

Defense Travel Dispatch

Volume IX, Volume 1
Spring/Summer 2016



The DoD Center for Travel Excellence

A Message from the Acting DTMO Director

I often get asked, "What is on your bucket list for 2016?" so I'd like to take this opportunity to share with you what is on my list in hopes that it will shed additional light on the strategic direction of DoD travel. In previous editions of the Dispatch, we introduced our travel transformation effort and that continues to dominate my bucket list.

In late 2011, DTMO began to explore opportunities to reform travel. Travel Transformation centers on simplifying travel policies and establishing a program of compliance, customer needs, improving travel programs and processes, travel system modernization, expanding strategic sourcing opportunities to leverage overall travel spend, and integrating a robust data warehouse to create business intelligence for decision making. This Travel Transformation effort was a response to several external drivers requiring efficient ways to manage and conduct travel. Travel Transformation has since evolved into what we now refer to as Travel Reform. But, no matter what we call it, the outcomes are the same: overall cost savings, simplified policy, improved compliance, enhanced auditability, and an improved traveler experience.

We will continue to make progress toward simplifying travel policy, modernizing the DoD travel system, and expanding our strategic sourcing programs like our Integrated Lodging Program Pilot, which you can read more about in this edition, and integrating data to support business intelligence. While my bucket list may be short, these Travel Reform initiatives will have a lasting impact on the Defense Travel Enterprise. I invite you to follow our progress.

— Philip Benjamin, Director, DTMO (Acting)

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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.

Integrated Lodging Program Pilot Continues to Expand



Launched in 2015, the Department of Defense’s Integrated Lodging Program Pilot (ILPP) directs DoD civilians and service members to stay in government (DoD Lodging), Government Privatized, or DoD Preferred commercial lodging before other commercial lodging options while on official travel to select pilot locations. When the program pilot launched, it tested the viability of an enterprise-wide commercial lodging program as well as the DoD lodging booking interface in DTS.

Since then, privatized lodging has been integrated and the program has expanded to more than 40 pilot sites. The program is set to expand again in July when DoD Preferred properties are added at five pilot sites.

Privatized Lodging

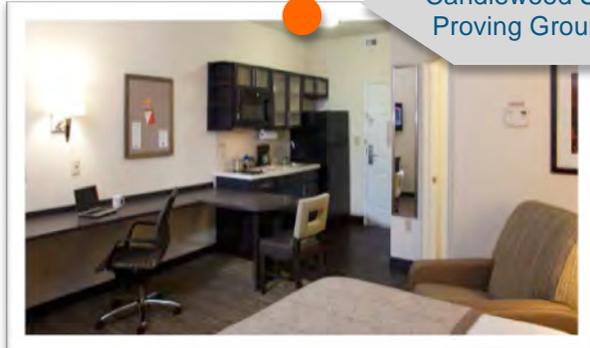
In March 2016, Public-Private Venture lodging (referred to as, privatized lodging) was integrated into the pilot and travelers are directed to use it when TDY to a military installation at a pilot site and DoD lodging is not available. Privatized lodging is located on or near military installations and was once operated by the government, but is now operated by a commercial lodging company. At this time, only Privatized Army Lodging (PAL) properties, corporately branded as IHG Army Hotels, Holiday Inn Express, Candlewood Suites, and Staybridge Suites, are available in DTS. Other PPV lodging may be integrated in the future.



PAL –
Holiday Inn Express
Ft. Hood, Texas



PAL –
Candlewood Suites Yuma
Proving Ground, Arizona



To facilitate the integration of privatized lodging, a new “Govt Privatized” tab (see figure 1) was added to the DTS lodging module. All privatized lodging that appears on this tab must meet strict DoD requirements for quality, safety, and security. Currently, there are 31 privatized lodging properties available at 27 installations on the Privatized lodging tab. Additional privatized lodging will be added as properties are built or renovated and meet DoD quality, safety, and security standards. Travelers are directed to the privatized tab when TDY to a military installation and DoD lodging is not available. Just as with DoD lodging, if privatized lodging is available and not used, DTS will display a pre-audit and automatically limit lodging reimbursement to the amount the government would have paid if used, unless an exception applies. Note that Privatized properties may also appear under the "Commercial - Fire Safety Act Compliant" tab, but travelers are not required to book PPV properties that appear on this tab.



Figure 1

New Pilot Sites

On July 1, 2016, DoD Preferred commercial lodging will be added to the program at five pilot locations. Three locations are new pilot sites (as of 1 July) and two are existing sites. Travelers TDY to these locations are directed to use DoD lodging, privatized lodging, or DoD Preferred before other commercial lodging options.

Pilot Site	DoD Lodging	Privatized Lodging	DoD Preferred Lodging
Ft. Bragg/ Fayetteville, NC*			✓
Hill Air Force Base/Ogden, UT*	✓		✓
Shaw Air Force Base/Sumter, SC*	✓		✓
Fort Meade/Fort Meade, MD		✓	✓
Redstone Arsenal/Huntsville, AL		✓	✓

The continued expansion of the Integrated Lodging Program Pilot enables travelers to use DTS to find trusted lodging providers at more locations where they travel most. The DoD Integrated Lodging Program Pilot affords an excellent opportunity to not only leverage the Department’s collective purchasing power, but also incorporate program enhancements that ensure a certain level of “duty of care” for its travelers.

System

DTS users creating an authorization for overnight travel will be automatically routed to the lodging reservation module. DTS guides travelers to appropriate lodging options based on JTR policy, before displaying other lodging choices. If TDY to a military installation, DTS first displays (DoD) lodging, if available, then PPV lodging. If not available, travelers are directed to DoD Preferred commercial lodging options (if available) before other commercial lodging properties.

Policy

Paragraph 1265 of the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR) requires travelers TDY to an ILPP site for 30 or fewer days to use government (DoD) lodging, privatized lodging, or DoD Preferred commercial lodging before other lodging options. Unless an exception applies, failure to use available directed lodging results in a traveler’s lodging reimbursement being limited to the amount the government would have paid if used.

2016 EXCELLENCE IN PRACTICE AWARD WINNERS



The Excellence in Practice Awards are designed to recognize DoD travel professionals who have excelled in travel program management and have successfully addressed issues with exemplary professional skill, creativity, and resourcefulness. This year's award winners demonstrated an exceptional level of service, resulting in more efficient and effective travel programs.

THE CHAMPION: MRS. K. STRAITS, TRAVEL PAY OPERATIONS - DEFENSE FINANCE & ACCOUNTING SERVICE

The Champion Award recognizes a Lead Defense Travel Administrator (LDTA) whose wisdom, guidance, and commitment to their Organization DTAs (ODTAs) has made a fundamental and long-term positive impact on their travel program. This year's recipient is Mrs. K. Straits, Travel Pay Operations, Defense Finance & Accounting Service, for her support of the Defense Military Pay Office – Fort Rucker.

As the first installation-level LDTA for Fort Rucker, Alabama, Mrs. Straits provided support to over 5,000 uniformed and DoD civilian travelers, over 100 Authorizing Officials (AOs), over 100 ODTAs, and over 30 Finance DTAs (FDTAs). Mrs. Straits was applauded for her ability to mentor her fellow travel managers, for her resolve to work through difficult and tedious situations, for her commitment to success, for her infectious positive attitude, and for her willingness to exceed customer expectations.

Mrs. Straits' travel management expertise was particularly evident in how she engaged herself in Fort Rucker's centrally billed account reconciliation process. She was able to build coalitions among the Transportation Office, Resource Management Office, Commercial Travel Office (CTO) Regional Manager, and ODTAs to resolve outstanding travel transactions. Not only did this ensure a timely reconciliation of CBAs, but it also relieved the ODTAs of the burden of reconciling problem accounts, allowing them to execute their normal duties more efficiently.

Mrs. Straits demonstrated her commitment to the installation's ODTAs by training, encouraging, motivating, and empowering them. Her efforts resulted in a reduction of voucher errors and improved the accessibility of customer service. She was lauded by the ODTAs and Command leadership for her Best Practices Workshop, in which she shared recommendations on how each ODTA could improve their areas of travel oversight while also encouraging peer-to-peer knowledge sharing. Many of the ODTAs implemented the strategies discussed at the Workshop, resulting in

DTMO awards the Excellence in Practices Awards annually. The next nomination period will begin in late-Fall 2016. If you are interested in nominating a fellow travel professional or team, please continue to monitor the Excellence in Practice webpage (<http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/award.cfm>) for additional information and nomination forms.

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efficiencies at Fort Rucker's respective Commands.

Mrs. Straits was tireless in performing travel help desk support for Fort Rucker. She not only resolved customer inquiries swiftly and accurately, but she tracked her customers' most common trouble spots so she could provide targeted strategies to improve the installation's travel programs. She also implemented proactive strategies for her help desk support team, to include a rigorous training program, a robust site assist visit program, and a solid communications strategy. Mrs. Strait's efforts at Fort Rucker and her unwavering support of its ODTAs truly demonstrate the essence of a champion.

Other award nominees in this category included: D. Archer (USA), A. Avalos (USA), B. Bell (USAF), J. Farias (USA), M. Foye (USAF), A. Fuller (USA), W. Harris (Defense Agency – WHS), C. Moeller (USN), M. Mortenson (USAF), J. Pultz (USAF), T. Purnell (USA), S. Snyder (USAF), and E. Williams (USN).

THE ELITE: JOINT STAFF SUPPORT SERVICES OFFICE TRAVEL TEAM

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 Joint Staff Support Services Office Travel Team.

The Joint Staff Travel Office provided help desk and administrative support to all Joint Staff travelers, ODTAs, Authorizing Officials (AOs), and Agency Program Coordinators (APCs). The team also oversaw the Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) program for the entire Joint Staff and Premium Class Travel reporting for the Joint Staff and nine Combatant Commands. Despite having a customer base with a wide geographical distribution, the Joint Staff Travel Office provided world-class help desk support that balanced mission requirements, regulatory compliance, and individual traveler needs.

The Joint Staff Travel Office was particularly adept in its ability to identify trends and take the necessary steps to enhance the Joint Staff's travel program. The team instituted proactive monitoring that helped the entire Joint Staff achieve an unsubmitted voucher rate of less than 4%. The team was also responsible for increasing the GTCC rebates for the Joint Staff thanks to its vigilance in reconciling centrally billed accounts and promoting the "Direct to Treasury" program. The Joint Staff Travel Office also implemented a voucher audit initiative that has resulted in a 30% reduction in the most common errors on DTS vouchers.

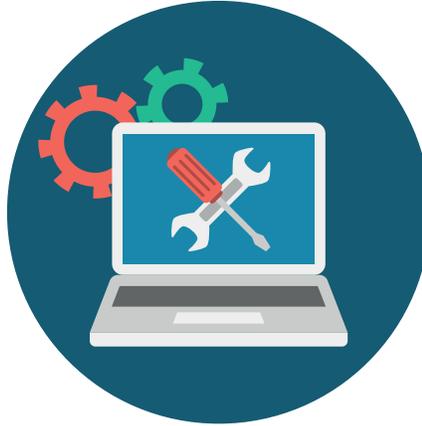
The team was renowned for sharing targeted, timely information with its customers through a well-refined communication strategy. The backbone of its strategy was leveraging its network of ODTAs, who shared regulatory changes, travel tips, and training information with Joint Staff travelers and AOs. The Joint Staff Travel Office also worked closely with its legal office and the Office of the Inspector General to create a highly successful and well-received travel ethics training briefing. This briefing, which the team provides regularly to senior leaders and AOs in the Office of the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff and in every Combatant Command, highlights the most commonly abused areas of travel and provides vignettes of recent breaches of ethics.

The Joint Staff Travel Office was also committed to improving its customer service. Its portal page provided customers with the



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Prevent Declines by Keeping your GTCC “On-Track”



ISSUE: Did you know that roughly 3% of the Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) purchases that DoD travelers attempt are declined? Between January and April 2016 alone, DoD Standard Cards were declined nearly 5,000 times. The four main reasons why:

1. **Card is not activated for travel by the APC.** Several organizations “turn off” cards when a cardholder is not scheduled for travel.
2. **Insufficient available balance.** If the balance is too high due to back-to-back, long term, or costly travel, contact your APC in advance for a credit limit increase.
3. **Did not confirm receipt (receipt verify) new card.** Every cardholder must contact Citi via telephone or online to confirm receipt of the card prior to using it.
4. **Did not update DTS profile with new card expiration date.** When you receive your new card, travelers must update their DTS profile with the new expiration date and, if applicable, card number. Failure to do so will result in an inability for CTOs to complete your travel reservations.

SOLUTION: If we track everything online from the weather to bank accounts to friends, why not also keep track of your Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) online to ensure your card won’t be declined? The top three reasons why cards decline could be quickly identified via CitiManager (www.citimanager.com), or its mobile version, CitiManager Mobile (www.citimanagermobile.com). CitiManager allows cardholders to view their account in real time, check activation status, verify account balance, receipt verify a new card, view online statements, make payments, dispute transactions, and much more! Plus, it is simple to keep your contact information updated in CitiManager.

If you have not yet registered for CitiManager, go to <https://home.cards.citidirect.com/CommercialCard/Cards.html?classic=2> and click on ‘Self registration for Cardholders’ under first time users.

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opportunity to leave feedback, accolades, and constructive criticism. While most of the feedback to the team’s customer service was overwhelmingly positive, the team leveraged constructive criticism to improve its services for the Joint Staff’s travel program. In fact, as a result of some of the constructive criticism left by customers, the team was able to engage the Defense Travel Management Office and the Joint Staff’s Commercial Travel Office contractors to develop long-term solutions to some common difficulties encountered by travelers.

All told, the Joint Staff Travel Office’s track record as a proactive, customer-focused team exemplifies what it means to be an elite help desk.

Other award nominees in this category included: 19th Expeditionary Sustainment Command (USA), 434 Logistics Readiness Squadron DTS Travel Pay Help Desk (USAF), 914th Airlift Wing Financial Management (USAF), and the Installation Management Command G8 Special Programs Team (USA).

Did you know?

As an added convenience, Citi automatically registers new cardholders in CitiManager as part of the initial application process. When a new card is approved, the cardholder receives two emails that welcome them to CitiManager – one with a temporary user name and the other with a temporary password. New cardholders will have up to 60 days to use the temporary log-in credentials before they expire.

Using Restricted Fares



DoD travelers often ask why they can't use low airfares that they find on Internet travel sites. The truth is, under the right circumstances travelers can purchase lower-cost, restricted airfares for official travel – but DoD policy requires tickets for official travel be purchased through the contracted Commercial Travel Office (CTO). To do so, travelers must first get approval from their travel Authorizing Official (AO) who must complete the Restricted Airfare Checklist (as required by the JFTR/JTR). Often, a restricted airfare may be non-refundable, usually has costly change-fee penalties, and has advance purchase and ticketing requirements. The Restricted Airfare Checklist walks an AO through a series of questions to determine if the use of a restricted fare is both cost effective and meets mission requirements. Authorization for use of restricted fares must be obtained on a case-by-case basis; blanket authorization and justification for use of restricted airfares is prohibited.

If travelers want to use a restricted fare, they should:

1. Contact their AO to determine feasibility and gain approval.
2. Book restricted airfares through DTS by requesting CTO Assistance. Travelers should provide as much information as possible such as airline, flight number, departure time, and the fare quoted. Also, they should indicate that they are requesting a restricted fare.
3. When they receive an itinerary from the CTO, they should check for guidance regarding advanced ticketing requirements and information regarding penalties/fees for change and cancellation.
4. Immediately contact their AO and advise him/her to approve in accordance the advance-ticketing requirement.
5. When travelers receive the "Approved" email, they need to follow local business rules for notifying the CTO to issue the ticket. When contacting the CTO, travelers should provide the six-digit Passenger Name Record (PNR)/GDS locator number. Travelers must contact their CTO to request ticket issuance.
6. If travel plans change, travelers should cancel your reservation as soon as possible. It is vital that the ticket reservation is cancelled prior to flight departure.

The [Joint Travel Regulations \(JTR\)](#) Appendix H provides a decision support tool to assist AO with determining the feasibility and approving the use of a restricted fare. The checklist certifies that all decision factors were considered prior to the approval of purchasing a restricted airfare and if approved, the funding command accepts total financial responsibility for the restricted airline ticket should the trip be changed or cancelled for any official reason.

Important items to note:

- Authorization must be obtained on a case-by-case basis. Blanket authorization and justification for use of restricted fares is prohibited.
- If a restricted airfare is approved, the funding command accepts total responsibility for the restricted airfare ticket should the trip be changed or cancelled for any official reason.
- Restricted airfares must be purchased through a Commercial Travel Office.

Hate Long Lines?

TSA Precheck is the Answer



You may have seen signs at airport security advertising TSA Precheck, but what you may not realize is that as a member of the Department of Defense you are eligible to participate in the 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. 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 150 domestic airports. [Click here](#) for a complete list of participating airports.

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

Additional information is available at www.defensetravel.dod.mil

DTMO MAILBOX



QUESTION: *Our organization has reserved a block of hotel rooms in a location that is an Integrated Lodging Program Pilot location. How does each traveler enter this in DTS?*

When an organization blocks a group of rooms at an Integrated Lodging Program Pilot location, it can be confusing for the travelers who are not sure how to handle this in DTS. When TDY to an ILPP location, DTS directs travelers to either the Govt-DoD, Govt-Privatized, or Commercial-DoD Preferred tab (depending on whether the TDY location is a military installation or a surrounding metro area). Travelers sometimes select the same lodging as the group block, which spurs two reservations at the same hotel. This can lead to unnecessary no-show fees. Here is how this should be handled:

- If lodging availability is displayed on the **Commercial DoD Preferred** tab: select **Decline Commercial DoD Preferred** (see figure 1), **OR**, if lodging availability is displayed on the **Commercial Government Safety Act Compliant** or **Commercial Other Published Rates** tabs, select **Skip This Hotel** (see figure 2 below).
- Reserve lodging according to the instructions provided by the event coordinator.
- In the pre-audits, select the appropriate reason code, typically **L7 Conference or Event** or **L12 Group lodging required** (see figure 3 below), and enter information as requested.
- DTS will limit your lodging rate to the cost of preferred lodging. If necessary, follow your organization's guidance for updating the actual lodging cost.

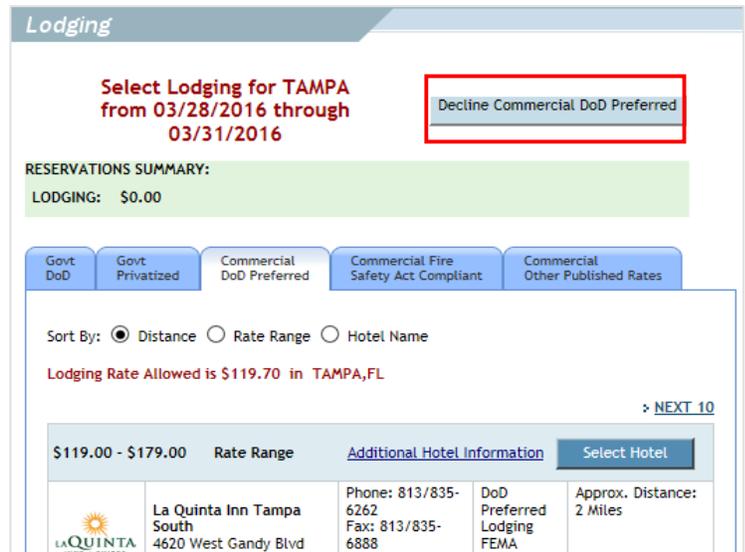


Figure 1

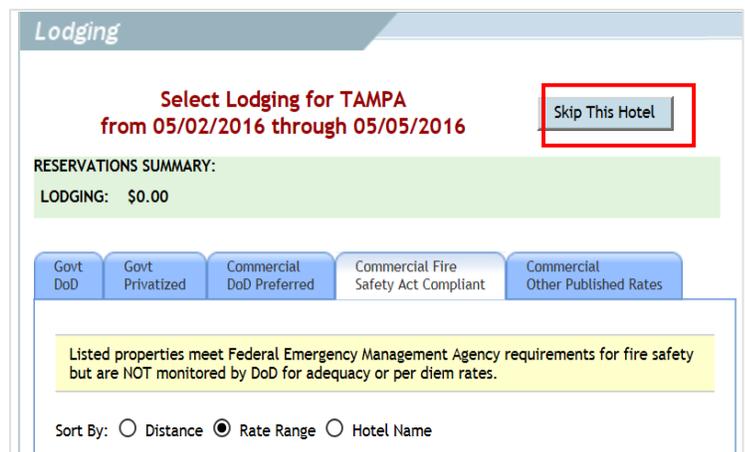


Figure 2

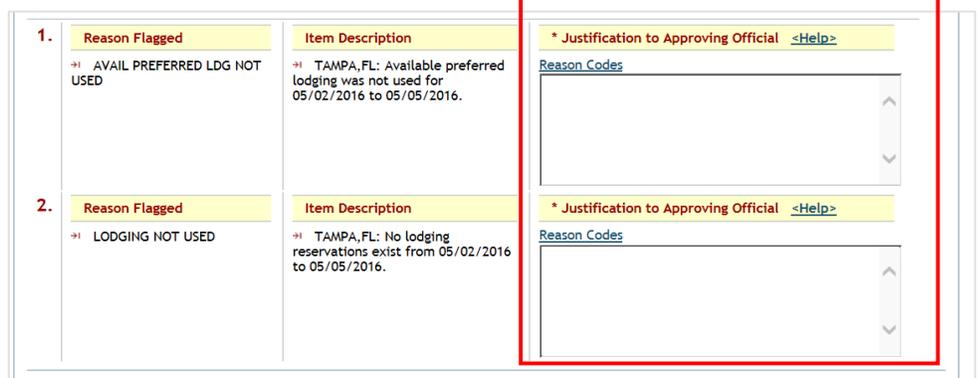


Figure 3



Travel Managers in Action

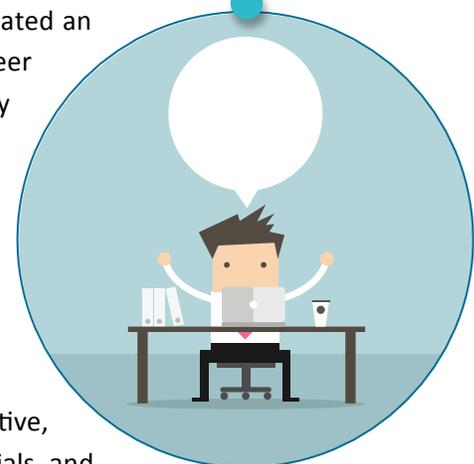
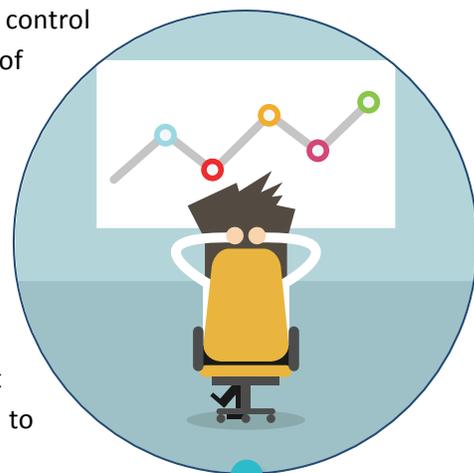
Real tips and best practices from the field

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.

- **W. Harris, WHS** – Conducted regular site-assist visits with ODTAs to provide deskside training and review organizational DTS processes. Improved knowledge sharing by developing internal customer service notifications and encouraging ODTAs to sign up for DTMO's RSS Feeds.
- **Fuller, USA** – Enhanced organizational compliance with DoD travel regulations and Army's business rules by providing customized training. Extracted information from TAC Outreach Calls and DTS website and shared with ODTAs.
- **Avalos, USA** – Closely monitored organizational travel trends. Tailored locally provided training to address common traveler mistakes.
- **D. Archer, USA** – Tracked customer trouble spots and swiftly disseminated tips to prevent others from making them as well. Demonstrated a commitment to building a knowledgeable community of travelers and AOs by providing annual DTS training for the entire command.
- **J. Farias, USA** – Worked closely with ODTAs and AOs to clear outstanding vouchers, improving timeliness of reimbursement and funds tracking. Created own DTS newsletter for distribution to customers.
- **T. Purnell, USA** – Deftly managed emergency travel situation encountered by senior DoD officials by coaching other ODTAs in their responsibilities and by providing round-the-clock assistance. Adjusted standard communications from DTMO, TAC, and Component to meet customer needs.
- **Bell, USAF** – Built strong partnerships with ODTAs by encouraging them to take a proactive approach in their travel programs and providing them with the required training and tools. Ran weekly reports to track potentially stuck travel documents.

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- **J. Pultz, USAF** – Provided quarterly AO training, which addressed common traveler mistakes and highlighted recent successes of AOs. Developed an internal control checklist for personal and ODTA use to ensure a consistent, candid review of the organization’s travel program.
- **M. Foye, USAF** – Hosted quarterly meetings with ODTAs to enhance camaraderie and synchronize strategy. Created step-by-step documents for self-registration and checklists for creating/approving travel documents, which reduced profile rejects and improved accuracy of travel documents.
- **M. Mortenson, USAF** – Assessed the needs of each ODTA and customized training plans for them. Analyzed needs of individual groups and sent targeted communications to them, rather than sending generic information to entire wing.
- **S. Snyder, USAF** – Combined an eye for efficiency with a positive attitude to build a coalition of ODTAs and AOs, leading to a reduction in voucher errors. Sent calendar reminders to AOs reminding them to complete Certifying Officer Legislation training.
- **Moeller, USN** – Undertook robust initiative to eliminate separation of duties violations. Provided ODTAs with training, data, and tools they needed to run a successful travel program in their respective organizations.
- **Williams, USN** – Helped ODTAs, AOs, and travelers understand complex travel situations and travel regulations by developing clear and concise training materials. Solicited candid customer feedback and incorporated their suggestions into customer service/help desk procedures.
- **19th Expeditionary Sustainment Command, USA** – Developed systematic processes that directly addressed organizational travel goals. Improved customer service and reduced DTS authorization and voucher error rate through targeted training and friendly, one-on-one coaching.
- **Installation Management Command G8 Special Programs Team, USA** – Created an atmosphere of information-sharing, self-empowerment, and peer-to-peer learning that aided their troubleshooting and help desk support. Carefully balanced professionalism, flexibility, and policy compliance as it managed a robust, complicated travel program.
- **434 Logistics Readiness Squadron DTS Travel Pay Help Desk, USAF** – Adjusted schedules to ensure proper coverage for customers on different shifts and on deployments. Established benchmarking procedures for processing authorizations and vouchers in a timely manner.
- **914th Airlift Wing Financial Management, USAF** – Developed an interactive, step-by-step user guide for customers using DTS. Posted training materials and reference materials on common shared drive to increase user traffic and improve accessibility.



Stay Informed

The DTMO has a series of RSS Feeds that provide timely, relevant information that can be delivered directly to your desktop. Current RSS Feeds include:

- **General DoD Travel Information** – provides travel-related news and information.
- **Defense Travel Administrator Toolkit** – provides information for DTAs to improve DTS maintenance, and training strategy. It also offers key messages that can be shared with travelers and AOs to improve the travel experience and adherence to policy.
- **Travel Regulations Update** – provides updates on changes to the JTR and applicable travel regulations.
- **Agency Program Coordinator Toolkit** - provides information on GTCC initiatives, policy, training, best practices, and FAQs. Additionally, it will offer recommendations on how to improve GTCC program management, policy compliance, and help with responsiveness to management and cardholder concerns.
- **Centrally Billed Account Specialist Toolkit** - provides information on policy, training, best practices, FAQs and useful links related to the DTS CBA Reconciliation Module. It also offers recommendations for improving program oversight of an organization's CBA, resulting in faster reconciliation, reduced prompt payment interested and increased rebates.

To access a feed, 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

Avoid Currency Conversion Surcharge Fees

When traveling internationally, you may be asked if you would like to have your Government Travel Charge Card purchases charged in the local currency or in U.S. dollars. At first



thought, you may think that it would be best to charge in U.S. dollars so your receipt shows a currency we recognize, but that is not the case. When you charge in US currency overseas, a vendor (usually hotels and restaurants) can charge you a currency exchange surcharge, which can be as high as 6% or more of your purchase. Because of this, you should always charge in the local currency and let Citi automatically make the exchange for you before it shows up on your statement or in your account. This protects you from randomly assessed high percentage fees that vendors may apply to your bill. According to the JTR, this surcharge may not be reimbursed as a separately reimbursable expense and must be included on the receipt as part of the overall cost for OCONUS expenses.

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).

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Volume IX, Volume 1 – Spring 2016