

Defense Travel Dispatch

VOLUME VIII, ISSUE 2
FALL 2015



The DoD Center for Travel Excellence

A Message from the DTMO Director

We can all agree that DoD's complicated travel policy contributes to the limitations we face with DTS. We are making great strides in reforming travel through policy simplification, process reengineering and program improvement, but we cannot realize the full potential of these transformed business capabilities without a modernized Defense travel technology solution. The Department requires a state-of-the-art travel system that is user-friendly, easy to navigate and does not encumber the traveler with time-consuming travel planning and expense reporting processes. We need a travel solution that considers customer needs, enables travel reform, and incorporates industry best practices to improve travel programs and processes. Policy simplification and travel system modernization have been and continue to be one of our highest priorities. I am pleased to announce that the Department is accelerating these efforts.

Earlier this year, the Secretary of Defense selected Defense Travel Modernization as part of a special White House project led by the United States Digital Service (USDS). The USDS provides consultation services to federal agencies with the goal to make government services simple, effective, and efficient. This effort reinforced and brought increased visibility to the Department's requirement for a modernized travel solution. Over the next few months, DTMO will be rolling out a plan and expedited timeline for simplifying travel policy and testing the viability of a commercial solution for travel planning and expense management. Stay tuned for additional information as we move forward with these transformative initiatives.

Lastly, I am moving on to a new assignment at the Department of Veterans Affairs. I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to say that I am truly honored to have served and partnered with such a dedicated workforce that works tirelessly to support the Department's travelers. I am truly excited about the direction of the Defense travel enterprise and will continue to observe from afar as these initiatives move forward.

— Harvey Johnson, Director, DTMO

Inside

What if . . . the Perfect Trip Existed?

Learn what proactive steps you can take to avoid frustration, save valuable time, improve your overall travel experience and get closer to that "perfect trip."

2

Surviving a Bad Travel Experience

If you are not having the "perfect trip," here are some solutions for salvaging it.

5

U.S. Government Frequent Renter Program Kicks Off

Many of the rental car companies that participate in the U.S. Government Rental Car Program offer unique frequent renter programs specifically designed for federal travelers on official travel.

7

More on the Integrated Lodging Program Pilot

Based on questions received, here are a few clarifications on the policy, DTS functionality, and a look into what is to come for the pilot.

9

2016 Excellence in Practice Awards

Learn more about the Excellence in Practice Awards and how you can nominate those who make a difference in Defense Travel.

12

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 allowance and entitlement program management.

What if . . .

the Perfect Trip Existed?

Does the perfect travel experience exist? On a recent TDY, one of our own seasoned travelers, Dave, experienced the “perfect trip.” Learn what proactive steps he took to get him there, and how you too can avoid frustration, save valuable time, and improve your overall travel experience to get closer to that “perfect trip.”



Meet Dave - our very own seasoned traveler



Ensured his new Chip and PIN Government Travel Charge Card was ready to go. In early 2015, Citi began issuing chip and PIN cards to DoD personnel with traditional magnetic stripe government travel charge cards. The new chip and PIN cards retain the same account number but have a new expiration date, requiring travelers to update their DTS profile with the new information before successfully booking travel. Our seasoned traveler, Dave, logged into DTS to double-check that his new information was loaded into his profile and went one step further; he contacted Citi to ensure his card was ready to accept charges. Some organizations “turn off” a traveler’s card while not traveling. Before booking travel, travelers are encouraged to call the Citi customer service number on the back of the card to check the status of their account. Citi’s automated system will advise if the account is activated for use or if it is deactivated and transactions will be declined. If it is deactivated, travelers should contact their Agency Program Coordinator (APC) immediately as the Commercial Travel Office (CTO) will be unable to ticket any airline reservation, which could result in booking delays or worse, arriving at the airport to find that your ticket wasn’t purchased and/or your reservation no longer exists.

Took advantage of curbside check in. Curbside check-in can save valuable time waiting in line at the airline counter. If like Dave, you checked-in to your flight early and printed your airline ticket in advance, you too can use this convenient option. Usually these lines are much shorter than the lines inside the terminal. Plus if you just have a carry on bag, you can head right to security. Keep in mind that any additional fee charged to use curbside check-in is not reimbursable.

Used TSA Precheck to breeze through airport security. You may have seen signs at airport security advertising TSA Precheck, but you may not realize that as a member of the Department of Defense you are eligible to participate in this program free of charge. TSA Precheck allows travelers to keep on your shoes, belt, and light jacket, and leave laptops and 3-1-1 compliant liquids in your carry-on bag when going through dedicated Precheck airport security lanes. Often, TSA Precheck security lines are shorter and move faster than traditional airport security lines.

Who Can Participate in TSA Precheck?

- 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.

To participate:

1. **Locate your DoD ID number** (10-digit number found on the back of your Common Access Card). If you do not have a DoD ID number listed on your CAC, you can locate it by logging in to MilConnect (www.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect) and clicking on the “My Profile” tab.
2. **Opt-In to the program** (*applies to DoD civilians only*). Civilians need to log in to the MilConnect website (www.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect), click on the “My Profile” tab and then 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.” Service members already are eligible and do not need to opt in to the program.
3. **Save your DoD ID Number in the “Known Traveler Number” field of your DTS profile.** To ensure your future airline reservations automatically include your DoD ID number, save it in your profile. For instructions, see [How to Enter your DoD ID Number and Update Your DTS Profile](#).
4. **Ensure your DoD ID Number is included when making reservations.** *For official travel:* If you saved your DoD ID number as part of your profile, it will automatically pre-populate in your reservation. You may also participate by entering your DoD ID number in the “Known Traveler Number” field when prompted to verify your Secure Flight Information (name, DOB, gender) each time you make a reservation. If making a reservation through a Commercial Travel Office, provide your DoD ID number as the “Known Traveler Number” when asked to verify your Secure Flight Information. *For leisure travel:* Enter your DoD ID number in the “Known Traveler Number” field when making reservations.
5. **At the airport, look for dedicated TSA PreCheck security lanes.** The program is available at over 120 domestic airports. [Click here](#) for a complete list of participating airports.

Nabbed an aisle seat in the front of the plane, near the door. Did you know that an airline could provide confirmed reservations without providing specific seat assignments? Whenever possible, make sure you are booked and ticketed with a seat assignment prior to leaving your home or duty station, otherwise you could get stuck in the middle seat. This is the best way to secure a primo seat – one near the front of the plane, next to the door so you can debark first. Our traveler, Dave, was able to secure a great seat by checking in for his flight the night before when the airline released previously blocked seats. In addition to checking in early, here are other options for avoiding those “bad” seats.

- **Book reservations as far in advance as possible:** The earlier you book, the more likely preferred seats will be available.
- **Enroll in frequent flyer programs:** Status in frequent flyer programs often gives travelers better seating options.
- **Do not rely on the seating charts in DTS:** If you select an aisle or window from the dropdown menu in DTS, review the email itinerary received by the Commercial Travel Office to ensure that an aisle or window seat was confirmed. If you can’t confirm an aisle or window seat, check seat availability via the airline website or contact the airline directly.
- **Arrive at the airport early:** The airline may release pre-assigned and preferred seats the day of the flight, which would allow you to select a seat at no additional cost. Also, fellow travelers may have changed their seat assignments since you last checked seating options, so better seats may be available. Some airlines may also sell preferred seats for a small upgrade fee when you check your baggage. If you choose to take the upgrade, you are responsible for the additional cost.

Enjoyed counter by-pass and a free upgrade when arriving to pick up his rental car. In early October, DTMO and most rental car companies participating in the U.S. Government Rental Car Program launched unique frequent renter programs specifically designed for federal travelers on official travel. These programs allow participants to earn points/miles while ensuring that they receive the benefits of the U.S. Government Rental Car program without needing to worry if they are renting under the provisions of the program or have the correct government rate. These programs

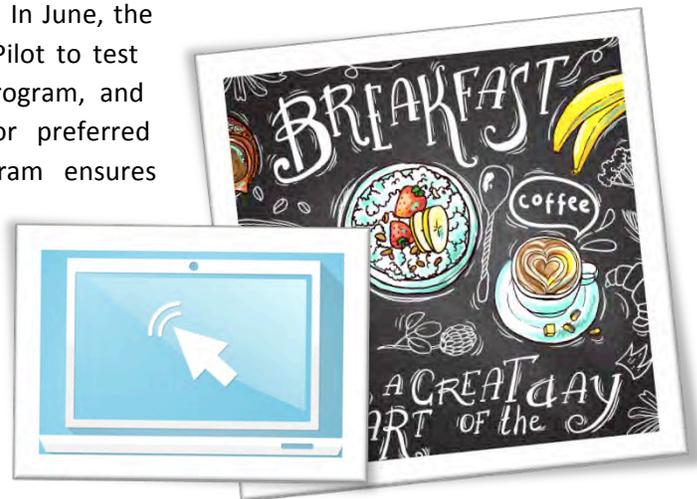
(Continued on page 4)

also ensure travelers are not offered additional unnecessary insurance or services, minimize reservation errors encountered at time of rental, and may provide additional user benefits such as counter by-pass or dedicated check-in lines. Before he booked any travel, Dave signed up for all of the available frequent renter programs and loaded those numbers into his DTS profile. When he arrived to pick up his rental car, he was given a free upgrade and was able to walk directly to his car, bypassing the very long line at the rental car counter. He verified that “GARS” was listed on his rental car contract, which qualified him for the benefits of the U.S. Rental Car Program.

Frequent renter programs are offered at no cost to Federal government employees and participation is voluntary. Use is restricted to official travel only and should not be used for leisure travel. To participate, travelers must sign up through the DTMO website at: <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/rentalCarFRP.cfm>

Called ahead to verify his hotel’s tax-exempt status. Did you know that in some states Government Travel Charge Cards (GTCC) are exempt from paying hotel lodging taxes? In some locations, state forms are required to be completed by the traveler and submitted to the hotel upon arrival, while in others no form is necessary. Dave called ahead to his hotel to verify state tax law compliance and was instructed that he needed to bring a completed form with him. He printed it off, completed it, stuffed it in his briefcase and presented it when he checked in to his hotel. For more information and to download tax-exempt forms, go to: http://smartpay.gsa.gov/about-gsa-smartpay/tax-information/state-response-letter_

Enjoyed free internet and free breakfast at his hotel. In June, the Department implemented an Integrated Lodging Program Pilot to test the viability of an enterprise-wide commercial lodging program, and directing travelers to use government (DoD Lodging) or preferred commercial lodging at select pilot locations. The program ensures travelers are staying in quality lodging facilities that meet specific DoD safety, security and quality standards; are protected from certain fees; and provide amenities at no additional cost with room rates below the established per diem rates. Dave was traveling to Tampa, Florida, an Integrated Lodging Program Pilot site, so when he created his authorization in DTS he was automatically shown a list of DoD Preferred Commercial hotels from which to choose. When he arrived at his hotel, he was told that he qualified for free internet access and free breakfast. All of the hotels participating in the program offer free internet and about 77% offer free breakfast.



Tax Exempt Locations

No Form Required	Form Required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alaska • Delaware • Kansas • Massachusetts • Missouri • Oregon • US Virgin Islands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Florida • New York • Pennsylvania • Texas • Wisconsin • Puerto Rico

Verified his charges and paid his GTCC balance online. CitiManager, the online interface for GTCC account management, gives cardholders access to see recent account activity including unbilled transactions, view monthly statements (current and past), make payments, update contact information, manage email/alert notifications and much more. When unable to access a computer, CitiManager Mobile allows cardholders some of the same account access from a mobile phone. Online and mobile access affords you the ability to manage your information at any time, from anywhere in the world. And this is just what Dave did; as soon as he arrived home from his trip, Dave logged on to CitiManager to review his charges and pay his balance. To sign up for an account or to access CitiManager, go to: <https://home.cards.citidirect.com/CommercialCard/Cards.html>. Additional information is available on the DTMO website at: http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/cardholder.cfm_

Surviving a Bad Travel Experience

While you may have taken steps toward the “perfect trip,” there are always issues that arise that are out of your control.

Here are some all too common bad travel situations and solutions for how to handle them. Above all, remember to take a copy of your travel itinerary with you. It includes any confirmation numbers you need, your Commercial Travel (CTO) contact number and more information that can assist you if you face a bad travel experience.



No ticket or airline reservation when you arrive at airport. It is a sinking feeling when you arrive at the airport only to be told by the counter agent that your reservation doesn't exist in the airline's system. This could be the result of a number of issues, including an expired Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) in your profile or an unapproved authorization. In 2013, the airlines instituted a policy where airline reservations are automatically cancelled if a government travel authorization that includes air travel is not approved and ticketed at least 72 hours in advance of the scheduled flight (6 hours in advance if you are booking within 24 hours of scheduled departure). It is important to note that while a reservation may exist, it is not purchased (“ticketed”) until the Authorizing Official approves the travel authorization and the CTO tickets the reservation. This means that if a travel authorization is not approved by an AO at least 72 hours (or 6 hours if booking within 24 hours) in advance of travel, you could arrive at the airport without a ticket or reservation in the airline's system. If your reservation is cancelled, you will be notified by email or phone by your CTO using the email address you provided in your DTS profile. However, if your profile information is incorrect, you may not know that your reservation was cancelled before leaving for the airport.

Mitigation: First, ensure that your DTS profile is up to date with your current contact information, email address and correct GTCC information. Next, and most importantly, monitor the status of your travel document(s), ensuring travel authorizations are approved. If it is getting close to your trip and your authorization isn't approved, contact your AO or their back-up AO to ensure your authorization is approved.

Airline delays or cancellations. Whether it is caused by inclement weather or unexpected mechanical problems, if you are the victim of a delayed or cancelled flight, make sure you have a copy of your itinerary and your travel orders with you.

Mitigation: If your delay, cancellation or unexpected travel challenge occurs during normal duty hours, contact your Commercial Travel Office via the normal duty hour toll free number listed on your itinerary. Although your first option should be to contact your Commercial Travel Office, in some instances (i.e., flight cancellation), it may be necessary for you to rebook with the airline counter directly. If this happens, make sure you ask for a YCA or _CA fare. Counter agents are often not familiar with GSA's City Pair Program and may book you on a full priced fare at a much higher cost. Also, contact your lodging facility and rental car company to let them know about your late arrival.



(Continued on page 6)

Lost luggage. In most cases, airlines are able to track down and deliver your lost baggage to you in less than 24 hours. In those rare cases when your luggage is nowhere to be found, don't worry, you are protected. As a GTCC cardholder, you receive coverage for permanently lost, stolen or damaged articles while checked with or carried on a common airline carrier, when the entire fare is charged to your GTCC (some exclusions apply).

Mitigation: If this happens to you, contact Citi Customer Service at 1-800-200-7056 (or if outside the U.S., call Citi collect at 1-757-852-9076) for information regarding the maximum benefit amount that applies to your account or to start the process of filing a claim.

Reserved rental car class/size sold out when you arrive to pick up your car. If you reserved a car under the U.S. Government Rental Car Program and arrive at the rental car counter to find out the size/class you reserved is not available, the rental car company must provide you with an equivalent or upgraded vehicle at the same cost. If they do not have a car available on the lot, they must arrange for the vehicle to be transported to the renter or the traveler be transported to the vehicle.

Mitigation: Ensure you rent under the U.S. Government Rental Car program, book through DTS or a CTO; and sign up for U.S. Government Frequent Renter Program, adding your frequent renter numbers in your DTS profile.

Accident in a rental car. If you are renting through the U.S. Government Rental Car Program, you have liability coverage for personal injury, wrongful death and property damage at the following limits: \$25,000 for property damage, \$100,000 per person, \$300,000 for all persons, per incident. Additionally, Loss Damage Waiver (LDW)/Collision Damage Waiver (CDW) is provided at no additional cost. In most cases, neither the Government nor the traveler will be held responsible for loss or damages to a rental vehicle when rented through the program.

Mitigation: Ensure you rent under the U.S. Government Rental Car program by booking through DTS or a CTO and also sign up for U.S. Government Frequent Renter Programs, including your frequent renter numbers in your DTS profile. When you pick up your rental car, ensure "Government Administrative Rate" or "GARS" is listed on rental contract. If you are in an accident, contact the police to obtain a police report. Then, contact the rental car company and let them know about the accident and if you need a replacement vehicle. You may also be required to complete the rental car company's accident report. Travelers should first attempt to resolve issues directly with the rental car company, but if you need assistance, file a help ticket through the Defense Travel Management Office Rental Vehicle Assistance tool at www.defensetravel.dod.mil/rental.

Flat tire or dead battery on rental car. If you are renting through the U.S. Government Rental Car program and experience a mechanical issue, including lost keys, the rental company will provide timely assistance up to and including replacing the vehicle, towing it to a repair location, or fixing it on the spot. If the repair cannot be completed within two hours of initial notification, the company will provide a replacement vehicle.

Mitigation: Immediately notify the rental car company, and if necessary, request a replacement vehicle.

Government Travel Charge Card is declined. There may be several reasons why a card is declined, including being over your charge limit or trying to make a purchase at a business that is blocked from government purchases.

Mitigation: Contact Citi Customer Service by using the number on the back of your card. They will be able to tell you what the issue is and if you need to contact your Agency Program Coordinator for resolution.



Introducing U.S. Government Frequent Renter Program



Did you know that you can ensure you receive the benefits of the U.S. Government Rental Car Program while on TDY and earn rental car rewards? Many of the rental car companies that participate in the U.S. Government Rental Car Program offer unique frequent renter programs specifically designed for federal travelers on official travel. All of the programs allow you to earn rewards and some offer additional benefits such as counter by-pass or dedicated check-in lines that can save valuable time; all of this while ensuring that you receive U.S. Government Rental Car Program benefits such as insurance.

According to the Joint Travel Regulations, DoD travelers are required to rent a car through DTS or a Commercial Travel Office and use the U.S. Government Rental Car Program is recommended. With frequent renter programs there is no more worrying if you are renting under the provisions of the program or have the correct government rate. Also, as a member of a government frequent renter program, rental car companies are precluded from offering you unnecessary insurance or additional services. Frequent renter programs are offered at no cost to Federal government employees and participation is voluntary.

How to Participate

Register for each company's "government" frequent renter program through the Defense Travel Management Office website, <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/rentalCarFRP.cfm>. Frequent renter programs that you may already participate in are slightly different than those associated with the U.S. Government Rental Car Program, so it is important that you use the above link to register for a "government" frequent renter program.

As part of the registration process, you may be asked for your driver's license number, preferred payment method (your government travel charge card, if one has been issued to you), address, and additional contact information such as, email and phone number.

Once you receive your frequent renter number provided by each rental car company, add it to your DTS user profile and/or use it when making reservations with your Commercial Travel Office. Sign up for as many frequent renter programs as you like. Receiving the benefits of the U.S. Government Rental Car Program remains your responsibility, so continue to ensure that "Government Administrative Rate Supplement (GARS)" is listed on your rental car contract at the time of pick-up.

Adding Frequent Renter Numbers to your DTS Profile

1. When the Welcome screen opens, hover over **Traveler Setup**, and select **Update Personal Profile**. The **My Profile** screen opens.
2. Select the **My Preferences** link. The **My Preferences** screen opens.
3. Scroll to the bottom of the **My Preferences** screen and select **Rewards Programs** and the **Frequent Flyer** screen opens.
4. Select the **Rental Car** radio button. When the **Frequent Renter** screen opens, enter your frequent renter number and save to your profile. Add as many numbers as you like.

The screenshots illustrate the process of adding frequent renter numbers to a DTS profile. The first screenshot shows the user's welcome screen with navigation options. The second screenshot shows the 'My Profile' page where 'My Preferences' is selected. The third screenshot shows the 'Frequent Flyer' form where the 'Rental Car' option is chosen, and fields for 'Frequent Flyer No.' and 'Vendor' are visible.

The DTA Toolkit RSS Feed provides articles specifically designed to give Authorizing Officials and travelers the information they need to reduce improper payments. DFAS's Post Pay Review Team reported that improper payments are on the rise, so many of our articles target the most frequent mistakes and offer useful techniques for you to share with AOs and travelers via informational sessions or email distribution. Articles that target AOs and travelers have "for distribution to . . ." in the title. Here is a sampling of DTA Toolkit RSS Feed articles and the DFAS Post Pay Review findings they address.

DID YOU KNOW?

Error	DTA Toolkit RSS Feed Article Title
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meals - Rate Paid Incorrectly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do I Need to Deduct Meals Offered at a Hotel? (For Distribution to Travelers) Don't Claim Expenses/Per Diem While on Personal Leave (For Distribution to Travelers) Enter the Correct TDY Location on Your Itinerary (For Distribution to Travelers)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rental Car, lodging or airfare - Paid Without Receipt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some Pre-Trip Advice to Share With Your Travelers (For Distribution to AOs)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rental Car, lodging or airfare - Paid Without Receipt Lodging- Attached receipt for lodging does NOT reflect the same amount claimed on voucher Rental Car - Actual Daily Rental Rate Claimed is Different from Rental Receipt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't Forget Your Receipts! (For Distribution to Travelers) Look for Receipts (For AOs)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lodging- Attached receipt for lodging does NOT reflect the same amount claimed on voucher Rental Car - Actual Daily Rental Rate Claimed is Different from Rental Receipt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple, Boring Tips for Tackling Travel Documents (For Distribution to AOs)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incomplete Voucher/data missing/information does not match voucher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to Reflect Reservation Changes on a Voucher (For DTAs) How to Reflect Itinerary & Reservation Changes in DTS (For distribution to Travelers)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> T-entered- NDEA - No Signed DD 1351-2 or SF 1164 attached or incorrect form used to include DTS printout Mileage – incorrect per DTOD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where's the DD Form 1351-2? (For Distribution to AOs)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mileage – Incorrect per DTOD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should you use the DTOD or you odometer to calculate mileage? (For distribution to travelers)

There are three ways to access the DTA Toolkit articles:

- Select the hyperlink with each article's title in the table above.
- View all available articles at: <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/rssCat.cfm?id=45>
- (Preferred)** Subscribe to the DTA Toolkit RSS feed so that articles are delivered to your Microsoft Outlook account (if allowed/compatible with your network settings). Check with your local IT support for more information or add "<https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/rssCat.cfm?id=45>" as a new RSS Feed to your Outlook account.

More on the Integrated Lodging Program Pilot



Since we launched the Integrated Lodging Program Pilot (ILPP) in June, we have received lots of questions about the program so we thought we would take this opportunity to provide some clarifications on the policy, and DTS functionality, as well as also provide a look into what is to come.

Important Points and Clarifications

- **The policy provides flexibility.** Travelers may choose other lodging accommodations besides directed DoD lodging or DoD Preferred commercial lodging, but their lodging reimbursement will be limited to the amount the government would have paid if directed lodging was used. This means that they will pay out of pocket if their choice is more expensive than the directed lodging. An authorizing official may authorize exceptions to policy (in advance of travel) based on mission, distance, lower rate, as well as other exceptions outlined in the JTR.
- **DTS facilitates policy compliance.** When DTS recognizes the TDY location as an Integrated Lodging Program Pilot location it automatically displays the lodging options based on JTR policy. The traveler must decline directed lodging to view other commercial lodging options outside of the program. If TDY to a military installation with DoD (government lodging) is required and there is no availability, DTS will automatically include a non-availability confirmation number (also known as a CNA) as part of the authorization. Once a non-availability confirmation number is received, travelers are not required to check availability again or call the facility directly to check availability (per JTR).
- **New audit flags require justification for non-use.** Audit flags are generated when DoD Lodging is available but not used, DoD Preferred Lodging is available but not used, and when no lodging is used. There are reasons why reservations are made outside of DTS, including pre-arranged lodging, staying with friends and family, etc. When directed lodging is not used, travelers must select the reason code that best describes their situation. In most cases, travelers are asked to provide the name and address of the property where they stayed. It is important that the traveler includes this information, because it assists the Department with targeting those properties for possible participation in the future.

Current Integrated Lodging Program Pilot Sites

- Charleston, SC - Joint Base Charleston
- Dayton, OH - Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
- Norfolk/Virginia Beach, VA – Select area U.S. military installations
- Saratoga Springs, NY – Naval Support Activity Saratoga Springs
- Seattle-Tacoma Airport area, WA
- Tampa, FL - MacDill Air Force Base
- Twentynine Palms, CA - Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center

For a complete list of zip codes included in the metro area of each location, go to:

www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/LP_Sites_List.pdf

The most common question we receive about audit flags is “What is the acceptable distance to justify the ‘Too far away from TDY location’ reason code?” Since this isn’t

(Continued on page 10)

stated in the JTR, first check your local business rules to see if the answer is stipulated there. If not, it is up to the AO's discretion. We are reviewing the use of reason codes and the properties where travelers stayed to ensure these codes are not used unnecessarily, and to see what hotel properties/TDY locations should be considered in the future.

- **Not all commercial lodging properties in DTS are designated as "DoD Preferred."**

Only commercial lodging properties listed on the "DoD Preferred Lodging" tab meet specific quality, safety and security



requirements outlined by the Department and will only display when TDY to a pilot site. Commercial lodging listed on the last two tabs are what you would typically find if using an online booking website to find a hotel. It is recommended that travelers selecting lodging listed on one of these tabs research their lodging choice as they would for personal travel. There is no requirement for travelers to select the lowest available lodging option listed on the last two commercial lodging tabs as long as the rate is within per diem (travelers can select higher but will only be reimbursed up to the max per diem.)

- **Only DoD Preferred Lodging properties can be removed.** If a *DoD Preferred* property fails to meet DoD standards it can be removed from the Integrated Lodging Program Pilot Program and will no longer be displayed on the DoD Preferred tab, however, it could still be listed under the other Commercial lodging tabs, as long as it offers a government rate and is "Fire Safety Act" compliant (e.g., FEMA approved). Keep in mind that DoD does not monitor the quality, safety, and security of properties listed on any of the other commercial lodging tabs and cannot remove a property from the DTS listing for failure to meet DoD standards.
- **Group reservations cannot be made in DTS.** If traveling as part of a group, reservations may be pre-arranged to facilitate group integrity. In this case, travelers should decline lodging and use a reason code to indicate group lodging.
- **Once travelers receive a non-availability confirmation number through DTS, the system will direct them to book commercial lodging.** Per the JTR, once a traveler receives a non-availability confirmation number, they are not required to check availability again through DTS and/or call the facility directly to check availability (per JTR) or obtain an official non-availability confirmation letter. DoD Lodging facilities may have rooms available if you call directly but they may not meet DoD adequacy standards and are therefore not available in DTS.
- **Not all DoD Lodging locations are displayed in DTS.** At this time, travelers can book lodging in DTS at most Air Force Inns, Navy Gateways Inns and Suites, Navy Lodge, as well as some Army lodging at foreign locations (see [DTS DoD Lodging Listing](#)). When Service members are directed to stay in DoD Lodging and it is not available in DTS, they must use www.Dodlodging.net or by calling the location directly to make reservations. *For those booking VIP lodging quarters:* VIP lodging quarters managed by protocol offices are not available through DTS; therefore, there is no requirement to use DTS to make those reservations. VIP travelers should continue to make arrangements through the protocol offices when applicable.



- **Feedback is important.** This program is a pilot and it will continue to evolve based on the feedback we receive. If your travelers stayed in DoD preferred commercial lodging, they will receive a customer satisfaction

(Continued on page 11)

survey via email after their voucher is completed. Information provided through the survey will help shape future enhancements to the program and may impact current hotel offerings. To submit feedback on DoD lodging (government) facilities, travelers should submit a Travel Assistance Center help ticket.

What's to Come: The future of the Integrated Lodging Program Pilot

On January 1, 2016, the Integrated Lodging Program Pilot will expand up to six additional pilot sites. Additionally, the program may see changes to the specific DoD Preferred properties that participate in the program. Each year, hotels have an opportunity to apply to participate in the DoD Preferred Lodging Program Pilot for the next calendar year. Even those hotels that already participate must reapply annually. All commercial hotels must meet DoD quality, safety and security standards, offer rates below per diem, and provide certain amenities and traveler protections to participate. The list of participating DoD Preferred Lodging properties for calendar year 2016 will be available in December.

The program will further expand this spring when Public-Private Venture (PPV) lodging will be available in DTS. PPV lodging is on-base lodging that is owned by the government but is operated/managed by a commercial lodging company. PPV lodging options will be displayed on a new tab between the Government (DoD) Lodging and DoD Preferred commercial lodging tab in DTS. It will function the same way as the other tabs; if available, the Government PPV tab will be active. If travelers are TDY to a pilot site and PPV is available but not used, their lodging reimbursement will be limited to the amount the government would have paid if used.

For more information on the Integrated Lodging Program Pilot, go to: www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/lodging.cfm.

Potential New Integrated Lodging Program Pilot Sites

(final sites will be determined in December and be effective January 1, 2016)

- Quad City, IL - Rock Island Arsenal
- Fort Lee/Petersburg, VA – Fort Lee
- Hampton, VA – Joint Base Langley-Eustis
- Newport News, VA – Fort Eustis
- York/Williamsburg, VA – Yorktown Facility
- Suffolk, VA

RECENT JTR POLICY ON MANDATORY USE OF DTS TO BOOK LODGING

The Joint Travel Regulations (JTR) now requires travelers going TDY to use the Defense Travel System (DTS) to book lodging, both government quarters and commercial lodging. This new language clarifies the DTS mandatory use requirement that was outlined in the 2008 Office of the Under Secretary of Defense memorandum, "Mandatory Use of the Defense Travel System" by specifically outlining that the system be used to book lodging. To support this policy, DTS automatically routes travelers to the Lodging Reservation Module when creating an authorization for overnight travel.

Here are some important points to remember:

- DoD Preferred Lodging that meets DoD quality, safety and security standards only displays when TDY to a pilot site. Commercial lodging that appears on the following tabs are not monitored for compliance with per diem rates or compliance with DoD standards.
- If TDY to a military installation that has available DoD lodging, DTS will display it on the first tab in DTS. Civilians are not required to use DoD Lodging when TDY to a non-pilot site even though it is displayed as the first option they see. If available and declined, reimbursement will not be limited.
- The only exceptions to use are when 1) lodging is for multiple travelers such as, lodging in conjunction with a conference, mass training evolutions, or unit moves); 2) when lodging is arranged at a lower cost than available through DTS or a CTO; or 3) when arranging lodging on a weekly or monthly basis for long term TDY.

DTMO is pleased to announce the

2016 EXCELLENCE IN PRACTICE AWARDS

DTMO is pleased to announce the 2016 Excellence in Practice awards, which recognize top performers in DoD travel for the value and services they provided during FY2015.

Awards will be given in the following areas:

- **The Champion** – recognizes a Lead DTA who goes above and beyond in providing monitoring and training to their organization
- **The Elite** – recognizes a local help desk team whose superior efforts result in continuous improvement and outstanding customer care
- **The Icon** – recognizes a major command or agency whose strategies and tactics enhance their travel program capabilities for their subordinate sites

Nomination forms are available at:

<http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/award.cfm>

DTMO designed the Excellence in Practice Awards to recognize DoD travel professionals who have excelled in travel program management and have successfully addressed issues with exemplary professional skill, creativity, and resourcefulness.

NOMINATIONS DUE FEBRUARY 29, 2016



Have a new
@mail.mil
email address?

As the Department transitions to the generic mail.mil email address, it is important to remind travelers to update any travel profiles including:

- **DTS Profile** – This is the most important travel profile to update. Information including flight information is sent to the email address on file. It is also a good time to remind travelers to ensure that their emergency contact information and Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) numbers and expiration dates are up to date.
- **TraX Profile** – An updated email address ensures you'll be able to log in to the system. To update, sign in using your old email address, and click on "User Profile" icon in the top left corner.
- **GTCC CitiManager Account** – CitiManager, Citi's online portal, allows users to access account activity, view monthly statements, make payments and much more. Notifications including payments due, payments past due, payment receive and other relevant information is sent to the email address on file. To update, log on to CitiManager and click "update profile."

Late Breaking News: Chip and PIN Government Travel Charge Cards

Since mid-January 2015, Citi has been replacing traditional magnetic stripe Government Travel Charge Cards with new chip and PIN cards. Chip and PIN cards contain a microprocessor that requires cardholder authentication via a 4-digit Personal Identification Number (PIN) input at the point of sale. At this time, all active cardholders should have received their chip and PIN card; however, the process for issuing cards to inactive accounts has changed.

On October 16, 2015, Citi placed roughly 400,000 inactive accounts in a “soft close” status for six months. Inactive accounts are considered to be those that meet one of the following criteria:

- Cardholder failed to contact Citi’s customer service to receipt verify the magnetic strip card
- Magnetic stripe card was receipt verified, but no merchant or ATM transactions have posted to the account within the last 36 months.
- Account limit is set to \$0
- Account was flagged for an incorrect mailing address/returned mail
- Account was flagged because of suspected fraud

Each Service/Agency will be contacting their cardholders’ whose accounts are in a soft close status. Cardholders can contact Citi within the six-month period to request a chip and PIN issuance. All account that remain in a soft close status after that time will be permanently closed and cardholders will need to reapply to be issued a card. For more information, contact your organization’s Agency Program Coordinator.

To date, the DoD Travel Policy Compliance Program has identified over **\$13.6M** in potential errors and collected over **\$5.4M** in overpayments to travelers.

About the Compliance Program

The Travel Policy Compliance Program was established to ensure travel claims do not exceed reasonable or actual expenses; and to minimize inaccurate, unauthorized, overstated, inflated or duplicated travel claims. The program relies on an automated application known as the Travel Policy Compliance Tool, which reviews all DTS travel vouchers in near real time and identifies duplicate or incorrect payments. When an error is identified, the tool automatically notifies the traveler, the Non-DTS Entry Agents (NDEA), and the Authorizing Official who approved the voucher, via an email that includes instructions for correcting the error. The tool will continue to send reminder emails until action is taken. For more information on the program, go to: <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/te/compliance>



Stay Current

DTMO offers several RSS feeds that will keep you up-to-date on the latest in Defense travel. To access RSS feeds, go to the [DTMO website](#) and click on the RSS Feed icon at the bottom of the homepage or search for a feed using an RSS Feed Aggregator. To get updates delivered directly to your Outlook inbox, click on the “RSS Feeds” folder in your left folder navigation pane and follow the instructions. For more information, go to: www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/rss.cfm

About the Defense Travel Dispatch

The Defense Travel Dispatch is a quarterly publication issued by the Defense Travel Management Office, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel & Readiness).

The reproduction of the Dispatch is permissible for official use only.

To subscribe or to view previous editions, visit www.defensetravel.dod.mil

Volume VIII, Issue 2 – Fall 2015