide information on how to apply for a travel card and DTS account is presented. Every new SSC Pacific traveler takes command-specific travel card and travel regulation training. This past year, TSO also offered a wide range of classroom training including Authorizing Official training, new traveler training, top travel issues training, travel policies/procedures training and civilian PCS training. During each training session, TSO discusses TRAX and the additional trainings available. TSO has also posted all of the PowerPoint trainings to their website and has even included audio versions for some of those trainings.

TSO works hard to ensure each employee has the information needed to successfully complete their travel. The Travel Services Office answers an average of 16,000 phone calls and sends 23,000 emails each month while maintaining the highest level of customer service. Random monthly surveys are conducted with TSO customers and consistently positive feedback is received. The Travel Services Office is renowned command-wide for exceeding customer service expectations.

**THE ICON:** Naval Sea Systems Command, Naval Underwater Warfare Command – Transportation of People Team

The Icon is a military service major command or Defense agency team that has, with exemplary professional skill, successfully communicated and provided guidance for travel-related updates, plus facilitated a visible enhancement in travel program capabilities for its subordinate sites. This year’s recipient is Naval Sea Systems Command, Naval Underwater Warfare Command – Keyport Division.

The Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) Warfare Center (WC) - Transportation of People (TOP) Team is comprised of NAVSEA Headquarters (HQ) and WC travel personnel that oversee a travel program with over 28,000 travelers across the United States and other countries, who approximately 95,000 travel documents each year. Despite separation by geographic distance and time zones, the team’s extraordinary efforts to improve its travel program reflect their passionate commitment to NAVSEA WC mission, audit readiness, and its travelers.

*(Continued on page 14)*
The NAVSEA WC TOP Team is committed to mentoring, training, and networking. They share knowledge, work towards process standardization, and employ an “each one teaches one” for success in DTS TOP programs. The NAVSEA WC TOP partnerships promote open communication and collaboration through conference calls, direct email, and knowledge sharing, which results in a superior level of customer service, strong program management, audit readiness, awareness of regulatory and systems changes, and compliance. The WC TOP Team created a peer-training forum for continuous improvement and standardization of processes. The team achieved a performance standard of excellence that resulted in collaborative improvements, standardization for fiscal year end, and timely payment of Defense Travel System (DTS) entitlements.

The WC TOP Team works to stay abreast of DTS and Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system changes, the status of the major rewrite of Joint Travel Regulations, compliance issues, and audit readiness guidance. They put their customers first by continually sharing knowledge to address the needs of travelers and Approving Officials (AO). The WCs continue to promote reductions in travel by stressing the importance of the obligation to exercise prudence in travel due to budgetary constraints and creation of new consistent travel processes.

This year, the team held two events – a face-to-face deep dive to develop common standard processes and a TOP Lean Event on Permanent Duty Travel (PDT). A key decision made at the face-to-face event was to covert all 10 WCs to the NAVSEA WC Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW) DD577 Tool for generation and retention of DD577s. To accomplish this, the team developed a phased implementation plan, which paved the way for enhanced DD577 management and tracking of appointments, terminations, and training history. A NAVSEA LDTA also provides on-site assistance after an inspection to review and retrain where applicable. Also within the past year, the team successfully developed and implemented a Financial Improvement Audit Readiness (FIAR) TOP Internal Test strategy across NAVSEA and the WCs. The NAVSEA WC TOP team used its keen technical knowledge, creative innovation, and aggressive teaming to employ groundbreaking strategies for audit readiness with all 10 WCs synchronized during FIAR TOP Internal Lock-step Testing. They developed a standard DTS and ERP strategy to ensure compliance and audit readiness, harnessing their diverse technical expertise to develop common and simplified TOP business processes, and worked together to standardize interpretation of regulations.

The NAVSEA WC TOP team celebrated numerous achievements this past year including TOP recommendations for “Just Do It” changes; operational efficiencies; best practices for the DTS review process of authorizations and vouchers; the development and implementation of strong process improvements; and the promotion of multiple communities of practice (COP) for communication, standardization, and commonality. Efforts resulted in increased operational effectiveness, business efficiencies, audit readiness, and improved customer service. 

(Continued on page 15)
This team’s accomplishments are just a reflection of their passionate commitment to NAVSEA and Warfare Center travelers and the Navy’s mission.

THE PREMIER: David Ross, U.S. Naval Hospital - Okinawa, Japan

The Premier is an Agency Program Coordinator (APC) who demonstrates an extraordinary and exemplary commitment to cardholders and stakeholders through proactive education, effective communication, responsive customer service, and outstanding Program Coordination. This year’s recipient is David Ross who works at the U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa (USNHO).

Mr. David Ross serves as the sole APC for USNHO’s 1,700 staff members with an annual travel budget of $1,400,000. Execution of USNHO’s travel card program is aligned with the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery’s (BUMED) policy and use of SOPs across the Navy Medicine enterprise and in full financial audit readiness compliance.

Mr. Ross’ systematic process in managing the command's GTCC program is evident throughout consistent metric compliance rates across the full spectrum of charge card management reports and in the following categories: (a) less than 1.5% travel card aging analysis report; (b) sustained compliance with monthly Financial Improvement and Audit Readiness (FIAR) reports; (c) up to 100% split-disbursement rate; (d) minimal questionable transaction violations; (e) full documentation of GTCC training requirements and follow up staff reminders; (f) 100% inclusion of DD-577 documents for travel authorizers and voucher approvers; (g) trusted agent in handling sensitive staff related GTCC matters.

Mr. Ross led a multi-disciplinary team (HR, finance, budget, accounting, and travel experts) in developing an expedient process for foreign national travel in alignment with government of Japan's labor and employment regulation policies. These efforts eventually led to the development of Navy Medicine’s foreign national travel SOP and is used across the Budget Submitting Office (BSO)-18 enterprise. He also developed a database repository of staff’s training requirements and their due dates plus a trigger tool to remind for annual training updates. He also instituted a periodic DTS/TDY road show to the organization’s branch clinics, where the experts are brought to the users and travelers making it less impactful on clinic operations and patient time.

Additionally, he conceptualized and pioneered USNHO’s "one stop-shop on-site GTCC application" through the use of tablet technology. He leveraged the use of Wi-fi/Cellular enabled iPads for customers applying for their GTCC. The one-stop shop captures the new staff member on site, at the point of check-in in completing all the requirements for GTCC application. This reduced the cycle time of receiving the GTCC by 28% and ensured a steady increase in GTCC issuance for all required personnel. The process was lauded by a recent Medical Inspector General’s audit as a best practice and will be in review for implementation across BSO-18. David Ross provides top-notch customer service and is often recognized by MEDIG, Navy Audit Service, BUMED's FIAR Team, internal stakeholders and customers, and even visiting travelers from other commands and BSOs. He has devoted countless hours ensuring travel itinerary, authorizations, and vouchers are completed as outlined and in compliance with existing policies.
The Value of Using Local Level Support

If you have ever called the Travel Assistance Center (TAC), you know that the wait time to talk to an analyst can be long. To help mitigate wait times, travelers and Authorizing Officials (AOs) should utilize their local level DTS support prior to contacting the TAC. Most issues can be resolved by your Defense Travel Administrator (DTA) or local help desk.

Leveraging your local support resources will:

• Lead to a faster resolution of your issue.
• Reduce the number of folks unnecessarily contacting the TAC; that will free up TAC analysts to assist DTAs in resolving more difficult issues that require technical assistance like stuck travel documents and back-end financial problems.
• Keep DTAs and local level help desk staff more up-to-date on the types of issues that travelers and AOs are encountering before they turn into bigger problems over time.

Below are some examples of issues that should be, or in some cases, must be resolved locally by an Authorizing Official, DTA or local travel help desk.

Basic DTS questions. The TAC receives many phone calls from personnel who are unfamiliar with basic DTS functions, such as how to start an authorization or how to upload receipts to a voucher. Since the TAC never turns anyone away, you can imagine that these types of assistance requests can be quite time-consuming, delaying action on other assistance requests that require more technical knowledge.

Resolution: Encourage travelers to utilize the training materials in the Travel Explorer or on the DTMO website for help on DTS functionality.

Reservations. The TAC is not a Travel Management Company (TMC), so they are unable to make official reservations for your travelers. However, unknowing travelers still contact the TAC every day trying to book their reservations.

Resolution: Inform your travelers that they should make their own reservations in DTS. Or, if they need help with their reservations (e.g., changing a reservation after a trip begins), they can contact your organization’s TMC help desk for reservation assistance, though it results in a higher TMC fee.

DTS permission level or access requests. The TAC cannot issue permission levels, organization access, group access, or read-only access to DoD personnel.

Resolution: If you or someone in your organization needs permission level or access assistance, you must contact the Lead DTA in your organizational hierarchy.

By encouraging your travelers, AOs, and fellow DTAs to exhaust all local help options before contacting the TAC, you will get the help you need and help the TAC run more efficiently. To find your local level DTS support, go www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/localSupport.cfm.
Travel Managers in Action

Real Tips and best practices from the field

Each year DTMO recognizes top performers in DoD Travel for the value and services they provide to their travel programs through the Excellence in Practice Awards. Below is a selection of tips and best practices from this year’s runners-up.

Sheryl Bullette, Army – Coordinated with FORSCOM DTAs to clear outstanding obligations. Ms. Bullette provided assistance to all subordinate organizations via email, teleconference, and onsite training. One focus included the proper procedures to correct Compliance Tools errors that resulted in the recovery of more than $900K in over payments.

Dora Winter, DFAS – Was instrumental in improving the DFAS DTS program. She established a process to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Appointment/Termination 577 reviews. Ms. Winter also led the DFAS support of the Hurricane Harvey and Irma initiative. She successfully communicated guidance from senior leadership, coordinated with the DTAs to establish the new FEMA line of accounting, and then orchestrated the processing of the travel orders for those who supported the initiative.

Timothy Anklam, Army – Maintained a SharePoint site on the Ft. Bliss domain for all DTAs, AOs, and travelers. The site allowed DTAs quick access to any and all DTS information and class schedules for upcoming DTS training. For DTAs who do not have access to the Fort Bliss Portal, Mr. Anklam provided updated information in alternate formats. Due to his efforts, all supported organizations are kept up-to-date with the latest information and materials to maintain successful DTS programs.

Ruben Garcia, Marine Corps – Developed and implemented the I MEF DTS AO/RO & ODTA training classes required prior to assuming the roles of an AO/RO/ODTA. Mr. Garcia actively coordinated and conducted two advance DTS training sessions for over 350 Defense Travel Administrators, and provided Annual DTS refresher

(Continued on page 18)
training at 4 major installations. The training encompassed current DTS system updates, the JTR, local DTS policies, and common errors identified by Disbursing DTS Certifying Officials.

**Erin Mullis, Navy** – Demonstrated her commitment to NSWC Crane’s travel program by motivating, encouraging, and training her DTA team. She provided over-the-shoulder training, offered training presentations, and offered her team new opportunities to enhance their understanding of the DoD travel process, DTS system, and travel regulations. Her efforts have resulted in a reduction of voucher errors, created a notable improvement in the five day voucher submissions, and improved customer service and communications.

**PO2 Davin Enos, Navy** – Held travel training quarterly for the 150 Sailors onboard the USS NEW HAMPSHIRE and daily for all newly reporting Sailors. This included the signing of the required Statements of Understatements (SOU), PG13s and GTCC notifications.

**Valesca Gaylord, STRATCOM** – Meticulously walked her ODTAs through the various DTS screens and tools to teach them how to properly document each traveler’s information and travel requirements. Ms. Gaylord challenged travelers and the ODTAs to use the JTR as a reference when seeking answers to common questions like how to complete a constructive travel worksheet (CTW), long term per diem rates, and the integrated pilot lodging program.

**Tanya McMichael, Navy** – Identified and analyzed the command's risk in overdue payment activities by running weekly reports in DTS for Unsubmitted Vouchers. Ms. McMichael notified supervisors and made process recommendations to get the command's obligated funds reconciled or unobligated in two separate systems, FIS and DWAS.

**Cameron Baumgartner, STRATCOM, J832** – Created an electronic PDF version of in/out processing forms and the Statement of Understanding. Now, all records regarding cardholder accounts are completed and maintained electronically.

**Carmencita Wilson, Army** – Conducted teleconference and virtual training for subordinate organizations on GTCC processes and provided step-by-step instructions on how to access Citibank EAS and Visa Intellilink. Ms. Wilson created training packets for forty-two Agency Program Coordinators’ during a one-week hands-on training. Plus, she created an AKO website for organizations to have access to travel policy data and updates.

**Melanie Stone, Air Force** – Created a custom report in Citibank Custom Reporting System (CCRS) to maintain oversight of all current and future overdue accounts. Ms. Stone provided leadership weekly updates on all accounts highlighting those that needed attention. These efforts yielded a GTCC program with no suspensions for 5 consecutive years.

**Paul Knoblock, Air Force** – Sent out a monthly DTS Dispatch alerting members how to update their DTS profile. Mr. Knoblock ran a weekly report on hierarchy to ensure members mailing address and contact information is most current. Plus, he posted relevant regulations on the 451 FTS SharePoint to allow members fast access to travel references.

**Jill Glando, Marine Corps** – Proactively encouraged APCs to work with their Organization Defense Travel Administrators (ODTAs) to ensure that all cardholders have their GTCC information correctly loaded in DTS, and expiration dates kept up to date. This improved the declined airfare transactions and prevented traveler
frustration.

**Ted Caballa, Navy** – Used the reporting system and Intellilink for monitoring account activity for potential compliance issues and subsequently facilitated opportunities to educate cardholders on the proper use of the GTCC. Mr. Caballa also tracked in-progress research via case management related to potential misuse, abuse, and fraud.

**Willie Harris, WHS** – Always reachable and will meet with customers to demonstrate the use of his programs. Mr. Harris implored service-quality feedback and promoted potential areas of organizational improvement. He initiated daily interface with customers to ensure informed program decisions, provided status of inquiries and increased the Resource Managers ability to anticipate the customer needs. Mr. Harris responded to customer requests within 24 hours and/or develops a plan of action to address requests. He provided guidance regarding proper integration of program requirements into the WHS process.

**Human Resources Command, Enlisted Personnel Management Directorate, Army** – Went above and beyond the expectation of daily customer support and ensured their population understood how to submit travel and how to correct errors. The team maintained logs to track all travel to ensure timely submissions. They provided first-line-assistance for all of their travelers and collaborated with Agency Program Coordinators and Authorizing Officials. The result was an atmosphere of exceptional customer service.

**Washington Headquarters Service/Human Resource Directorate/Resources Management Division, DoD** – As OSD/WHS recently transitioned to a new accounting system, this team managed to keep over 25 components in operation within the prescribed guidance during this important financial transition.

**Marine Expeditionary Force MCI-West Helpdesk, USMC** – Established a phone network system that ensures that every call is answered without a customer getting a busy signal. Every call goes into queue and is answered based on the FIFO approach. They also provided subordinate unit APCs the status of all delinquent accounts and the status of the DTS or PCS voucher to assist the unit and traveler in getting the voucher settled.

**Undersea Warfighting Development Center Arctic Submarine Lab, Navy** – Implemented a regular schedule for DTS system assessments and linked monthly Citibank reporting to these system checks to analyze voucher anomalies.

**HQ FORSCOM, Army** – Produced and published FORSCOM travel implementation policy that was turned into a FORSCOM travel regulation (FORSCOM Regulation 37-1-2) for the headquarters and subordinate organizations.

**Space and Naval Warfare Systems, Navy** – Addressed the needs of traveler and user concerns through open communication. They established two team mailboxes (DTS and GTCC) to allow customer submission of requests for assistance or feedback and were instrumental in providing near-immediate response to all requests. They escalated DTS issues or customer feedback via the Travel Assistance Center or to appropriate DTMO personnel. Issues and concerns were also addressed during the monthly AO training, while weekly
Get Ready for Summer Travel with TSA Precheck

TSA Precheck is a voluntary, expedited security screening process offered at most domestic airports that allows participants to keep on their shoes, belt, and light jacket, and leave laptops and 3-1-1 compliant liquids in their carry-on bags. The program is open at no cost to DoD civilians and Service members (including Reservists, National Guardsmen, members of the Coast Guard, and students at the U.S. Military Academy, the U.S. Naval Academy, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and the U.S. Air Force Academy).

How to Participate
1. **Locate your 10-digit DoD ID number on the back of your Common Access Card (CAC).**

2. **Opt-in to the program through MilConnect.** *(Applies to Civilians only)* Log in to www.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect and click on the "My Profile" tab, then select "Update and View My Profile." Next, click on the "CIV" tab. In the Personnel Status information box, click on the "TSA Precheck Program" checkbox and scroll to the bottom of the page and click "submit."

3. **Add your DoD ID number to your DTS profile and Frequent Flyer accounts.** Login to DTS and select Traveler Setup > Update Personal Profile from the tabs at the top of the DTS Welcome screen. Then, select My TSA Information from the profile update from the links at the top. Add your DoD ID number as the Known Traveler Number and click “save.” Login to each of your frequent flyer accounts and follow the instructions for updating your profile.

4. **Add your DoD ID number to your reservation.** If your DoD number is part of your DTS profile, it will be part of all future TDY airline reservations made through DTS. If making a reservation through a Travel Management Office, provide your DoD ID number as the “Known Traveler Number.” For leisure airline reservations, use your DoD ID number as the “Known Traveler Number.”

---

Who Can Participate in TSA Precheck for FREE?
- DoD and Coast Guard civilians
- Service members (including Reservists, National Guardsmen, and members of the Coast Guard)
- Students at the U.S. Military Academy, U.S. Naval Academy, U.S. Air Force Academy, and the Coast Guard Academy.

Expanded Hours for Live Chat

Due to the success and positive customer feedback for the Travel Assistance Center’s live chat capability, the operational hours have been expanded to 6pm eastern time. Live Chat currently supports those users with Defense Travel System and DTMO Passport login issues, and documents “Stuck at CTO Submit.”

To access chat, click on the “Live Chat” icon on the DTS homepage or on the DTMO Passport login help screen. Live Chat is available Monday through Friday, 8am-6pm ET.