

# Defense Travel Dispatch

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*The DoD Center for Travel Excellence*



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### A Message from the DTMO Acting Director

I want to assure our readers that during Sequestration and any related administrative furlough actions, the Defense Travel Management Office and the Travel Assistance Center will remain open during normal business hours. With this being said however, the next Dispatch will be published in the fall as a summer/fall edition.

As always, the Travel Assistance Center (TAC) will be available to answer travel-related questions 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Please continue to utilize our resources, like the TAC, Travel Explorer (TraX), which has links to training and a Knowledge Center where you can search hundreds of FAQs on a variety of travel topics. And, don't forget about our website, [www.defensetravel.dod.mil](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil), where you can find a wealth of information on our programs, access a resource library, and find links to helpful tools such as the travel regulations, allowance calculators, and much more.

— Harvey Johnson, Acting 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.*

# UPDATE: Travel Policy Compliance Tool Pilot

The 2012 National Defense Authorization Act required the Department of Defense to create and maintain a compliance program to minimize inaccurate, or duplicate claims. In December 2012, DTMO launched a pilot of the Travel Policy Compliance Tool, which is at the heart of the Department's new program.

The automated tool reviews all DTS travel vouchers in near real time and identifies duplicate or incorrect payments in an effort to ensure travel claims are

paid in accordance with regulations and recoup funds for erroneous payments.

As part of the pilot, the tool was initially implemented for a limited user group

that included all four Services and two Agencies. The tool is being incrementally implemented across the Department as organizations are added to the pilot.

Initially, the tool focused on identifying three of the most common and clear cut policy compliance errors:

OCONUS laundry expense, OCONUS foreign lodging tax, and duplicate lodging payments. Since then, the OCONUS lodging tax query has been expanded and an Administrative Foreign Lodging tax query has been added that identifies when lodging tax is added as a non-mileage reimbursable expense but does not exceed the locality per diem rate when added to the lodging cost. Over the next few months, several new queries will also be added including:

- *Excess Lodging* – identifies additional lodging costs claimed as a reimbursable expense when full locality rate is claimed as per diem
- *Incorrect Government Quarters Rate* – identifies when travelers do not change the default \$55 per day for government quarters when that is not the rate for that location
- *Contingency Operation Per Diem* – identifies when travelers receive more than \$3.50 per day per diem when the combatant commander directs that all meals are available and limits per diem to the government incidental rate of \$3.50
- *Duplicate Airfare* – identifies when travelers claim airfare for tickets that were cancelled or refunded to their government travel charge card

For more information on the program and the Compliance Tool, visit: [www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/compliance](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/compliance).

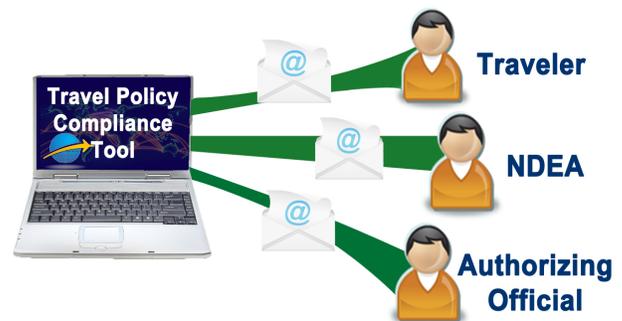


## About the Compliance Tool

The Travel Policy Compliance Tool is an automated application that reviews all DTS travel vouchers in near real time and identifies duplicate or incorrect payments.

When an error is identified, the tool will automatically notify 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.

The tool includes a user interface that provides Service and Agencies points of contact with access to a reporting and records management capability, to track and monitor of vouchers that have been identified as having an error.



# Using the Defense Table of Official Distances in DTS

The Defense Travel System (DTS) uses the Defense Table of Official Distances (DTOD) to calculate official driving distances for reimbursement for DoD personnel on authorized travel. The DTOD, the official source for worldwide PCS and TDY distance information, uses a zip code to zip code distance within the CONUS and non-foreign OCONUS areas and a city to city distance elsewhere (e.g., within foreign locations or to and from foreign locations). It provides a distance that requires rounding to the nearest mile for each segment of travel.

In DTS, if private auto (Pvt Auto-TDY/TAD) or private motorcycle (Pvt Motorcycle-TDY/TAD) is selected in the **Expense Type** drop-down list, mileage cannot be manually entered. The traveler must select **DoD Table of Distances** (see Step 1) to calculate mileage and receive an estimated cost for the expense. It is important to search for the locations, and then select the correct zip codes for the official origin and official destination from the list before clicking on **“Calculate Mileage”** (See Steps 3, 4).

For more information on Official Distance Determination, go to the Joint Federal Travel Regulation (JFTR) and the Joint Travel Regulation (JTR) Chapter 2, Part J: Official Distance Determination.

**Step 1: Click on Defense Table of Official Distances**

**Step 2: Enter locations and click search**

**Step 3: Select locations from search results**

*Note: If the desired zip code is not displayed in the search results, the official distance will be determined by using the location without a zip code.*

**Step 4: Click Calculate Mileage**

**Step 5: Click Save**

**Step 6: If necessary, click checkbox to create separate mileage for return trip**

**Step 7: Click Save**

# Cost Effective Travel Option: Ride Share

The Office of Management and Budget Memorandum “Promoting Efficient Spending to Support Agency Operations” (M-12-12), which directed agencies to look at ways to reduce travel costs, proposed the use of ride sharing. Ride sharing is when two or more travelers on official travel are going to the same TDY location and share a rental car or taxis. While there are no current regulations that direct travelers to share a vehicle, DTMO recommends that travelers and Authorizing Officials (AOs) explore this fiscally responsible travel option when arranging travel.

Although travel regulations state that travelers must select a compact rental car, the Authorizing Official may authorize an appropriately sized vehicle, IAW mission requirements, when a compact car does not meet the requirement. This means that multiple travelers sharing a single vehicle is a sound justification for the approval of a larger vehicle.

Ride sharing may not always be possible due to schedules or the location of lodging, but in the current fiscal environment where travel budgets are constrained, ride sharing is a cost effective option.

## Did you Know . . .

The U.S. Government Rental Car Program allows for additional drivers at no additional cost. Fellow drivers must be government personnel traveling on official business. To ensure you receive this benefit (and others), book a rental car at the government rate through DTS or a Commercial Travel Office and look for “Government Administrative Rate Supplement” or “GARS” on the rental contract at the time of vehicle pickup.

# Citi Offers Paperless Options

Did you know that Citi offers cardholders the opportunity to receive their Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) statement electronically instead of receiving paper statements through the mail? This effort is part of a larger initiative to *Go Paperless*, which further eliminates the use of paper in GTCC processes.

On October 5, 2009, President Obama signed Executive Order 13514 "Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance" that included promoting pollution prevention and eliminating waste, promoting electronic stewardship and sustaining environmental management. Since then, DoD, in coordination with Citi, further identified areas to eliminate/reduce the use of paper in normal business processes to include:

- Online request for new accounts - no paper applications are required
- Payments can be initiated online - no checks
- Cardholders can view and download statements online - no paper

By signing up for *Go Paperless*, cardholders can access their account statements online within 48 hours of the close of the billing cycle. When their statement is available online, cardholders will receive an email or text alert. Cardholders can also monitor account activity and make online payments.

It's easy for cardholders to go paperless – they simply log in to their CitiManager account, select “My Card Account,” and click on the “Go Paperless” option. If they don't already have a CitiManager account, register today at <https://home.cards.citidirect.com/CommercialCard/Cards.html>. Cardholders can also find a quick reference guide for registering your CitiManager account, on the DTMO Government Travel Card website for Cardholders under Quick Links and References.



# NEW TOOL REQUIRED FOR RESTRICTED AIRFARE USE

Many DoD travelers frequently 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, they must first get approval from their travel Authorizing Official (AO). To assist with determining if the use of a restricted airfare is feasible, a decision support tool, referred to as the Restricted Airfare Checklist, has been added to the Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR) and the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR) Appendix H. The checklist must be completed by an AO when approving use of this type of fare.

Often a restricted airfare may be non-refundable, usually have costly change-fee penalties, and have advance purchase and ticketing requirements. The Restricted Airfare Checklist walks an AO through a series of five questions to determine if the use of a restricted fare is both cost effective and meets mission requirements. Because advanced purchase and ticketing requirements may vary by airline, AOs should refer to the airline's website for more information.

When completed, the checklist certifies that all decision factors were considered prior to the approval of purchasing a restricted airfare. Moreover, it also certifies that the funding command accepts total financial responsibility for the restricted airline ticket should the trip be changed or cancelled for any official reason. Authorization must be obtained on a case-by-case basis; blanket authorization and justification for use of restricted airfares is prohibited. AOs should check local business rules for more information on using this form.

To access the Restricted Airfare Checklist, go to <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/Restricted-Airfares-Checklist.pdf>.

## Using Restricted Fares

### Tips for Travelers:

- Contact your AO to determine feasibility and gain approval.
- Book restricted airfares through DTS by requesting CTO Assistance.
- Monitor your travel authorization for approval. Once approved, contact your CTO for ticket issuance.
- Monitor the “Preview Page” for “Comments from the Travel Agent” for the ticketing time limits and associated penalties.
- Cancel your reservation as soon as you know the trip is cancelled. It is vital that the ticket reservation is cancelled prior to flight departure.

### Tips for AOs:

- Ensure the Restricted Airfares Checklist is used to determine feasibility.
- Complete and digitally sign checklist and return to the traveler.
- Ensure a back-up AO is designated if you will be on leave or deployed.

### Tips for DTAs:

- Inform travelers and AOs about how this change potentially could affect their upcoming travel and what steps to take if a reservation is cancelled.

**Q:** *What are some of the more recent travel policy changes and how do I find out when something changes?*

## DTMO MAILBOX



### How to Find Out About JFTR and JTR Changes

- **Subscribe to the Allowance and Travel Regulation Mailing List.** Go to <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/allSub.cfm> to sign up to be notified when updated allowances or changes to the travel regulations have been posted.
- **Check DTMO Website for a Summary of Changes.** Go to the Travel Regulations webpage on the DTMO website (<http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/travelreg.cfm>) and look for the box on the right for Immediate Changes or Monthly Changes.
- **Review first few pages of current JFTR/JTR.** All changes in a month are listed on the cover sheet to the current version of the regulations.

The Per Diem and Travel and Transportation Committee (PDTATAC) and its advisory panels approved almost 40 changes in the Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR) and Joint Travel Regulations (JTR) during the first quarter of calendar year 2013. Below are a few of the more noteworthy changes.

- Dislocation Allowance – 1.7% increase
- Relocation and Business Mileage Allowance – increases of \$.24 and \$.565 respectively, airplane (\$1.33) and motorcycle (\$.535)
- Government Meal Rate – increases of \$10 (Discounted) and \$11.70 (Standard)

Additionally, the PDTATAC enacted several proposals brought forth by DTMO that changed the reimbursement policy for disciplinary travel incurred expenses and removed unnecessary JFTR/JTR (APP G) reimbursable expenses.

#### About the Per Diem and Travel and Transportation Committee

*The Committee is composed of senior executive and flag officers from the three Military Departments, U.S. Coast Guard, Public Health Service, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Corps (NOAA). Its permanent chair is the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy (DASD/MPP). The Committee has two advisory panels; the Military Advisory Panel (MAP) and the Civilian Advisory Panel (CAP). The MAP generates and evaluates issues pertaining to per diem, travel and transportation allowances, housing allowances, and cost of living allowances, and the CAP generates and evaluates issues pertaining to per diem, travel and transportation allowances for DoD civilian employees. DTMO oversees the day-to-day operation of the PDTATAC and manages the regulation development and approval process for the JFTR and JTR and reviews of all DoD issuances that implement the JFTR and/or JTR.*

#### Contacting the PDTATAC

*We encourage travelers to use their chains-of-command to resolve travel and transportation concerns. Inquiries are welcome but will be forwarded to the appropriate DoD Component/Service POC for further customer assistance. For a list of PDTATAC representatives, go to:*

*<http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/perdiem/pdcContacts.pdf>*

# TSA Further Expands Pre✓ Program



TSA has recently expanded its Trusted Traveler program known as Pre-Check (Pre✓), to Service members flying out of St. Louis (STL), Denver (DEN), and Baltimore-Washington (BWI) International airports. These locations are added to the growing list of airports which offer this program including:

- Charlotte Douglass International (CLT)
- Dulles International (IAD)
- Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International (ATL)
- Honolulu International (HNL)
- Ronald Regan Washington National (DCA)
- Seattle-Tacoma International (SEA)

Service members, active drilling Reservists, National Guardsmen, and members of the Coast Guard, who go to a dedicated Pre✓ security checkpoint and present a valid Common Access Card (CAC) will receive expedited security screening. As part of the program, Members will not be required to remove their shoes, outerwear, belts, laptops or small liquid containers from carry-ons when going through security. Eligible Service members do not need to be on official travel or in uniform to participate.

For more information on TSA's Pre✓ program, visit: [http://www.tsa.gov/what\\_we\\_do/rbs.dod.shtm](http://www.tsa.gov/what_we_do/rbs.dod.shtm).



# Correction

In the Fall 2012 edition of the Dispatch, in our reply to the DTMO Mailbox question about GARS, we incorrectly stated that "...there are some OCONUS locations where there are no rental car companies participating in the program. If

traveling to one of those locations, travelers should opt for the insurance as it is considered to be a reimbursable expense (for one of those locations only)." In fact, according to the Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR) and Joint Travel Regulations (JTR), "When the AO authorizes special conveyance/rental vehicle use for official business, the following reimbursements are authorized IAW APP G. (4) Mandatory rental car insurance coverage required in foreign countries." It is ONLY when a foreign country requires certain insurance be purchased is the expense considered a reimbursable expense. Whether or not the vendor is part of the U.S. Government Rental Car program is not relevant. The traveler cannot 'opt' for insurance and be reimbursed; only if the foreign country mandates it and the command approves it, can it be reimbursed.

## 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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