Progress Made Toward Travel Policy Simplification
Over the past year, many changes have been made to support writing a simpler, more concise Joint Travel Regulations (JTR) and it will culminate in 2017 when a revised JTR is published.

Recent Notable Policy Changes
Learn about recent changes to the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR) including updates to the Restricted Airfare policy, change in Commercial Travel Office nomenclature, and elimination of Appendix O.

Integrated Lodging Program Pilot Expands Again January 1
In January 2017, the number of pilot sites will expand, one location will no longer be deemed a pilot site, and the list of participating DoD Preferred commercial lodging properties will change.

Travel Certificate Program For AOs
As part of its Travel Certificate Program, DTMO now offers a specialized training certificate for Authorizing Officials (AOs). Learn what it entails and how to begin earning your certificate.

A Message from the DTMO Director
Since 2011, DTMO has focused on reforming the travel enterprise. From the implementation of travel efficiencies and the merger of the JFTR and JTR, to the launch of the DoD Integrated Lodging Program Pilot and DoD Travel System Pilot, we have already made big strides towards this vision. But there is still more to do. We must continue to simplify policy and improve our business processes to maximize policy understanding. We must understand our customers’ needs and leverage industry-leading technology to improve the delivery of travel services. We must improve our visibility and understanding of DoD travel spend and adopt travel industry best practices to optimize cost effective travel. As the newly appointed Director of the DTMO, I will continue to champion these strategic goals to meet and exceed the needs of our customers. Over the next year, you will see even more progress. In this issue, you’ll find ‘An Update on Travel Policy Simplification’ on page 2.

I am honored to lead a dedicated team that is committed to improving travel across the Department. I am excited about where we are going and I hope you are too.

— Bill Mansell, Director, DTMO

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.
Progress Towards Travel Policy Simplification

It is no secret that DoD travel is encumbered by complex rules and regulations – causing expensive management systems, complicated allowance structures, extensive training, and frustrated travelers. Since 2011, DoD has been working to rectify this by reforming travel policy. Travel policy reform is intended to standardize and/or provide cost savings opportunities. It is the key underpinning that facilitates all other DoD travel reform efforts. This effort gained momentum in April 2015 when the United States Digital Service (USDS), part of the Executive Office of the President, conducted a 2-week “Discovery Sprint” for DoD on Defense Travel System Modernization. Recommendations included streamlining the JTR. In response, DoD implemented a surge capability for the travel policy reform effort already underway. Since then, many changes have been made to eliminate redundancies, reduce confusion for travelers and Authorizing Officials, and pay the way for a re-write of the JTR with clearer, simpler language.

The current JTR has undergone a restructure under a new framework and has been rewritten in plain language. The resulting revised JTR will be easier to navigate, easier to understand, and shorter in length. It will consist of one book, with two volumes and cover all of the travel authorities that it does today. No policies will change.

The revised JTR will be implemented in a phased approach. The new framework and revised chapters on general travel policies, standard allowances, and TDY travel is slated for approval in January 2017 and chapter 4, Government-Funded Travel in February. Both the framework and revised chapters will be effective on 1 April 2017. Phase 2, planned for no later than October 2017, will consist of a revision to the remaining chapters on Permanent Duty Travel, evacuation travel and, appendices 1 and 2.

All changes associated with the revised JTR are being staffed through the standard Per Diem Travel and Transportation Allowance Committee (PDTATAC) approval process. The framework and chapters 1-3 have been vetted and approved by two advisory panels, the Military Advisory Panel (MAP) and Civilian Advisory Panel (CAP), and are awaiting final approval by the PDTATAC, a senior level board to the MAP/CAP. Remaining JTR revisions will be approved by the MAP and CAP.

When approved, the revised JTR will include simplified and standardized allowances, be reorganized to improve navigation, and include simplified the language aimed at improving the overall understanding of travel policy. Specifically, here is what is changing:

1. **Simplified and Standardized Allowances.**

DTMO has been analyzing travel allowances authorized by the JTR through the development of a model, the Travel
Reengineering Information Processing System (TRIPS), which was designed to identify and consolidate types of travel, and identify location-related allowances. The model provides opportunities to standardize policy and a roadmap on how to improve the overall framework. The revised JTR will include the results of the model including broader categories of travel, and consolidated allowance groups, types of travelers, allowance locations, and types of approving officials. Through this simplification and standardization, travelers and Approving Officials will have a better understanding of what allowances are permitted for the types of travel being performed, without the need to differentiate between minor nuances that can complicate what is authorized.

2. Framework. (Pending PDTATAC Approval)

First, those JTR chapters and appendices that detail allowances that most travelers are almost always eligible to receive are consolidated into a single chapter that explains a traveler’s “standard TDY allowances” (Chapter 2). Chapter 3 is dedicated to

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<th>Current Joint Travel Regulations</th>
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<td>Chapter 1: General</td>
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<td>Chapter 2: Official Travel</td>
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<td>Chapter 3: Transportation</td>
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Revised Joint Travel Regulations

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<th>Volume 1</th>
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<td>Chapter 1: General Policies</td>
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<td>Chapter 4: Gov’t-Funded Leave</td>
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<td>Chapter 5: Permanent Duty Travel</td>
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<td>Chapter 6: Evacuation Travel</td>
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<td>Chapter 7: Resources</td>
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Those travel types that mostly rely on standard allowances, though each allows or mandates certain variations from those standards. Chapter 3 does not repeat the standard allowances; rather, it addresses the manner in which each travel type differs from them. Other special types of travel like Permanent Duty or Evacuation Travel remain in separate chapters as they do today.

Next, where vastly dissimilar allowances were combined into a single chapter or appendix, the revised JTR separates and moves them to more logical places based on the category of travel. For instance, in Chapter 7, Special Circumstances Travel, many trip types now receive standard allowances (found in chapter 2), so they will cease to appear separately, but will now be included under the corresponding category of travel. Additionally, in the current JTR, miscellaneous reimbursable expenses are all listed in Appendix G, but are separated and moved to more logical locations. Reimbursable expenses accrued in connection with overnight lodging, for example, are now in the lodging per diem section of the standard allowances chapter.
While analyzing the current JTR, no less than three chapters and four appendices address allowances that a person may be entitled, but not directly in connection with official travel. To avoid confusion between non-travel and travel regulations, chapters dedicated to “station allowances” are separated into a new volume; regulations directly related to travel are now in a separate, more concise and user-friendly volume. The JTR remains one Regulation, with two volumes.

Finally, several of the current appendices like Appendix P: City Pair Program or Appendix T: Standard Data Elements are mainly administrative in nature or are designed as reference information. While they are partially related to official travel, they deal more with eligibility rules, travel programs descriptions, and other administrative functions. Those are added to Chapter 7 or deleted if referenced somewhere else.

3. Languages and Ease of Use

When the revised JTR is published, it will be more readable and written in plain language so that the reader can easily understand the information. The revised JTR will features:

- **Extensive use of if/then tables** – Instead of long paragraphs to explain all possible travel permutations, the revised JTR makes extensive use of short tables making it easier to understand.

- **Standardized terminology** – The revised JTR uses the same terminology throughout, making it easier to understand and follow which allowances apply. For example, you no longer have to remember the difference between a “vehicle” and a “conveyance.”

- **Less repetition** – Those instances where the same information is repeated are removed. For example, there are fewer statements telling you that you must usually arrange your trip through a TMC, not 237.

The revised JTR includes simplified business rules, standardized allowances for military and civilian travelers where policy reform initiatives have been adopted; organized in a more logical flow under a new framework; and rewritten to make it easier for travelers and travel administrators to understand.

**Resources**

To help you navigate these changes, the following resources are available:

- **Training**: In February, DTMO will begin offering an updated JTR Distance Learning course to help explain the changes. For more information on how to sign up for training, go to: [http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/training.cfm#lookup](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/training.cfm#lookup).

- **Travel Regulations RSS Feed**: Stay abreast of all JTR policy changes by subscribing to the Travel Regulations RSS Feed. Notifications of changes can be delivered directly to your inbox. For more information, go to: [http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/rss.cfm](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/rss.cfm). *Note: RSS Feed functionality does not work when using Chrome.*

- **MAP/CAP Representative**: If you have any questions or concerns related to this initiative, contact your respective PDTATA/C Military Advisory Panel (MAP) or Civilian Advisory Panel (CAP) representative. A current listing is available on the DTMO website at: [http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/perdiem/pdcContacts.pdf](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/perdiem/pdcContacts.pdf).

- **DTMO Website**: Upon final approval, the revised JTR will be posted on the Travel Regulations webpage, [http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/travelreg.cfm](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/travelreg.cfm), of the DTMO website.
Recent Notable Policy Changes

The PDTATAV approved the following notable Joint Travel Regulations (JTR) policy changes. To view the current version of the JTR, visit the Travel Regulations webpage. To stay abreast of all JTR policy changes, subscribe to the Travel Regulations RSS Feed. For more information, go to: http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/rss.cfm.

1. Commercial Travel Office to Travel Management Company

The Per Diem, Travel and Transportation Allowance Committee (PDTATAV) approved Uniform and Civilian Travel Decision (UTD/CTD) 127-16(I), which replaces the term ‘Commercial Travel Office (CTO)’ with the term ‘Travel Management Company (TMC)’ throughout the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR). This change aligns the JTR with current industry terminology as is used by other Federal Agencies. There is no change in regulatory authority with this change in this nomenclature.

As of 1 November, the abbreviation “TMC” replaced “CTO” throughout the JTR with no other explanation other than the definition in Appendix A1 and its original use in the regulation. The definition of a Travel Management Company or TMC reads: “A commercial activity providing a full range of commercial travel and ticketing services for official travel under a contract with the Gov’t. Also called a Travel Management Center (TMC) under GSA’s program, this was formerly referred to as a Commercial Travel Office (CTO) within the JTR.” The key point of the definition is, “…under a contract with the Gov’t.” The change in terminology does not authorize a traveler to go to just any travel management company to arrange official travel.

It will take time to change the new abbreviation, so any references to a CTO that have not been replaced will mean the same thing. Like any change to DTS, replacing CTO with TMC is subject to the established DTS change management process and the priorities set by the DTIB. There are no immediate plans to make these cosmetic changes in DTS.

2. Changes to Restricted Airfare Policy

In response to OMB Memorandum 12-12 and the President’s Executive Order (EO) 13589, “Promoting Efficient Spending,” DoD looked to restricted airfares as a cost savings to the Government (taxpayer) when warranted. While the JTR already permitted the travel authorizing official (AO) to approve purchase of a restricted ticket, because of the complicated rules regarding change fees and cancellation penalties, very few organizations used restricted tickets. DTMO developed a Restricted Airfare Checklist to assist travelers and AOs in determining when it is appropriate to use a restricted fare. The Per Diem, Travel and Transportation Allowance Committee (PDTATAV) added the requirement for AOs to use this checklist before approving any restricted ticket. Recently, PDTATAV approved MAP/CAP item 104-16(E) and MAP/CAP item 118-16(E) which changed the JTR to no longer require the AO to use the checklist when a Contract City-Pair fare was not available, leaving it up to the AO to determine whether the potential savings from using a restricted ticket was worth the risk of the traveler incurring change fees or cancellation penalties due to a change in the travel requirements. This is to encourage expanded use of restricted airfare when appropriate. If a

Important Steps for Using Restricted Fares

1. Prior to reserving a restricted fare through the TMC/CTO, travelers should consult their Authorizing Official to assist with determining whether the savings from a reduced fare is worth the risk that the itinerary will change, as well as to coordinate timely approval of the authorization to ensure proper ticketing.

2. The traveler requests assistance from the TMC/CTO to book a restricted fare through comments via the CTO Assistance button in DTS.

3. The traveler submits the authorization to the Authorizing Official.

4. The Authorizing Official approves the authorization immediately to ensure ticketing within the shortened ticketing timeline.

5. The traveler MUST then contact the TMC/CTO immediately upon Authorizing Official approval to have the ticket issued.

(Continued on page 6)
DTMO MAILBOX

QUESTION: Where can I find a list of DoD Preferred hotels available at a pilot site?

A listing of DoD Preferred commercial hotels is available at: www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/lodging. Keep in mind that this listing changes annually when hotels reapply for the program, anytime hotels are removed from the program, or when new pilot sites are added to the program.

QUESTION: I am traveling to an Integrated Lodging Program Pilot site and the privatized lodging option is showing rooms with rates above what is listed on the official rates list. Since I’m not declining use, am I allowed to stay in a room with a higher rate and still receive full reimbursement?

Lodging properties may offer more than one type of room with varying rates. As long as you are staying at the directed lodging facility (DoD, Privatized, or DoD Preferred commercial lodging), you are entitled to full reimbursement despite the room rate. The ILPP Rate document (www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/lodging) only provides the amount that travelers would be reimbursed if directed lodging was declined. Rates at participating lodging properties (DoD, privatized, and DoD preferred) offer special DoD rates that are below per diem. As long as you do not decline directed lodging (by selecting “decline” in the DTS pop-up), you are entitled to full reimbursement.

Be Aware: Stealth Marketing in Hotels

Across the United States, hoteliers are seeing an increase in stealth marketing tactics occurring at their properties. Marketers are posing as travelers and sneaking into hotels to go floor-to-floor distributing flyers or menus for fake restaurants underneath guest doors. When travelers call to place a take out order, they provide their name and credit card number, which is then used to make fraudulent purchases. In some cases, marketers are even so brazen to deliver pizza, so that the unsuspecting traveler is not aware of the scheme until it is too late.

It is always best to contact the front desk for a list of preferred restaurants if you are interested in ordering take out while staying in a hotel. If you are the recipient of a flyer or menu shoved under your hotel door, contact the front desk to let them know and be sure to verify the legitimacy of the restaurant before calling to place an order.

In light of these policy updates, Services and Agencies should review local business rules to ensure they cover restricted airfare use and how to handle shortened ticketing timelines. Travelers and Authorizing Officials should be aware of the fare rules and shortened ticketing timelines associated with restricted airfares. Typically, restricted fares require ticket issuance within 24 hours. In addition, restricted fares are usually not transferable if cancelled and may include specific requirements on when a cancelled ticket must be rebooked.

Until changes are made to DTS to automate the use of restricted airfares, restricted fares must continue to be purchased through the Travel Management Company (TMC)/Commercial Travel Office (CTO). When using DTS, restricted airfares should be requested through comments via CTO Assistance.

3. Removal of JTR Appendix O

Appendix O serves as a summary of those allowances found in JTR Chapter 4. In an effort to remove redundancy, the PDTATACT approved the removal of Appendix O. This change appears in the JTR version published 1 December.
Integrated Lodging Program Pilot Expands Again January 1

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 choosing other commercial lodging options while on official travel to select pilot locations. The program began with just seven pilot sites and has since expanded to over 40 pilot sites. In January 2017, the number of pilot sites will expand again, one location will no longer be deemed a pilot site, and the list of participating DoD Preferred commercial lodging properties will change.

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<th>New Pilot Sites as of January 2017</th>
<th>DoD Lodging</th>
<th>Privatized Lodging</th>
<th>DoD Preferred Lodging</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aberdeen, MD – Aberdeen Proving Grounds</td>
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<td>Bangor/Bremerton, WA – Naval Base Kitsap</td>
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<td>Everett, WA – Naval Air Station Everett</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lewis-McChord, WA – Joint Base Lewis-McChord</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phoenix, AZ – Luke Air Force Base</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quantico, VA – Marine Corps Base Quantico</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>San Antonio, TX – Joint Base San Antonio (Lackland AFB, Ft. Sam Houston, Randolph AFB)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whidbey Island, WA – Naval Base Whidbey Island</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seattle (downtown)</td>
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Saratoga Springs, NY will no longer be a pilot site effective January 1, 2017. Travelers to this location can still book lodging for this location, but DoD Preferred commercial lodging will no longer be available.

In addition to the pilot site expansion, some of the participating DoD Preferred commercial lodging properties at the existing pilot sites will change in January. Each year, hotels have an opportunity to apply to participate as a DoD Preferred commercial lodging property for the next calendar year. Current DoD Preferred hotels must reapply annually and compete for DoD’s lodging business. All commercial hotels must meet DoD standards for quality, safety and security, offer rates below per diem, and provide certain amenities and travel protections.

The continued expansion of the ILPP not only enables travelers to use DTS to find trusted lodging providers at more locations, but also ensures travelers are staying in quality lodging facilities that are close to TDY locations. 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.

Additional information on the Integrated Lodging Program Pilot is available at: www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/lodging.

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.

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.
Travel Certificate Program for Authorizing Officials

AOs play a critical role in managing travel. They contribute to mission readiness by ensuring travel is necessary to meet the organization’s mission requirements. AOs oversee the obligation of travel funds, authorize travel, ensure travelers abide by all travel regulations, and approve reimbursements for authorizing travel expenses. In this role, AOs function as Certifying Officers (COs) when approving most DTS documents and are expected to safeguard taxpayer funds from misuse. Any approved payment found to be erroneous, may result in an AO being held personally liable for reimbursing the Government for the amount of the erroneous payment.

This financial responsibility is called “pecuniary liability.” To better prepare AOs and protect them from the consequences of erroneous payments, DTMO developed a specialized training certificate for Authorizing Officials (AOs) as part of its Travel Certificate Program. DTMO launched the Travel Certificate Program in 2014 as a knowledge, skill and assessment-based professional development program aimed at validating the capabilities of personnel who manage travel for the Department of Defense.

The Travel Certificate Program for AOs (TCP-AO) trains and validates the critical knowledge and skills an AO must have to perform their role proficiently. AO Certificate program includes:

- **Approximately 20 hours of training.** Candidates have one year to complete the required training and may receive credit for training previously completed through Travel Explorer (TraX).

- **Certifying Officer Legislation (COL) training.** As part of the certificate requirements, candidates must complete the COL training. After receiving a TCP-AO certificate, AOs must take the refresher COL training each year thereafter to retain the TCP-AO certificate. This helps TCP-AO certificate holders meet the legal requirement for annual COL training* without any additional coursework.

- **Support from a local coach.** As part of the program, candidates find someone at their local organization, known as an “Endorser,” to coach them on local review and approval procedures. This ensures that candidates get both a DoD and a local level look at their responsibilities. For more information on Endorsers, refer to the Organizational Knowledge Checklist – AO Certificate in the TCP Guide.

The TCP-AO launched in spring 2016, and so far, many AOs have enrolled and taken the steps toward improving their professional performance through this structured program. For more information about the TCP-AO, visit the Travel Certificate Program webpage.

*Some organizations require different (or additional) training to meet COL requirements. Completing the COL training in TraX only satisfies your TCP-AO certificate requirements and does not satisfy those additional COL training requirements.

**By the Numbers**

- **500+ AOs enrolled so far**
- **32 AOs have earned an AO Certificate and are now part of the renewal program**
DTMO is pleased to announce the 2017 Excellence in Practice Awards, recognizing top performers in DoD travel for the value and the services they provided during FY2016.

This year’s awards will be presented in the following categories:

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

Nomination forms are available at: [http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/award.cfm](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/award.cfm)

The Excellence in Practice Awards are designed to recognize DoD travel professionals who have excelled in travel program management and 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.

**Nominations due February 28, 2017**

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**Travel Assistance Center Marks New Milestone**

Congratulations to the Travel Assistance Center for fielding its 3 millionth call! The first call was answered by at 2:52am on October 1, 2007 and the 3,000,000th call was recorded on August 1, 2016 at 6:39am.

**About the Defense Travel Dispatch**

The Defense Travel Dispatch is a quarterly publication issued by the Defense Travel Management Office.

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