Insight into CTO Operations & Viewpoint

2011 Connect Seminar
April 2011

For Official Use Only
Agenda

• DTS/Commercial Travel Office (CTO) Reservations Cycle
  – Document Status
  – Stuck at CTO Submit
• Seat Assignments
• Non-Contract & Restricted Airfares
• Duplicate Bookings
• Churning
• Traveler Profiles
• Changing CTO Data in DTS
• Contacting the CTO
• DTA Support
DTS/CTO Reservation Cycle

- User creates authorization, books reservations, and applies digital signature “SIGNED”
- DTS forwards “CTO Ticketed” notification and CTO forwards invoice to traveler via email
- CTO issues ticket(s), and forwards ticketed PNR to DTS “CTO TICKETED”
- DTS forwards “Approved” email notification to traveler and forwards PNR to CTO for ticketing 3 business days prior to travel
- AO reviews and approves authorization, TAW date applied to PNR “APPROVED”
- DTS forwards reservations (PNR) to CTO for quality control review “CTO SUBMIT”
- CTO performs quality control review and forwards PNR to DTS for AO approval “CTO BOOKED”
- DTS forwards “CTO Booked” notification and CTO forwards itinerary to traveler via email
“CTO Submit”

• Upon user selecting air/rail, rental car, and lodging reservations, DTS creates passenger name record (PNR)
  – PNRs contain reservation records, traveler contact information, frequent flyer accounts, etc.

• Upon user digitally signing travel authorization, DTS forwards PNR to CTO for quality control review (“CTO Submit”)
  – CTO does not have DTS access
  – PNR is forwarded by DTS to CTOs database a.k.a. Global Distribution System (GDS)
“CTO Submit” (continued)

- Within one business day of receipt, CTO is required to perform quality control review, which consists of:
  - Ensuring reservations are complete and coincide with airline arrival/departure times
  - Checking alternate routes, times, etc. when travel is between origin/destination with no GSA contract City Pair award (Worldwide CTO Contracts only)

- Upon completion of quality control review, CTO returns PNR to DTS
  - Document updated as “CTO Booked”
“CTO Booked”

- At “CTO Booked,” travelers receive email notifications from:
  - DTS
    - Advisory message regarding the route and review to Authorizing Official (AO)
    - Streamlined itinerary to include any comments from CTO
      - Comments from CTO are located under the itinerary and may indicate action required by traveler
  - CTO
    - Complete itinerary and any special instructions
“Stuck at CTO Submit”

• When an authorization has been in “CTO Submit” status for a prolonged period of time, it is referred to as “stuck at CTO Submit”

• Causes:
  – CTO has not completed the quality control review
  – DTS system problem
  – CTO queuing issue

• Travelers/DTS administrators should contact the TAC for assistance with “stuck” PNRs
“Approved”

- Upon AO approval, TAW (tickets are waiting) date is applied to PNR
  - TAW authorizes CTO to issue ticket
- Approved PNRs are forwarded to CTO for ticketing three business days prior to departure
  - Tickets may be issued in advance of TAW when requested by Government
- Traveler receives DTS email notification regarding approved document status
- Travelers should contact their AO and/or local DTS Help Desk if they have not received an “Approved” email notification within three business days of travel
“CTO Ticketed”

- Upon ticket issuance, CTO returns PNR to DTS
  - Authorization updated “CTO Ticketed”
  - Air ticket and transaction fee (when applicable*) costs added
    *Current Navy contract under management service fee; therefore, no transaction fee assessed at ticketing

- At “CTO Ticketed,” travelers receive email notifications from:
  - DTS
    - Ticketed notification to include streamlined itinerary
  - CTO
    - Invoice to include complete itinerary, ticket numbers/costs, after hours emergency numbers, etc.
Leading Practices

• DTS users/travelers should monitor DTS document status to ensure proper routing of travel authorization

• DTAs run weekly Approved Status Reports to identify documents pending AO approval

• Whether reservations were booked in DTS or by CTO directly, travelers **should not** proceed on travel unless they have received an itinerary/invoice with their ticketing information
Air Availability In DTS

- Air availability is displayed in tabs in order of precedence:
  - GSA Contract Airfare with limited availability (-CA)
  - GSA Contract Airfare (YCA)
  - Other Government Airfare (non-contract government fares)
  - Other Published Airfares (all other unrestricted coach fares)
  - Alternate GSA (contract fares offered to alternate airports within an 80 mile radius of temporary duty location)
Non-Contract Airfares

- Other Government Airfares (Tab 3) are non-contract Government fares to include:
  - Discount Government (DG)
  - Category Z (CATZ)
  - Constructed City Pair fares

- DG and CAT Z fares are competitive airfares available to Government travelers on official business
  - Costs often same or less than GSA contract city pair fares
  - May carry rules and restrictions
  - Requires justification and approval if GSA city pair fare available
Non-Contract Airfares (continued)

• Other Airfares (Tab 4) are non-contract airfares available to the general public
  – Costs are often higher than GSA contract city pair and Other Government fares
  – Although fares are unrestricted, they may have rules associated with use (especially foreign flag carriers)
  – Requires justification and approval if GSA city pair fare available

• Usage of Other Government and Other Airfares require justification when selected for travel in GSA contract city pair markets
Risks Associated with Non-contract Airfares

- When booking non-contract Government fares, travelers should consider the following:
  - Seats are capacity controlled; airline limits availability
  - Airfares are not guaranteed until ticketed; fares may increase or discontinue at any time
  - Fare rule changes; airline has the right to change rules to include booking class, advance purchase/ticketing requirements, etc.
  - Cancellations; many airlines cancel un-ticketed reservations especially capacity controlled non-contract fares
Restricted Airfares

- Travelers may request CTO assistance to obtain restricted fares
- Risks associated with use of restricted airfares:
  - Fees and penalties associated with restricted fares
    - Up-front savings may be consumed and surpassed if travelers frequently change or cancel travel plans
  - Unused tickets are non-refundable/non-transferable
  - Value of unused ticket (if any) must be used within timeframe established by airline or may be forfeited if cancelled
Restricted Airfares (continued)

• Other risks to consider include:
  – Airline charges additional fees for reservation changes and ticket re-issuance
  – Advance purchase and/or advance ticketing requirements
    • If document is not approved by AO and ticketed within time required, reservations will be cancelled by airline
    • AO/Traveler must contact CTO upon AO approval for ticket issuance
Duplicate Bookings

- When two or more reservations are held on the same airline for travel within the same time frame
  - Regardless of class of service or booking method
  - Includes reservations booked on same flight and/or multiple flights to same origin/destination

- Consequences for holding duplicate reservations include:
  - Cancellation of reservations
  - Multiple airline ticket and transaction fee charges
  - CTO fined (i.e., debit memo) by airline
    - Includes reservations made by travelers in DTS
    - Services/Agencies/travelers may be liable
Preventing Duplicate Bookings

• Avoid creating multiple authorizations with reservations to same/similar TDY locations during same time period
  – Includes un-signed authorizations

• Prior to creating duplicate or similar authorization, cancel reservations and remove authorization

• Do not contact CTO to make travel reservations when DTS authorization with reservations already exists
  – If CTO is contacted directly, reference any existing DTS reservation
  – Enter transportation costs manually in Travel-Other Transportation
Inventory Churning

• Practice whereby airline reservations are repeatedly created and canceled
  – Ties up seat inventory; prohibited by airline industry
  – CTOs are fined (i.e., debit memo) by airline
    • Services/Agencies/Travelers may be liable for debit memos

• Majority of churning is due to unsigned authorizations
  – Remember to sign DTS authorizations with reservations
    • Traveler forgets to sign, reservations are cancelled, traveler re-books
Leading Practices

- Avoid creating authorizations with reservations to obtain travel costs/schedules
  - Encourage travelers to utilize TraX, GSA website, or fedtravel.com to obtain:
    - Government flight/rail schedules and fares
    - FEMA-approved hotels offering government rates
    - Car rental vendors who participate in U.S. Government Rental Car Program
DTS Traveler Profile

• Whether you travel frequently or a few times a year, ensure the following DTS profile information is current:
  – Phone Contacts
  – Email address
    • CTO or airline may need to contact traveler regarding reservations
  – Government Charge Card (GOVCC)
    • Valid account number and/or expiration date
    • Work with APCs to validate account info and ensure activation for upcoming travel (i.e. Accounts Info List & Approved Status Report)
Changing CTO Data in DTS

• DTS organizations are connected to CTOs in accordance with DoD CTO contracts
• Changes to DTS organizational CTO data (i.e. PCC, Ticket PCC, and Company Code) requires formal request through DTMO
  – DTAs submit request through Service and Agency DTS Office and/or TAC
    • Include list of organizations and reason for change
    • 30-day advance required
    • Verify Centrally Billed Account (CBA) loads
Changing CTO Data in DTS (continued)

- DTS organizations and existing passenger name records (PNR) will be systematically updated with new CTO data
  - Reduces errors commonly made when processing changes manually
  - Ensures existing PNRs may be modified, approved, ticketed, and/or cancelled
  - Seamless transition transparent to travelers and DTAs

- DTAs should “CTO Disable” those organizations that are no longer being used
  - Organizations should also be removed from CBAs
Contacting the CTO

• *Do* contact the CTO for:
  – Emergency travel plans
  – En route assistance
  – Unused tickets

• *Do not* contact the CTO for:
  – DTS questions/issues
    • Travelers should utilize local help desk, Travel Assistance Center (TAC), and Travel Explorer (TRAX)
  – Reservation Changes
    • If travel has not commenced, reservation changes should be processed in DTS
DTA Support

• Quality Assurance Evaluators (QAE) and Contracting Officer Technical Representatives (COTR) are qualified government representatives personnel designated as a local resource for resolving CTO issues
  – Serve as local point of contact for travelers, DTAs, and CTO
  – DTAs should discuss all DTS/CTO performance issues/concerns with QAE/COTR
Resources

DTMO Website
- Access eLearning, instructor resources, and reference materials through Training Resource Lookup Tool
- CTO small business after hours support
  www.defensetravel.dod.mil

Travel Explorer (TraX)
- DTS Document Processing Manual
- DTS CTO Orientation and User’s Guide
  www.defensetravel.dod.mil/passport

Travel Assistance Center (TAC)
- 1-888-Help1-Go (1-888-435-7146)
- Overseas: Use DSN to dial directly
- 24 hours a day/7 days a week
- Submit a Help Ticket through the Tickets section of TraX