

# Defense Travel Dispatch

Volume I, Issue 1

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*The DoD Center  
for Travel Excellence*



## SDDC Programs Join the DTMO

On October 28, 2007, several travel programs, previously administered by the Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC), transferred to the Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO). [Story](#)

## Distance Learning Program Launched

A new interactive Distance Learning program for Travelers, Authorizing Officials, Defense Travel Administrators (DTAs), and Finance DTAs is now available. All 23 classes are no charge to users, require no pre-registration and all are available from any computer configured with the appropriate software. Learn more about these new classes or register using the "Quick Link!" [Story](#)

## Travel Card Myths

The Department of Defense (DoD) Travel Charge Card Program supports over 1.2 million travelers. It has many guidelines of which most travelers might not be aware. This article addresses many commonly held myths of the Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC). [Story](#)

## Booking OCONUS Travel Using DTS

Booking travel Outside the Continental United States (OCONUS) can be challenging, but with practice and some tips from travel experts, anyone can learn to use the system. This article will help you book OCONUS flights, lodging, and car rentals using DTS. [Story](#)

## Travel Policy Review Update

The DTMO is well underway with a travel policy review. Government representatives have completed the review of some policies and are synchronizing and simplifying others to ensure they are relevant. Check where DTMO is in the process. [Story](#)

## Director's Message

Welcome to the first issue of the Defense Travel *Dispatch*. The *Dispatch*, published quarterly, fulfills our commitment to keeping you informed about the Defense Travel Enterprise.

So that we can provide you with both travel tips and newsworthy information in one document, the *Dispatch* will incorporate information previously included in the *Travel Tutor*. In this issue you will find a number of helpful articles, including an update on the travel policy review and information on our new Distance Learning Program. DTMO hopes that you find the *Dispatch* useful, and invite your feedback as we prepare future issues.

-Sheila M. Earle,  
Acting Director, DTMO

## Security Reminder

DTS is not a classified system and inclusion of classified information in the description of the trip, attachments such as receipts or faxes, or any other field poses a serious security risk.

## The Defense Travel Management Office

The DTMO 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.

The DTMO maintains central oversight for commercial travel management, travel policy and implementation, customer support and training, DoD travel card program management and functional oversight for the Defense Travel System.

## Booking OCONUS Travel Using DTS

Travel Outside the Continental United States (OCONUS) can present challenges for the official traveler - especially for new Defense Travel System (DTS) users. Practice coupled with following some travel tips, the traveler can book OCONUS travel quickly and easily.

### Booking Flights

Travelers taking flights from the continental United States to major OCONUS destinations have numerous options from which to choose; selecting a flight in the reservation module is easy in these situations. However, the reservation process might be more complex for personnel traveling to a remote location or making multiple stops. For these situations, assistance is only a click away.

If a flight meeting your mission needs does not automatically populate in the reservation module, take the following steps:

- Click the **“Request Assistance in Booking Flights”** button to request assistance from your Commercial Travel Office (CTO).
- When the page opens, a pre-populated message box will appear. You may use this message but it is recommended that you add specific comments related to point of origin, destination, and preferred times. Once entered, click **“Send Comments to CTO”**.

To add arrangements booked outside of DTS into the system,

# Focus on the Traveler

- Click **“Travel”** on the main navigation bar, select **“Other Transportation”** from the sub-navigation bar.
- Enter necessary information into the **Add Ticket Information** fields and click **“Save”**.



### Booking Hotels

When booking OCONUS hotels, the number of results returned in the reservation module search might be limited. If you do not see a hotel that meets your mission needs,

- Click on **“Request Assistance in Booking Hotel”** on the **“Lodging”** page. Adding specific comments that detail your requests will help to facilitate the booking process.

If a third party, such as an embassy, booked the hotel reservation, receiving reimbursement is a simple matter.

- In the authorization, click **“Expenses”** on the main navigation bar. Then, click on **“Per Diem Entitlements”** on the sub-navigation bar.
- If column labeled **“Lodging Cost”** does not reflect the actual cost of lodging, click the **“Edit**

**All”** button to change the lodging cost for each day listed.

If editing a single day or range of days,

- Click on the individual **“Edit”** buttons, located next to each day. Then, go to the box labeled **“Lodging”** under the Per Diem Rates subheading.
- Enter the actual daily amount of lodging. Scroll to the bottom of the page and click **“Save These Entitlements”**. The **“Lodging Cost”** column will reflect the new amount entered.

Remember that in OCONUS locations hotel tax is included in the per diem entitlement and is not a separate reimbursable expense.

### Booking Rental Cars

The procedures for booking rental car reservations are similar to the flight reservations booking process.

Within the reservation module, travelers will normally see more options for larger cities when booking OCONUS rental car reservations. If a rental vehicle option meeting mission needs does not appear, follow procedures similar to those in the flight reservation section, beginning with clicking on **“Request Assistance in Booking Rental Car”**.

Booking flights, hotels, and rental vehicles when traveling OCONUS can be challenging. If DTS users follow the above instructions, it will alleviate many of the problems associated with reserving this type of travel and will enable personnel to book travel more efficiently. «

## Travel Card Myths

**Myth:** I have to pay interest on my DoD GTCC.

**Fact:** Interest rates are never applied to the DoD GTCC.

**Myth:** If my bill is delinquent, the GTCC contractor will automatically report my delinquency to the credit bureaus, affecting my credit score.

**Fact:** An outstanding bill will not be reported to the credit bureau UNLESS the bill remains unpaid for 210 days.

**Myth:** Late fees begin to incur on my delinquent account after 60 days.

**Fact:** A bill becomes delinquent 60 days after the billing due date. Late fees do not begin to incur on delinquent accounts until a total of 75 days have passed and the bill remains unpaid.



**Myth:** DoD does not have the authority to use my paycheck to pay for my undisputed delinquencies if I do not pay my delinquent bill within 120 days.

**Fact:** DoD has the authority to use salary offset to pay a cardholder's delinquent bill after the bill has become 120 days delinquent. The maximum percentage that DoD can deduct from a cardholder's disposable income to pay the GTCC contractor is 15 percent.

**Myth:** If DoD does not reimburse me for my official travel within 30 days, there's nothing I can do about it.

**Fact:** By law, DoD must pay reimbursements to travelers within 30 days. If reimbursements remain unpaid on a properly submitted claim after this time, travelers will be paid interest on authorized reimbursement amounts.

**Myth:** I can use my personal charge card to pay for my official travel expenses.

**Fact:** Use of the DoD GTCC is mandatory for all purchases related to official travel expenses, unless deemed otherwise exempt under the provisions of [DoD Financial Management Regulation Volume 9, Chapter 3](#). «

## What's New @ DTMO

### Distance Learning Program Launched

The Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO) launched a new interactive Distance Learning program for Travelers, Authorizing Officials, Defense Travel Administrators (DTAs), and Finance DTAs. The current schedule consists of 23 unique training classes, covering topics such as Document Processing, Travel Policy, Centrally Billed Account Reconciliation, the DTA Maintenance Tool, and Travel Outside the Continental United States (OCONUS). All classes are



offered at no cost to users, pre-registration is not required and there are no participation limits.

The classes provide an interactive environment for learning, using a combination of PowerPoint

presentations and live demonstrations. Participants use a secure chat room during class to communicate with the trainers. At the end of each session, trainers will host a brief question and answer session using computer audio. Course participants need access to a computer configured with the Web conference software, an active sound card, speakers/headset, and microphone.

Visit the DTMO website for more information, including system requirements and a schedule of available courses. «

## SDDC Programs Join the DTMO



In October 2007, several Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC) programs transferred to the Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO). These programs include the: U.S. Government Car/Truck Rental programs, the Military Bus Program, the Recruit Travel Assistance Program, formally known as the Passenger Standing Route Order (PSRO) and the Military Recruit Assistance Programs, and DoD

Customer Interface for the GSA City Pair Program. The transfer took place in accordance with Management Initiative Decision 921, which directed the Department to provide an integrated travel management approach within DoD and authorized the establishment of the DTMO to serve as the “single face” to the travel industry for information exchanges with the government.

Under DTMO management, these programs will continue to provide excellent service and value for DoD travelers. The U.S. Government Car/Truck Rental program offer DoD substantial savings from participating vendors by approving rental car rates. In addition, DTMO assists with vehicle claims and disputes.

The DTMO will also ensure safe and effective transportation for DoD travelers through managing the Military Bus Program and the Recruit Travel and Assistance Program. The Military Bus Program enforces safety regulations by requiring each qualified carrier to meet DoD safety standards. Offering 24-hour assistance, the Recruit Travel and Assistance Program provides mission-responsive transportation to new enlistees from the Military Entrance Processing Station to their initial training site. This transfer should result in no immediate change in Defense processes; however, the programs will be evaluated to achieve future efficiencies and enhance customer service. For further information visit: [www.defensetravel.dod.mil](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil)«

## Policy Update

The Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO) is conducting a comprehensive travel policy review that includes policies and entitlements for both military and civilian travel. To ensure effective collaboration, representatives from the Military Services/DoD Agencies and Federal Agencies review travel policies to ensure they are relevant, consistent, and understandable.

To date, the DTMO has completed workshops on Temporary Duty Travel (TDY), special circumstance and Permanent Change of Station (PCS) travel for military and civilians. DoD staffs, with interests in travel policy, were briefed on the recommendations from the PCS



workshop. These recommendations are undergoing review and evaluation to determine the appropriate strategy to implement changes to existing travel policies.

The DTMO has recently partnered with the General Services Administration to affect change and to determine best practices to be applied to federal travel. Stay tuned for much more to follow! «

### 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)

Subscribe to the *Dispatch* and other Defense Travel related updates at [www.defensetravel.dod.mil](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil)

To submit comments or questions, go to [www.defensetravel.dod.mil](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil)

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### QUICK LINKS

- Defense Travel Distance Learning
- DTMO Website
- DTS Website
- Provide Feedback through ICE