When you go on official travel, 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 calls a personal vehicle (e.g., car, motorcycle) 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 starters, it’s important to understand that constructed travel does not apply on most trips. To determine if constructed travel applies, 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).
When constructed travel applies, here’s what happens:

1. You create your DTS authorization to show 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 this process.
Some actions you take in DTS trigger a **Constructed Travel Worksheet** pre-audit flag (Figure 2, Indicator 1), which tells you that you may need to submit a CTW. 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.

- If you do need to complete a CTW, fill one out following the instructions below, attach it to your DTS authorization, and justify the flag by stating that the CTW is attached.

**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 to indicate en route travel (travel mode to and from the TDY location).
  
  - Selecting any expense on the **Expenses** 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 – To/From TDY
    - **Transportation Expense**: Rental Car – at TDY Area
    - **Ticketed Expense**: Bus Ticket (i.e., Commercial Bus).
• 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.

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

1. Open through DTS:
   a. Navigate to your travel document’s 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 3).

2. Select a direct link (or copy & paste the URL into the web browser of your choice):

Complete instructions for completing the CTWs are also available. You should always consult them as you complete a CTW. Open the instructions by selecting Worksheet Instructions in the CTW (Figure 3, Indicator 1) or use a direct link:

• Instructions for CTW for authorizations:

• Instructions for CTW for vouchers:
CTW Layout

Each CTW has four main sections, as shown in Figure 3. The CTW instructions (Figure 3, Indicator 1) explain in detail how to complete the CTW.

![CTW Layout Diagram]

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 better understand the complete cost of the trip, if it were accomplished using the directed transportation mode.

- **Section 4**: Select factors that could impact 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).
Here are a few examples to help improve your understanding of constructed travel. Except for Scenario 5, they all 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. Also, since you’ll have your own car at the TDY location, 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.
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. Also, since you’ll have your own car at the TDY location, 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. ... Though it would have been easier and better to contact the AO from the TDY location to get verbal approval for the use of the rental car, eliminating the need for the CTW.
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 opening your travel document, which opens on the Review Trip Authorization (or Voucher) screen.

1. Scroll down to the Accounting section (Figure 4), which shows two costs, **Allowed** (Indicator 1) and **Actual** (Indicator 2).

   - The **Actual** amount (Figure 4, Indicator 1) shows the costs you entered.
   - The **Allowed** amount (Figure 4, 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, the AO limited your transportation reimbursement.

   ![Figure 4: Review Trip Screen (Accounting Summary Section)](image)

2. Select Sign and Submit on 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 6), the **Comment** identifies whether the AO limited your transportation reimbursement. Government Amount means they did; Traveler Amount means they did not. It doesn’t tell you the costs involved, however.

   ![Figure 6: Digital Signature Screen (Document History)](image)
Note: When Constructed Travel is in play, the Digital Signature screen displays a CTW Cost Comparison tool (Figure 5). It shows the figures the AO used when deciding whether to limit your transportation reimbursement, but doesn’t identify whether they actually limited it.

![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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government Preferred Transportation</th>
<th>Traveler Preferred Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Costs (Box 2.D)*</td>
<td>Pvt. Auto-TD/TV/TAD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$120.00</td>
<td>$156.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TMC Fee (Box 2.E)*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$12.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Allowed Cost</td>
<td>Total Allowed Cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$132.25</td>
<td>$156.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5: Digital Signature Screen (CTW Cost Comparison Tool)

Key JTR Paragraphs

Regulations about constructed travel appear throughout the JTR. Although the following list is not comprehensive, it does contain some of the key entries you should 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**