



Information Paper:

Introduction to Constructed Travel in DTS

Summary

When you perform official travel for DoD, the Authorizing Official (AO) will authorize or direct you* to use a specific transportation mode (i.e., the *directed transportation mode*), but sometimes you'd rather travel using a different transportation mode (i.e., your *selected transportation mode*). For example, the AO directed you to use commercial air, but you want to drive your own car**.

The [Joint Travel Regulations](#) (JTR) allows you to use your selected transportation mode, but it also gives the AO the right to limit your transportation reimbursement, if your choice is more expensive. Constructed travel lets the AO compare the true costs of the same trip using different transportation modes.

**In this information paper, "you" are a traveler; however, the actions described can apply to others who create travel documents – e.g., Non-DTS Entry Agent, travel clerk.*

*** The JTR describes a personal vehicle (e.g., car, motorcycle) as a *privately owned vehicle (POV)*.*

Note: The primary focus of this information paper is on planning and coordinating constructed travel on an authorization. However, many of the same actions can also apply on a voucher if you used a transportation mode the AO did not authorize.

The Basic Constructed Travel Process

For most official trips, it's important to understand that constructed travel does not apply. To determine if constructed travel rules apply to your trip, ask yourself these questions:

- Do I want to use a transportation mode that is neither the directed transportation mode nor Government transportation?
- Do I want to drive a POV (car or motorcycle) over 400 miles on any one-way travel leg (e.g., from home to a TDY location)?

If the answer to both questions is, "**Yes**," constructed travel applies and you must complete a Constructed Travel Worksheet (CTW). If the answer to either question is "**No**," constructed travel does not apply, and you don't need to complete a CTW, even if DTS displays a Constructed Travel pre-audit flag (see the [Constructed Travel Pre-Audit Flag Triggers](#) section of this information paper).



**The Basic
Constructed
Travel
Process
(continued)**

When constructed travel applies, here's what happens:

1. You create your DTS authorization to reflect the total costs of the trip for your selected transportation mode.
2. You complete a CTW to show the estimated cost (a.k.a., the *constructed cost*) of the directed transportation mode and attach it to the DTS document. You may also include cost avoidances and additional considerations on the CTW.
3. The AO considers the information in both your authorization and the CTW and decides how to authorize your trip:
 - a. To allow full reimbursement for the selected transportation mode.
 - b. To allow you to use your selected transportation mode, but limit your transportation reimbursement to the constructed cost of the directed transportation mode.

Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the constructed cost decision process.

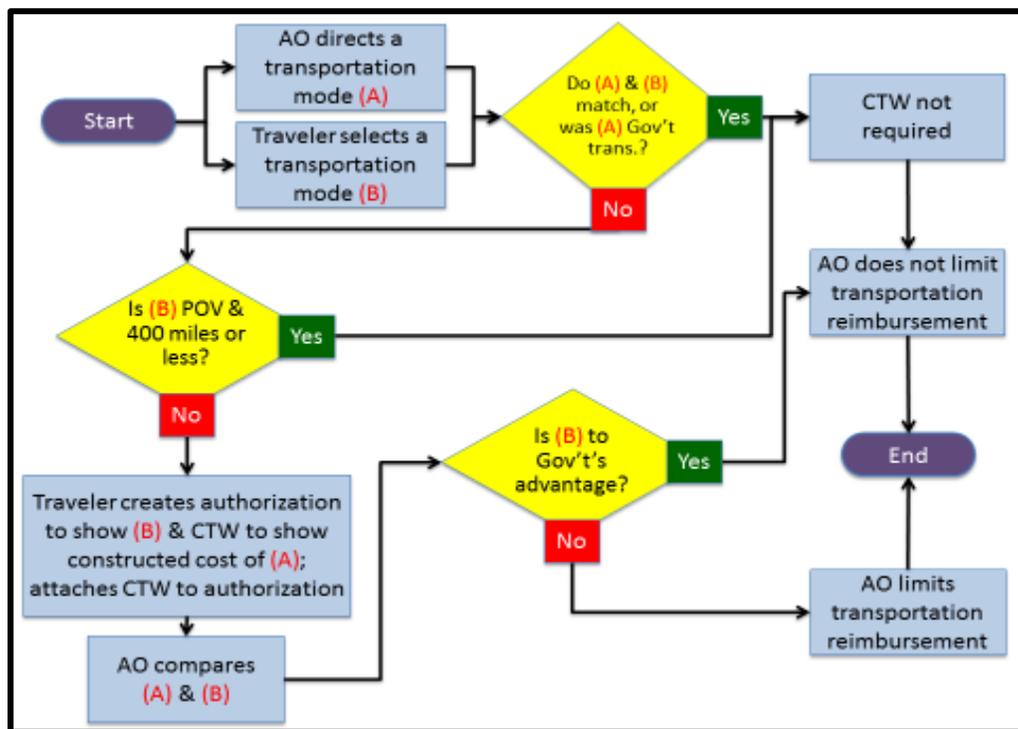


Figure 1: The Constructed Travel Process



Constructed Travel Pre- Audit Flag Triggers

Some selections you make in DTS trigger a **Constructed Travel Worksheet Pre-Audit** flag (Figure 2, Indicator 1), which tells you that you may need to provide a CTW. You will need to justify this flag in one of two ways:

- If you don't need to complete a CTW, justify the flag by stating that a CTW is not required, and explain why (e.g., POV mileage to the TDY location is under 400 miles one-way).
- If you do need to complete a CTW (see CTW instructions), attach it to your DTS authorization, and justify the flag by stating you attached the CTW to your trip.

Other Auths and Pre Audits

DoD mandates split disbursement for transportation, lodging and rental cars expenses by default. [View memorandum.](#) ⓘ

Other Authorizations

[Add Other Authorization](#)

The following are the additional authorizations that were selected based on the trip details. Enter comments to your Approving Official below.

• No Other Authorizations have been added.

Pre-Audit

Below are any items that were "flagged" for this trip. You must provide justification to the Approving Official.

[Constructed Travel Worksheet](#)

1 PRE AUDITS

CONSTRUCTED TRAVEL WORKSHEET

A transportation mode of other than Commercial Air or Government Transportation may require a constructed travel cost-comparison worksheet to be completed and included with the document via scanning.

Justification to Approving Official * [Add Justification](#)

Figure 2: Other Auths and Pre Audits Screen (Top)

The list below identifies the most common selections that trigger the **Constructed Travel Pre-Audit** flag:

- On an authorization:
 - The **Reservation Expenses** screen, *Select a Rental Car* section, under **Advanced Options**, checking the **Using to travel to my TDY location** box (Figure 3) to indicate en route travel (travel mode to and from the TDY location).



Constructed
Travel Pre-
Audit Flag
Triggers
(continued)

Rental Car Step 1 of 2: Select a Rental Car

PICK-UP LOCATION: IAD - WASHINGTON, DC (USA) (DULLES APT)

PICK-UP: 01/25/2021 08:30 AM

DROP-OFF: 01/25/2021 05:30 PM

Advanced Options

VEHICLE TYPE: Compact

TRAVEL MODE: One-way rental

EN ROUTE TRAVEL Using to travel to my TDY location

Search

Figure 3: Select a Rental Car Screen (En Route Travel)

- o Selecting any expense on the **Add New** (Figure 4) screen that reflects travel to, from, or between TDY locations by any transportation mode other than a commercial flight or Government vehicle. Examples include:
 - **Mileage Expense: Private Auto or Motorcycle – To/From TDY**
 - **Transportation Expense: Rental Car – at TDY Area**
 - **Ticketed Expense: Bus Ticket** (i.e., Commercial Bus).

Add New

Select Type*
Private Auto - To/From TDY

Attach Receipt

This expense may require a [Constructed Travel Worksheet](#) to be submitted with this document.

Expense Date*
01/25/2021

Start Location*
22192 Woodbridge, VA, Prince William

End Location*
29207 Columbia, SC, Richland

Cancel Add

Figure 4: Add New Screen (Private Auto)



Constructed Travel Pre- Audit Flag Triggers (continued)

- On a voucher, entering any transportation mode that was not present on the approved authorization, unless that transportation mode is a commercial flight or a form of Government transportation. In Figure 5, the flag occurs by adding POV mileage on the voucher, when the authorization only reflects commercial air travel mode. **Note:** The Pre-Audit flag for CTW as described in Figure 2 may also appear.

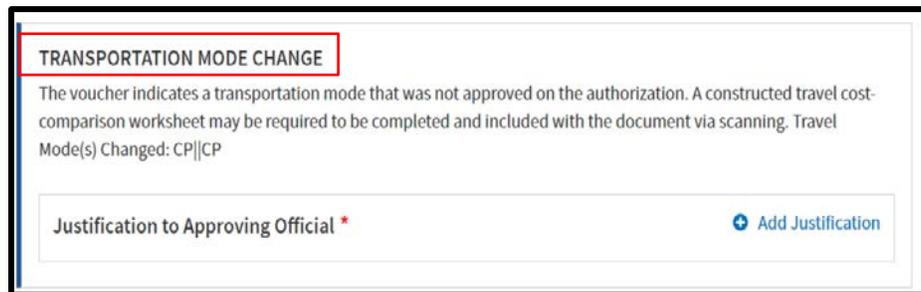


Figure 5: Pre-Audit Flag (Transportation Mode Change)

CTWs and Instructions Locations

There are two ways to locate and open a blank CTW:

1. Open through DTS:
 - a. In your document, navigate to the **Other Auths and Pre Audits** screen and select **Constructed Travel Worksheet** (Figure 2, Indicator 2). A new screen opens.
 - b. Select the CTW link for an authorization or a voucher. The CTW opens (Figure 6).
2. Select a direct link (or copy & paste the URL into the web browser of your choice):
 - a. CTW for authorizations: <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/cnsttvl/auth.pdf>
 - b. CTW for vouchers: <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/cnsttvl/voucher.pdf>

Complete instructions for filling out the CTWs are also available. You should always consult them, when you require a CTW. Open the instructions by selecting **Worksheet Instructions** in the CTW (Figure 6, Indicator 1) or use a direct link:

- Instructions for CTW for authorizations:
https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/cnsttvl/CT_Authorization_Instructions.pdf
- Instructions for CTW for vouchers:
https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/cnsttvl/CT_Voucher_Instructions.pdf



CTW Layout

Each CTW has four main sections, as shown in Figure 6. The **Worksheet Instructions** (Figure 6, Indicator 1) explain in detail how to complete the CTW.

1

Defense Travel System
A New Era of Government Travel

Worksheet Instructions

DTS Constructed Travel Worksheet - Authorization
Not required for any travel legs of 400 one-way miles or less, if by POV (auto or motorcycle)
Refer to worksheet instructions for complete guidance

Name: _____

1. Travel itinerary for the directed transportation mode:

| Travel Leg | Date | Departure Location | Arrival Location | Mode (+Fare Class if air) | Cost |
|------------|------|--------------------|------------------|---------------------------|--------|
| PDS to TDY | | | | | \$0.00 |
| TDY to PDS | | | | | \$0.00 |

For trips with multiple TDY locations:

| | | | | | |
|------------|--|--|--|--|--------|
| TDY to TDY | | | | | \$0.00 |
| TDY to TDY | | | | | \$0.00 |
| TDY to TDY | | | | | \$0.00 |
| TDY to TDY | | | | | \$0.00 |

2. Constructed cost of the directed transportation mode:

| | Cost |
|---|--------|
| A. Transportation costs from PDS departure terminal to TDY arrival terminal (e.g., home airport to TDY airport) | \$0.00 |
| B. Transportation costs from TDY departure terminal to PDS arrival terminal (e.g., TDY airport to home airport) | \$0.00 |
| C. Transportation costs from one TDY terminal to another (e.g., TDY airport to TDY airport) | \$0.00 |
| D. Total transportation cost | \$0.00 |
| E. Fee normally charged by your TMC | \$0.00 |
| F. Total constructed transportation cost | \$0.00 |

3. Potential transportation costs avoided by using your requested transportation mode:

| | Cost |
|--|--------|
| A. Transportation costs from trip start point to PDS departure terminal (e.g., driving from home to the airport) | \$0.00 |
| B. Transportation costs at all TDY sites (e.g., rental car, bus to/from airport, taxi) | \$0.00 |
| C. Transportation-related costs at all TDY sites (e.g., gas for rental car, parking at hotel, tolls) | \$0.00 |
| D. Transportation costs from PDS arrival terminal to trip end point (e.g., driving home from the airport) | \$0.00 |
| E. Parking at PDS terminal (e.g., parking at the airport while TDY) | \$0.00 |
| F. Shipping costs (e.g., baggage fees, official equipment shipping fees) | \$0.00 |
| G. Constructed transportation cost of official travelers sharing driver's vehicle (Line 2F x # of passengers) | \$0.00 |
| H. Total avoided transportation cost | \$0.00 |

4. Additional considerations (non-monetary):
Check all that apply to this trip:

- Scheduled common carrier departure time, arrival time, or total travel time would negatively impact the mission
- Scheduled common carrier is not available or is not practical to support the mission
- Potential for traffic, weather, or routing delays would negatively impact the mission
- POV use would be more efficient, more economical, or result in a more expeditiously accomplished mission

Save

Sections 1 & 2
Constructed Itinerary and
Constructed Cost

Section 3
Cost Avoidances

Section 4
Other Considerations

Figure 6: DTS CTW – Authorization

The sections of the CTW provide key information the AO will use when deciding whether to limit your transportation reimbursement. They are:

- **Sections 1 and 2:** Enter details of the itinerary and transportation costs as if you were using the directed transportation mode. This establishes the constructed cost. If the AO limits your transportation reimbursement, this is the maximum amount you may receive to reimburse you for your transportation costs.
- **Section 3:** Enter additional travel-related costs that are neither in the constructed cost nor on the authorization, but that you would incur if you were to use the directed transportation mode. It helps the AO to better understand the complete cost of the trip, if it were accomplished using the directed transportation mode.
- **Section 4:** Select factors that could influence the overall trip cost or that could prevent you from accomplishing your mission if you used the directed transportation mode (e.g., shipping equipment costs, weather delay possibilities).



Constructed Travel Examples

Here are a few examples to help improve your understanding of constructed travel. Except for Scenario 5, let's assume the AO wanted you to take commercial air, but you wanted to drive your POV. Many other scenarios are, of course, possible.

Scenario 1: A simple comparison with cheaper airfare

1. Per your DTS authorization, your POV mileage and allowable reimbursable expenses equal **\$400**.
2. Per your CTW, the constructed airfare cost is **\$350**. You entered no cost avoidances or other considerations.
3. Result: Drive=**\$400**. Fly=**\$350**. The AO limited your transportation reimbursement, so you'll receive **\$350** if you drive.

Scenario 2: A simple comparison with cheaper driving costs

1. Per your DTS authorization, your POV mileage and allowable reimbursable expenses equal **\$650**.
2. Per your CTW, the constructed airfare cost is **\$800**. You entered no cost avoidances or other considerations.
3. Result: Drive=**\$650**. Fly=**\$800**. The AO did not limit your transportation reimbursement, so you will receive **\$650** if you drive.

Scenario 3: A comparison with cheaper airfare and cost avoidances

1. Per your DTS authorization, your POV mileage and allowable reimbursable expenses equal **\$450**.
2. Per your CTW, the constructed airfare cost is **\$375**. You'll have your own car at the TDY location and you won't have to rent a vehicle that you otherwise would have rented, so you entered a cost avoidance of **\$325** for the rental car and gas.
3. Result: Drive=**\$450**. Fly=**\$375** (+**\$325** for the rental car = an overall cost of **\$700**). Flying initially seems cheaper, but given the extra costs associated with the rental car, allowing you to drive is a better value for the Government. The AO did not limit your transportation reimbursement, so you will receive **\$450** if you drive.



**Constructed
Travel
Examples
(continued)**

Scenario 4: Another comparison with cheaper airfare and cost avoidances

1. Per your DTS authorization, your POV mileage and allowable reimbursable expenses equal **\$525**. You will also incur an additional **\$300** for per diem on the extra travel days required to drive to and from the TDY location.
2. Per your CTW, the constructed airfare cost is **\$550**. You'll have your own car at the TDY location and you won't have to rent a vehicle that you otherwise would have rented, so you entered a cost avoidance of **\$250** for the rental car and gas.
3. Result: Drive=**\$525** (+\$300 in extra per diem = an overall cost of **\$825**). Fly=**\$550** (+**\$250** for the rental car = an overall cost of **\$800**). Although the transportation costs are higher to fly, when you consider the extra per diem, flying is a better value for the Government, even after factoring in the extra costs associated with the rental car. The AO limited your transportation reimbursement and required you to enter a non-per diem status (e.g., leave) on all extra travel days, so you'll receive **\$525** if you drive, but no extra per diem.

Scenario 5: A voucher comparison with cost avoidances and additional considerations

1. Per your DTS voucher, you did not fly back to your PDS as the AO approved on the authorization. Instead, you drove a one-way rental car at a cost of **\$300**. As you explained in a comment, you used the rental car because A) a snowstorm closed the airport for your connecting flight, B) no other flights to your destination were available until the next day, and C) you had an urgent meeting at your duty station that you would have missed, if you stayed at the TDY location for an extra day.
2. Per your CTW, the authorized airfare cost for the return flight was **\$150**. It also shows that had you remained overnight to catch a re-scheduled flight, you would have incurred **\$125** for an extra day of per diem. It also shows the weather delay mentioned above, but without the explanation.
3. Result of this one-way trip: Drive=**\$300**. Fly=**\$150** (+**\$125** in extra per diem = an overall cost of **\$275**). Flying seems cheaper, even with the extra per diem factored in, but because of the additional considerations (the weather delay, the urgent meeting), the AO chose not to limit your transportation reimbursement, so you will receive **\$300** for the return trip to your PDS. **Note:** Remember when changing travel modes and incurring additional cost, it is a good idea to contact the AO for approval for the changes (e.g., one-way rental car).



Checking for Transportation Reimbursement Limitation

There are several ways you can see whether the AO limited your transportation reimbursement. This information paper shows just two of them. They both start with you logging onto DTS and viewing your travel document, which opens on the **Review Trip Authorization** (or **Voucher**) screen.

1. Scroll down to the **Accounting** section (Figure 7), which shows two costs, **Allowed** (Indicator 1) and **Actual** (Indicator 2).

- The **Actual** amount (Figure 7, Indicator 1) shows the costs you entered.
- The **Allowed** amount (Figure 7, Indicator 2) shows the costs the AO approved.

If the amounts match, the AO did not limit your transportation reimbursement. If the amount in the **ALLOWED** column is smaller than the **ACTUAL**, the AO limited your transportation reimbursement.

| ACCOUNTING LABEL | ORGANIZATION | ALLOWED | ACTUAL |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|
| 21 Default CIC:15L2POL2P33186 | DTMO SDN:002QPY | \$1680.75 | \$1705.47 |

Figure 7: Review Trip Screen (Accounting Summary Section)

2. Select **Sign and Submit** from the **Progress Bar**. The **Digital Signature** screen opens.

- Select **Show Previous Stamps** to open the document stamping history. If it contains the **CONSTRUCTED TRAVEL** stamp (Figure 8), the **Comment** identifies whether the AO limited your transportation reimbursement. Government Amount means they did; Traveler Amount means they did not. Go to **Cost Comparison** tool to see the costs involved.

| | 01/25/2021 02:50PMEST | NAME | COMMENT |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| | CONSTRUCTED TRAVEL | Chris A West | Government Amount |

Figure 8: Digital Signature Screen (Document History)



Checking for Transportation Reimbursement Limitation (continued)

Note: When **Constructed Travel** rules apply, the **Digital Signature** screen displays a **CTW Cost Comparison** tool (Figure 9). The screen displays the figures the AO used when deciding whether to limit your transportation reimbursement, but does not identify whether they actually limited the trip. See the **Digital Signature** stamp for transportation reimbursement.

| CONSTRUCTED TRAVEL WORKSHEET (CTW) COST COMPARISON | | | |
|--|-----------|--|-----------|
| The traveler has indicated a preferred mode of transportation different from the one directed by their AO. The AO has approved the following allowed cost: | | | |
| Government Preferred Transportation | | Traveler Preferred Transportation | |
| Transportation Costs (Box 2.D)* | \$ 120.00 | Pvt Auto-TDY/TAD | \$156.97 |
| TMC Fee (Box 2.E)* | \$ 12.25 | | |
| <hr/> | | <hr/> | |
| Total Allowed Cost | \$ 132.25 | Total Allowed Cost | \$ 156.97 |

Figure 9: Digital Signature Screen (CTW Cost Comparison Tool)

Key JTR References

Regulations about constructed travel appear throughout the [JTR](#). Below are some key JTR entries to consult when using constructed travel:

- **JTR, Ch. 2, Par. 020210** Privately Owned Vehicles (POV), for information on:
 - Using private autos and motorcycles
 - Cost comparisons, highlighting constructed costs allowable when comparing POVs against other transportation modes
 - Cost comparisons that apply when using mixed transportation modes, including a POV
- **JTR, Appendix A: Definition of Policy Constructed Airfare**

Resources

On the DTMO website, the following resources are available.

- DTS authorizations - [DTS Guide 2](#)
- DTS vouchers - [DTS Guide 3](#)
- Adding mileage - [How to Calculate POV Mileage Allowances](#)
- [Joint Travel Regulation \(JTR\)](#)
- Constructed Travel - Web-Based Training (WBT) access through [Passport](#)
- The DTS Approval Process - Web-Based Training (WBT) access through [Passport](#)