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2015 Excellence in Practice Award Winners
Each year we recognize DoD travel professionals who have excelled in travel program management and have successfully addressed issues with exemplary professional skill, creativity, and resourcefulness. Learn who earned this year’s top awards.

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.

A Message from the DTMO Director
In previous editions of the Dispatch, I've touted that change is already afoot and we are beginning to see the fruits of our labor. We have been busy reviewing statutes, policies, business processes, and how we source travel services in a concerted effort to find ways to make travel more affordable and efficient. In this edition, we offer a look at one of the most significant changes to the travel enterprise yet – the DoD Integrated Lodging Program Pilot.

This pilot is about leveraging the Department's buying power and shifting market share; it is about ensuring "duty of care" and enhancing satisfaction for our travelers; it is about improving program management and increasing data collection. Implementing a corporate model to strategically source our $1.5B annual lodging spend is a win-win for the traveler and the Department.

It is important to remember that this is a pilot, a small-scale proof of concept test to help us decide how to launch a full-scale lodging program. We will review the successes and failures of the pilot. We will collect and analyze customer feedback and other pilot data to form the basis for what we want to be a high quality, cost effective lodging program of the future.

The DoD Integrated Lodging Program Pilot is just one example of the strategic initiatives we are working on to reform DoD travel. In the months ahead I will share more on our additional endeavors.

— Harvey Johnson, Director, DTMO
DoD Launches an Integrated Lodging Program Pilot

On June 15, 2015, the Department of Defense launched an Integrated Lodging Program Pilot that provides quality government (DoD) and commercial lodging, with greater safety and security and better services at reduced rates. Travelers now have the ability to book both types of lodging through the Defense Travel System (DTS) and are directed to use DoD lodging facilities or preferred commercial lodging when TDY to select pilot sites.

The effort to develop an enterprise-wide program was facilitated by the National Defense Authorization Act 2015, which authorizes the Secretary of Defense to institute a government lodging program to provide quality government or commercial lodging for civilians or members of the Military Services performing duty on official travel.

The DoD Integrated Lodging Program Pilot affords a tremendous 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. An Integrated Lodging Program will:

- Enable travelers to use DTS to find trusted lodging providers (DoD lodging facilities and preferred commercial lodging).
- Ensure travelers are staying in quality lodging facilities that are close to TDY locations; are protected from certain fees; and provide amenities at no additional cost with room rates below the established government per diem rates.
- Enhance traveler care and satisfaction; provide greater traveler security; reduce lodging spend per night; and improve program management and data collection.

Supporting Policy

As of June 15, 2015, the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR) directs travelers who are TDY to select pilot sites to stay in government quarters or preferred commercial lodging facilities and use DTS to book their stay.

- **Orders list TDY location as a military installation:** If a traveler’s orders list the TDY location as a military installation at a pilot site, the traveler is directed to use DoD lodging facilities if available. If the traveler is a service member, this requirement applies for TDY to any military installation, both at a pilot site and non-pilot site. If DoD lodging facilities are available and the traveler chooses other accommodations (and no exemption applies), lodging cost reimbursement is limited to the cost of available DoD lodging.

- **Orders list TDY location as pilot site city or metro area:** If a traveler’s orders list the TDY location as a pilot site city or surrounding metro area, the traveler is directed to book preferred commercial lodging, if available. If preferred commercial lodging is available and not used (and no exemption applies), lodging cost reimbursement is limited to the highest negotiated rate for preferred lodging at that pilot site.

DoD travelers with access to DTS are required to make lodging arrangements through the reservation module in DTS and should only contact their Commercial Travel Office to arrange commercial lodging when DTS is not...
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available. Travelers should not contact their Commercial Travel Office for assistance booking DoD lodging facilities. If DTS is not available, travelers should book DoD lodging facilities through www.dodlodging.net or by contacting the government lodging facility or reservation center directly.

An Authorizing Official may authorize exceptions based on mission, distance, lower rate, as well as other exceptions outlined in the JTR. Authorizations approved on or after June 15, 2015 are subject to this new policy.

DTS Modifications

To facilitate policy compliance, DTS has been modified to guide travelers to directed lodging before displaying other options. When TDY (for more than one night) to a pilot site, DTS will automatically route users to the lodging reservation module and to directed lodging based on their TDY location (pilot site city/metro area or installation). If TDY to a military installation at a non-pilot site, users must check the lodging box to be routed to the lodging reservation module.

Two tabs, one for DoD Lodging and another for DoD Preferred Commercial Lodging, will be added to the current lodging tab structure (Figure 1). If a traveler’s TDY location is a military installation at a pilot site, the DoD Lodging tab will be enabled if DoD lodging is available. It is important to note that travelers are able to book Air Force Inns, Navy Gateway Inns & Suites, and Army lodging in DTS. Other government lodging including Navy Lodge (non-recreational) and Marine Corps lodging will be incrementally added to DTS in the near future. Per the JTR, DoD civilians are not required to use government lodging (when TDY to U.S. military installation at a pilot site) when government lodging is not available in DTS. Service members, if directed by an Authorizing Official, must check government lodging available outside the system.

The Preferred Lodging tab appears if the user declines available DoD lodging or when a traveler is TDY to a pilot location metro area and there are preferred commercial rooms available. Lodging properties on this tab meet strict quality, safety and security requirements and offer rates below per diem, as well as, additional traveler protections and conveniences such as free internet and parking. Selecting the decline button on the Preferred Lodging tab will enable the last two remaining tabs – Other Safety Compliant and Other Rates.

With this new Integrated Lodging Program Pilot functionality, the system includes new pop-ups to alert travelers to the policy and pre-audits with justifications for non-use of available directed lodging. When a traveler declines directed lodging, they must select from a drop down menu of justifications and are prompted to enter notes in a free-form box during the pre-audit process. Depending on the justification, the system will automatically limit reimbursement if a traveler declines available government or preferred commercial lodging.

Additionally, DTS will automatically secure a non-availability confirmation number when government lodging is not available, precluding travelers from having to go directly to the lodging facility to obtain. The number appears in an advisory message and also on the DTS Preview Trip screen.

When traveling to non-pilot sites, travelers will also be able to book government lodging facilities directly in DTS.

The Integrated Lodging Program Pilot will provide valuable insights for sourcing and managing an enterprise-wide program; it is the genesis of a model for managing the Department’s future lodging requirements. The pilot is authorized to run through 2019 and DTMO expects that additional pilot sites will be added along the way. Additional information on this program is available at: www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/lodging.cfm.
Chip & PIN Cards Issued to DoD Cardholders

Last year, in response to the President’s Executive Order requiring current government payment cards to be upgraded with enhanced security features, DoD announced that all DoD Government Travel Charge Cards (GTCC) would be replaced with Chip and PIN cards.

In February, Citi began the first phase of the effort by issuing Chip and PIN cards to those accounts with cards that were expiring or being replaced, and to all new cardholder applicants. In July and continuing through October, Citi will begin the second phase by issuing Chip and PIN cards to all active accounts. After that timeframe all new accounts, as well as account reissues, will be issued the Chip and PIN cards.

Each cardholder, upon receipt of their new Chip and PIN card (regardless of travel status), must use the instructions on the sticker affixed to the card to activate their card. As of March 2015, only 62% of cardholders who were mailed a new Chip and PIN card had activated it. While cardholders’ old magnetic stripe card remains active (unless it is expiring or lost/stolen) until the new card is activated, it is more susceptible to ‘skimming’ and other forms of fraud. Failure to confirm receipt of the new Chip and PIN card could potentially lead to the deactivation of the existing magnetic stripe card.

It is also very important that cardholders update their DTS profiles with their new expiration date (or card number if the card is being replaced because it was lost or stolen). Failure to take this simple step means that a Commercial Travel Office is unable to issue an airline ticket without speaking to the cardholder first. This leads to a cardholder being charged a CTO fee and could potentially mean a higher cost flight/ticket. Instructions for how to update a DTS profile are available at: http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/GTCC_Profile_Update.pdf.

Additional information, including FAQs, is available at www.defensetravel.dod.mil. Any questions about the issuance of Chip and PIN cards should be directed to Agency Program Coordinators.

What to Do

1. Update contact information. Log in to CitiManager www.citimanager.com/login and navigate to My Card/Card Maintenance to ensure your mailing, email and other contact information is correct.

2. Call to Activate. When you receive your card, call to activate it by using the number on the front of the card. It is at this time that you will select your 4-digit pin.

3. Update DTS profile. Update your account information to ensure that your travel reservations are not cancelled.
Each year DTMO recognizes top performers in DoD travel for the value and the services they provide to their travel program through the annual Excellence in Practice Awards. Below is a selection of tips and best practices from this year’s runners-up that epitomize the savvy travel manager.

- **B. Romine, DFAS** – Leverages an ePortal to share tips and to quickly share information within her organization. Provides recurring training and constructive feedback to ODTAs, FDTAs, AOs, and ROs.

- **C. Wallace, WHS** – Motivates ODTAs with her can-do attitude. Routinely provides strong customer service and sees every customer’s travel-related matter through to a successful resolution.

- **C. Hale, MDA** – Uses exceptional mentorship to improve his agency’s travel program. Attends training with his ODTAs and FDTAs, submits exceptional teammates for awards, and conducts recurring teambuilding activities.

- **J. Coleman, JIATF-W** – Develops and implements simple, effective local travel policies that reduce improper payments. Hosts monthly all-hands meetings with his travelers, AOs, and DTAs.

- **D. Cooper, USA** – Provides recurring classroom and desk-side training to address emerging travel and GTCC trends in her command. Promptly shares travel-related information with her travelers and DTAs to prevent mission failure and to build a knowledgeable team.

- **D. Hunt** – USA – Performs routine audits of travel vouchers for accuracy. Offers recommendations to senior leadership on ways to enhance his command’s travel program and then implements the solutions in close partnership with his ODTAs and FDTAs.

- **M. Collins, USA** – Identifies negative or inefficient travel-related trends and takes immediate corrective action, resulting in significant time savings for his customers. Provides exceptional one-on-one attention to his ODTAs and travelers, improving learning and communications within his organization.

- **Lara, USAF** – Develops site-specific training material to address her audience’s learning needs. Meets individually with each ODTA to discuss their strengths and weaknesses, as well as a strategy for professional development.

- **D. Whittaker, USAF** – Offers “shadowing” sessions for her ODTAs, where she shares best practices and solicits their feedback for improving the organization’s travel program. Frequently meets with her ODTAs and AOs to provide informal training and offer candid recommendations.

- **D. Maclachlan, USAF** – Provides on-site visits and adjusts his schedule to meet the needs of his customers. Routinely sets goals for voucher timeliness and takes the necessary actions to ensure that his reserve base meets those goals.

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Q: As an Authorizing Official I like to keep up with current travel policy. Is there anywhere to find out what has been changed?

Absolutely. First, on our Travel Regulations webpage (www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/travelreg.cfm), there is a Travel Regulations Notices box on the left side that includes links to all immediate, pending and monthly Joint Travel Regulation (JTR) changes. Additionally, we publish a record of changes for that month in the first part of the JTR itself. Probably the most helpful for keeping current is our Travel Regulations RSS Feed. We post all changes to the JTR and other travel regulations to this feed in real time. You can access the feed by going to www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/rss.cfm and clicking on the actual feed. To make it even easier, we recommend that you subscribe to the feed so that all updates appear in the RSS Feed folder in your Outlook email.
Tell Your Travelers About . . .

**TSA Pre✓**

Who doesn’t like shorter lines and less hassle at airports? Tell your travelers about TSA’s voluntary, expedited security screening program, TSA Precheck. When signed up to participate, travelers can keep on their shoes, belt and light jacket, and leave laptops and 3-1-1 compliant liquids in their carry-on bags when going through security at over 120 domestic airports. The program is open to DoD civilians and Service members (including Reservists, National Guardsmen, members of the Coast Guard and students at the U.S. Military Academy, U.S. Naval Academy, and the U.S. Air Force Academy) at no cost.

To participate:

1. **Locate your DoD ID number.** Your DoD ID number is the 10-digit number found on the back of your Common Access Card (CAC). If your CAC doesn’t have a DoD ID number, find it by signing in to the milConnect website (https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect) and selecting “My Profile.”

2. **Opt-in to the program through milConnect.** *(Applies to DoD civilians only, Service members can skip to step 3)* Go to https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect and click on the “My Profile” tab and then click on the “CIV” tab. In the Personnel Status Information box, check the “TSA Precheck Program” box and scroll to the bottom of the page and click “submit”. Service members are already eligible and do not need to opt into the program.

3. **Add your DoD ID number to your DTS profile.** Log in and select Traveler Setup > Update Personal Profile from the tabs at the top of the DTS Welcome screen. Then, select My TSA Information from the profile update from the links at the top. Add your DoD ID number as the Known Traveler Number and click “save.”

4. **Ensure your reservation contains your DoD ID number.** If your DoD number is part of your DTS profile, it will automatically be part of future TDY airline reservations made through the system. 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. If making leisure airline reservations, use your DoD ID number as the “Known Traveler Number.”

Service members do not need to be in uniform to use the program. Accompanying family members ages 12 and under can be processed through expedited screening as well. For more information including frequently asked questions, go to www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/news.cfm?ID=18 or TSA’s website, www.tsa.gov/hs-precheck.
Congratulations to the 2015 Excellence in Practice Award Winners

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. This year’s award winners demonstrated an exceptional level of service, which resulted in more efficient and effective travel programs.

THE CHAMPION

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 Ms. D. Zabava for her support to the United States Army North (USANORTH) – Fifth Army.

As the LDTA of USANORTH – Fifth Army, Ms. Zabava assisted over 500 travelers, 50 Authorizing Officials, and 20 ODTAs in both a DoD civilian employee and a U.S. Army reservist capacity. In both roles, Ms. Zabava was applauded for her eye to efficiencies, her teaching ability, and her positive, can-do attitude.

Ms. Zabava actively monitored her organization’s travel to identify trends that required corrective action. In one notable example, she noticed that travelers going to the same country were committing the same types of errors, so she provided hands-on training to travelers and AOs to prevent similar mistakes. In another situation, when she noticed that her organization’s ODTAs spent a considerable length of time to create new lines of accounting for the new fiscal year, she developed a more-streamlined process that saved time and resulted in greater interface accuracy between DTS and GFEBS.

Ms. Zabava has been described as someone who “never passed up a teaching moment,” which she displayed through her mentoring and teaching to ODTAs, AOs, and travelers alike. She provided her ODTAs with recurring in-person and virtual training to address contemporary organizational travel trends and regulatory changes. Her training plan worked – USANORTH – Fifth Army exceeded its audit readiness goals due to her efforts. Furthermore, her positive attitude and ambition motivated USANORTH – Fifth Army’s ODTAs to identify efficiencies within their area of purview, improve internal communication, and expand travel training in the organization.

Ms. Zabavas’s efforts to improve USANORTH – Fifth Army’s travel program – and the personnel that support it – truly demonstrate that she encompasses the essence of a champion.


About the Awards

DTMO awards the Excellence in Practices Awards annually. The next nomination period will begin in late fall 2015. If you are interested in nominating a fellow travel professional or team, please continue to monitor the Excellence in Practice webpage for additional information and nomination forms.
THE ELITE

The Elite Award recognizes a local help desk team whose superior efforts result in continuous improvement and outstanding customer care. This year’s recipient is the Naval Undersea Warfare Center (NUWC) Division, Keyport and Naval Sea Logistics Center (NSLC) Travel Team.

The NUWC Division, Keyport (Echelon IV) and the NSLC (Echelon V) partnered in FY2014 to form a travel team intended to provide exceptional customer service and technical expertise to its combined 1,600 travelers. Despite a geographical separation of 3,000 miles, the two echelons’ partnership thrived because of their shared commitment to standardization, efficiency, and innovation, resulting in an elite help desk for its customers.

The NUWC Division, Keyport and NSLC Travel Team’s combined efforts resulted in a faster approval of travel vouchers, an improvement in policy compliance, a consistently low Government Travel Charge Card delinquency rate, and an enhanced oversight of travel among both echelons’ management, to name a few.

The NUWC Division, Keyport and NSLC Travel Team also demonstrated its commitment to proactive customer service by offering reference materials and regular training to its customers. The partnership of the two echelons fostered an environment that encouraged peer-to-peer learning among DTAs, AOs, and travelers alike, which produced a more-engaged user base and improved cross-training on travel-related topics. The help desk partners’ passionate commitment to their customers earned them a high rate of customer satisfaction and enhanced the performance of their respective travel programs.

The NUWC Division, Keyport and NSLC Travel Team’s track record as a proactive, training-focused team exemplifies what it means to be an elite help desk.

Congratulations to the other award nominees in this category: Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, Fleet Readiness Center Southwest Travel Department, Joint Interagency Task Force West, Joint Staff JSSSO Travel Office, Office of the Chief Defense Counsel Administrative Team, USAFA DTS Local Help Desk

THE ICON

The Icon Award recognizes a major command or agency whose strategies and tactics enhance their travel program capabilities for their subordinate sites. This year’s recipient is the Headquarters, Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC).

The HQ AFSOC team supported 19,000 travelers in AFSOC, which had the distinction of being the most commonly deployed command in the Air Force. Despite the obstacles that this distinction posed, the HQ AFSOC travel team was adept at quickly and accurately communicating critical messages to their personnel. For example, the HQ AFSOC team mitigated deviations from policy and prevented mission failure by swiftly informing AFSOC personnel of regulatory and business process changes.

The AFSOC’s DTAs, AOs and travelers had a reputation of being well-trained and efficient because of the HQ AFSOC team’s training strategy. The team frequently made use of travel training resources offered by the DTMO and also provided AFSOC-specific supplementary training materials.

The HQ AFSOC was renowned for its savvy AFSOC-wide travel help desk. The HQ AFSOC team’s refined customer service lifecycle consisted of quick responses to inquiries, trend analysis to identify the endemic issues confronted by AFSOC personnel, and frequent updates to AFSOC travel training materials. The team’s efforts produced a satisfied customer base and a streamlined travel program. Through its superb management of a complicated travel program, the HQ AFSOC exemplified what it means to be an icon in the Department of Defense.
DTMO Launches New RSS Feed

The DTMO recently launched a new RSS Feed for Agency Program Coordinators and Component Program Managers who manage the Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) program. RSS feeds provide timely information in an easy to read format that can be delivered directly to your desktop.

The new APC Toolkit RSS Feed will provide 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.

In addition to this feed, we also offer other feeds:

- **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.
- **Travel Assistance Center Update** – provides relevant and timely information regarding emerging issues, updates, and workarounds related to DTS.

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](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/rss.cfm)

To date, the DoD Travel Policy Compliance Program has identified over $12.2M in potential errors and has collected over $3.9M worth of 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/site/compliance.cfm](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/compliance.cfm)

**About the Defense Travel Dispatch**

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