

DTS and TMC Interaction

Reservation Process Guide

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Revision History

Revision No.	Date	Author	Revision/Change Description	Chapter
1.0	8/6/15	Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO)	New	All Chapters
1.1	5/2/16	DTMO	Reviewed guide for accuracy and added a paragraph to Section 5.1 to assist travelers with CTO Submit stuck documents	All Chapters
1.2	2/16/17	DTMO	Changed CTO to TMC Updated restricted airfare policy	All Chapters Section 5.7
1.3	2/16/18	DTMO	Updated screenshots	Chapters 2, 3, 5
1.4	7/10/18	DTMO	Updated screenshots and text for new Expenses & Per Diem modules	Sections 5.4 & 5.6
1.5	8/17/18	DTMO	Screenshots	Sections 2.2 & 3.7
1.6	1/04/19	DTMO	Screenshot	Section 2.2
1.7	04/05/19	DTMO	Screenshots and wording changes	Section 2.1 Section 3.1 Section 3.7

Section 1: Introduction

Moving official DoD travelers from point A to point B is a complicated business. One key that simplifies the travel process is solid communications between the Travel Management Company (TMC) and people who use the Defense Travel System (DTS). The intent of this guide is to improve such communications. This content is targets travelers, Authorizing Officials (AOs), and Defense Travel Administrators (DTAs), but the material will also be useful to anyone who wants or needs to know a little more about how the TMC and DTS interact to create travel reservations.

For the rest of this guide, “you” refers to the person engaged in communications with the TMC, regardless of your actual role in DTS – e.g., traveler, AO, DTA, etc.

Before you call the TMC, however, you must know your local policies regarding TMC contact. Some organizations prefer to have all TMC contact go through a single individual, such as the Lead DTA, or a group, like a help desk. Do not contact the TMC directly if doing so would contradict local policy.

Finally, although not required, some familiarity with processing documents in DTS will be helpful.

Section 2: Important Concepts

There is a significant difference between TMC and DTS terminology. DTS uses unique terms to refer to processes the TMC had been using for years. To complicate the matter, TMCs do not have access to DTS, so you may cause confusion if you use DTS terminology when communicating with them. For best results, you should always try to use words the TMC understands. Table 2-1 contains some examples of the linguistic differences between DTS and the TMC.

Table 2-1

TMC TERMINOLOGY VS. DTS TERMINOLOGY		
The DTS Term and the TMC Term Both Mean ...
CTO SUBMIT (stamp)*	Inbound or TMC Queue	The TMC received the traveler’s reservation requests for electronic quality control and verification.
CTO BOOKED (stamp)	Outbound or Polling Queue	The TMC finished the electronic quality control check and verified that the traveler’s requested reservations were successfully booked.
CTO TICKETED (stamp)	Ticketing Queue	The TMC issued electronic tickets for air reservations.
CANCELLED (stamp)	Cancellation Queue	The trip has been cancelled, and the TMC removed all requests and booked reservations.
VOCO, last-minute travel	Urgent Queue	The Commanding Officer authorized the trip with little notice and with no supporting paperwork.
DTS/TMC Confirmation ID	PNR** Locator	The alphanumeric code used to identify the file containing the traveler’s requests and reservations.
Send PNR***	Sweep PNR***	The process that recognizes that DTS and the TMC are alternately able to access the PNR.

*DTS occasionally refers to the TMC as a *Commercial Travel Office (CTO)*

**Passenger name record – more on this in Section 2.1.

*** Despite what this sounds like, the PNR doesn’t actually get sent or swept. See Section 2.1 for more information.

2.1 Passenger Name Record and Global Distribution System

All electronic communication between DTS and the TMC takes place through an electronic record called the “Passenger Name Record” (PNR). The PNR contains all the pertinent information about the traveler’s reservation requests, and resides permanently in the TMC’s database, which is known as a “Global Distribution System” (GDS).

The PNR is created when a traveler selects their first reservation in DTS. The PNR updates every time the reservation information changes – for example, when a traveler selects a new reservation or changes an existing reservation, or when the TMC adds ticket information.

DTS and the TMC don’t interact directly with each other, but each can access the PNR to update or access information about reservations or reservation requests as needed. See Figure 2-1. This action is known as “sweeping” or “sending” the PNR.

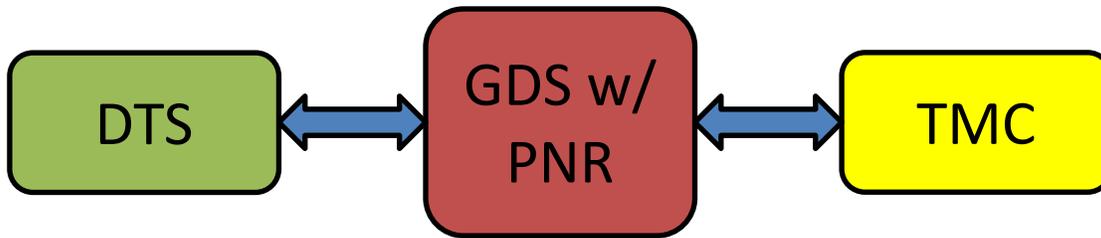


Figure 2-1: Interaction between DTS, TMC, and GDS/PNR

Information in the PNR includes, but is not limited to:

- Pertinent DTS profile information such as the traveler's name and contact information
- The traveler's projected itinerary
- Requested reservations and estimated costs
- The method of payment; typically one of the following:
 - Traveler's government travel charge card (GTCC)
 - Unit's centrally billed account (CBA) information
- Additional information the traveler provided, e.g., via a TMC assistance request in DTS

The PNR does NOT contain information such as:

- DTS screen names or formats
- DTS on-screen tools or entry fields
- People on the routing list
- Miscellaneous reimbursable expenses
- Additional Authorizations (e.g., Variations Authorized)
- Justifications to the AO
- Document history, including comments to the AO

The actual PNR format is as shown in Table 2-2 (next page). You likely can't read it – at least not all of it. Fortunately, you don't need to read it, since you will probably never see it. We only include it to bring home the point that referencing DTS screens and identification terms is pointless when discussing reservations with the TMC.

Table 2-2

PNR INFORMATION	MEANING
1.1TRAVELER/JOE	Traveler's name
1 AA1107Y 01FEB DCADFW HK1 600A 830A/ E	Outbound flight request
2 CAR ET 01FEB HK1 DFW/02FEB/CCAR/ARR-830A/RET-0230P/RG-USD30.00 UNL DY XD22.00 UNL/BS-22972246 /RC-DTS /CF-123456789	Rental car request
3 HHL BW HK1 DAL IN 01FEB OUT 02FEB 1NT 54847 BW /BW DALLAS 95.00USD/ AGT1234567/TRAVELER JOE/SI-CF-12345	Hotel request
4 AA2534 02FEB DFWDC A HK1 425P 810P / E	Return flight request
W#FLIGHT NUMBER AA1107 DCA-DFW 02/01/10 W#SEAT PREF 25D W#FLIGHT NUMBER AA2534 DFW-DCA 02/02/10 W#SEAT PREF 20C W#COMMENTS CTO PLEASE ASSIST WITH BOOKING	Request for TMC assistance booking flights
X#CAR SEGMENT ET CCAR DFW 02/01/10 - 02/02/10	Additional rental car info
Y#LODGING SEGMENT 02/01/10 THRU 02/02/10 Y#BW54847 Y#DOUBLE BEDS NONSMOK	Additional lodging info

Notice the special requests in the **W**, **X**, and **Y** lines. The TMC can easily overlook such requests, especially in a long PNR. If the TMC overlooks a special request then simply contact them for support, based upon your local business process. You should also be aware the TMC's responsibility is not ensuring the vendor satisfies such special requests. Instead, their role is to make sure that the vendor receives them. Each vendor decides if the traveler's request is possible.

When communicating with the TMC about the PNR, the most important piece of information is the PNR identifier. To find it in DTS, open the DTS authorization and select **Reservations** (or **Travel**) at the top of the screen. The Review Reservation Selections screen (Figure 2-2) opens. The **DTS/TMC Confirmation ID** is on the fourth line below the **Trip Details**.

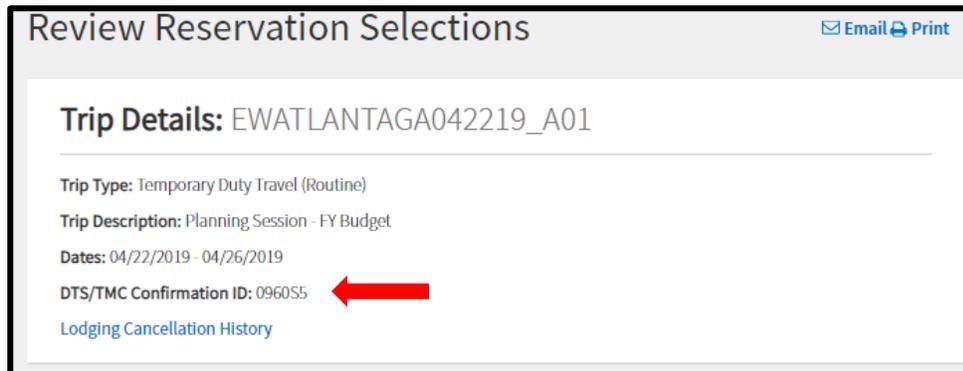


Figure 2-2: Where to Find the PNR Locator in DTS

Quoting that number to the TMC enables them to find the PNR and gain access to the

traveler's reservation information. However, going back to the terminology listed in Table 2-1, remember that when you talk to the TMC, you should call it the "PNR locator" or simply the "PNR" so the TMC understands exactly what you mean.

Depending upon the type of reservations, sometimes (as in the example in Figure 2-2) two PRN locators appear. This simply means that the reservations are tied to two different numbers simultaneously. Having two PNRs is not a problem, but you must give the TMC both numbers to prevent mistakes that may cause the DTS document to lock.

2.2 Ticketing Date

The tickets-are-waiting (TAW) date – a.k.a., the ticketing date – is the day the TMC is allowed to issue tickets on booked reservations. The TAW date is usually 3 business days before travel is due to start. Of course, the organization can request early ticketing, if required by the mission.

DTS adds the TAW to the PNR when the AO stamps the authorization **APPROVED**. If the AO does not approve the authorization, the TMC cannot issue tickets. This can lead to unaware travelers showing up at the airport without tickets. Don't let this happen.

- If you are a traveler, regularly check your authorization's document history (Figure 2-3) on the **Digital Signature** screen:
 - Look for the **APPROVED** stamp well before the TAW date.
 - Look for **CTO TICKETED** after the TAW date.
 - Contact the AO, DTA, or help desk if a stamp fails to appear in a timely manner.

Digital Signature

Trip Authorization Status
See where your trip authorization currently is in the approval process.

[Check document for errors...](#)

[Hide Previous Stamp](#)

STATUS	DATE/TIME	NAME	COMMENT
CREATED	11/05/2018 08:40AM	Eric T West	Need to add mileage allowance
SIGNED	11/05/2018 08:41AMEST	Eric T West	
APPROVED	11/05/2018 08:42AMEST	Chris A West	
ADJUSTED OBLIGATION	11/05/2018 08:42AMEST	Chris A West	Trip #1 DTMO 19 DEFAULT 2019 QTR: 1 \$11.99
PAY LINK	11/05/2018 08:44AMEST	Pay Mod Generated	Document data-linked to Payment Module
OBLIG SUBMITTED	11/05/2018 08:45AMEST	Pay Mod Generated	By XML Proc
POS ACK RECEIVED	11/05/2018 08:54AMEST	Pay Mod Generated	GEX Auto PosAck

Figure 2-3 – **APPROVED** stamp in DTS

- On the other hand, if you are a DTA, run the **Pending Airline Cancellation Report** frequently to identify documents containing flights, which approval has not yet occurred. Contact the AO to review and if compliant with policy, approve the authorization. Reach out to the TMC, help desk, or TAC if the AO has approved the document, but the TMC has not ticketed the reservations.

Section 3: DTS/TMC Reservation Process

This section will clarify how both systems (DTS and the TMC) interact with the PNR, how actions by various people trigger certain actions, and how both systems keep everyone informed about what’s going on. Table 3-1 shows all the major steps involved in the process of making reservations in DTS, through a TMC. See the pages that follow for more details.

As explained in Section 2, DTS and the TMC both access the GDS (where the PNR is stored) to

obtain, record, or update information during the reservations process. This type of access by alternate entities is known as “sending” or “sweeping” the PNR, although the document doesn’t actually go anywhere.

Table 3-1

STEP	ACTION	EFFECT ON PNR	DTS STAMP	EMAIL?
1	Traveler selects first reservation	Created	None	No
2	Traveler alters a reservation	Updated	None	No
3	Traveler completes authorization	None	SIGNED	No
4	TMC receives reservation requests	To TMC inbound queue	CTO SUBMIT	No
5	TMC books reservations	To TMC outbound queue	CTO BOOKED	Yes
6	AO approves travel	Updated	APPROVED	Yes
7	TMC issues tickets	Updated	CTO TICKETED	Yes

3.1 Step 1: Traveler Selects First Reservation

Selecting the first reservation in the DTS Travel module creates a PNR and immediately enters the selected reservation into it. This puts the reservation “on hold” – meaning a plane seat, hotel room, or rental car is set aside for the traveler. DTS provides a booking message for each reservation selected (air, rental car, lodging) providing the PNR Record number (Figure 3-1).



Figure 3-1: Booking message in DTS

While the reservation remains on hold, nobody else can select it, though it is not yet booked or ticketed.

Since this activity takes place while the traveler is still creating the authorization, DTS does not apply any stamps, and neither the TMC nor DTS send any emails.

3.2 Step 2: Traveler Alters Reservations

“Altering” reservations includes selecting more reservations, cancelling existing reservations, replacing reservations with others, and more. The actions all occur in the DTS **Reservations** module, so they behave almost exactly like the reservations in step one. That is, they trigger no DTS stamps or emails, but they can create a reservation that is placed on hold or remove the hold on an existing reservation. Each alteration updates the PNR.

The PNR may update quite a few times while the traveler goes through the process of building the authorization and during subsequent trip planning.

3.3 Step 3: Traveler Completes Authorization

After finishing making reservations and entering all other necessary information, the traveler must apply the **SIGNED** stamp to complete the authorization. The **SIGNED** stamp triggers DTS to start electronically routing the document to the travel experts on the routing list. If the authorization includes reservations, the first stop is the TMC.

Note: If the traveler makes any reservation changes between **SIGNED** and the trip start date, they must re-sign the authorization to send the updated PNR to the TMC.

3.4 Step 4: TMC Receives Reservation Requests

For authorizations including reservation requests, applying the **SIGNED** stamp triggers several actions:

- The PNR is swept to the TMC's "inbound queue"
- DTS applies the **CTO SUBMIT** stamp
- The document becomes temporarily "view-only" in DTS

When the authorization arrives in the inbound queue, the TMC performs an electronic quality control check of the reservation requests. Some TMC contracts also allow the TMC to conduct a check for alternate flights, if the traveler's request includes flights that are not Government contracted airfares.

3.5 Step 5: TMC Books Reservations

Within one business day, the TMC books the reservations, including any special requests the traveler made. From this point, the traveler has guaranteed reservations, though the TMC has neither charged the traveler nor issued tickets.

The act of booking reservations causes several actions to occur automatically:

- The PNR is swept to the TMC's outbound queue
- The document once again becomes editable DTS
- DTS applies the **CTO BOOKED** stamp
- The TMC sends the traveler an email that includes the trip itinerary.

- DTS sends the traveler an email that includes:
 - The trip itinerary
 - Comments from the TMC
 - The document's current status – **CTO BOOKED**, and actively routing
 - Instructions on how to access the document in DTS

3.6 Step 6: AO Approves Travel

The last person in the local routing process is always the AO. AO approval triggers DTS to do several things automatically:

- Update the PNR to attach the tickets-are-waiting (TAW) date
- Apply the **APPROVED** stamp
- Send the traveler an email with the document's new status – **APPROVED**

Note: Until the traveler receives this email, the traveler must assume the AO has not yet approved the authorization. The AO must approve the authorization before the traveler may travel.

3.7 Step 7: TMC Issues Tickets

On the TAW date, the TMC issues electronic tickets, unless the mission demands paper tickets or the organization has requested early ticketing. Ticket issuance triggers several actions:

- The TMC updates the PNR with ticket information and applicable fees
- The traveler's GTCC or the unit's CBA is debited
- DTS updates the authorization with the new PNR information
- DTS applies **CTO TICKETED** stamp (see Figure 3-1)
- DTS sends the traveler an email that includes:
 - Basic itinerary information
 - TMC comments
 - The document's current status – **CTO TICKETED**
- The TMC sends the traveler an email that contains:
 - The payment invoice
 - A more complete version of the itinerary
 - The ticket numbers and costs
 - After-hours emergency contact information
 - And much more

With an approved and ticketed trip, the traveler may go to the airport and will be able to travel.

Document History				
Status	Date	Time	Name	Remarks
CTO AMENDMENT	02/22/12	0537	CTO	Routing for approval not required.
CTO TICKETED	02/22/12	0537	CTO	
ADJUSTED	02/22/12	0537	CTO	

Figure 3-2: **CTO TICKETED** stamp in DTS

Section 4: Best Practices

Now you know how the reservations and ticketing process should work. Here are some suggestions to help ensure things go as smoothly as possible, based on your role.

4.1 Monitor Document Status in DTS (Traveler, Clerk, NDEA, AO)

Closely monitor each active document that concerns you. Check their status in DTS at least weekly to ensure it is routing in a timely manner. Do not hesitate to take action if you notice unusual delays. For instance, alert a slow Routing Official or call the local help desk or Travel Assistance Center (TAC).

*Before you contact the TAC, be aware of your local policies on this matter. Some organizations have rules about who may contact the TAC.

4.2 Run Tracking Reports Weekly (DTA)

Run the following reports each week to spot documents that are not processing normally:

- The Routing Status report identifies all documents currently in routing, along with their current status, awaiting status, and the amount of time they have been waiting.
- The Pending Airline Cancellation report identifies all documents with flights that are stamped **CTO BOOKED**, but not **APPROVED**. You can limit this search by a number of hours before the trip start time to spot documents for imminent trips.
- The Depart Status report identifies all documents for upcoming travel with the current and awaiting status. When the TA number column is blank, then the AO has not approved the document.

4.3 Watch Your Email (Traveler)

Monitor your email. Let the AO, DTA, TAC, or TMC know if you don't receive an email from the TMC with ticketing information by the TAW date. Do this as soon as possible to allow time for troubleshooting.

4.4 Don't Go to the Airport without a Ticket (Traveler)

Never go to the airport before you receive confirmation of ticketing (see Figure 3-1). The most likely cause of a failure to ticket is the AO neglecting to approve the authorization. Without AO approval, you do not have authorization to travel.

4.5 Keep DTS Profiles Up-To-Date (Traveler, DTA)

DTS updates the PNR with information from the traveler's DTS profile. The two most important items, from the TMC's perspective, are:

- **Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) data:** Few things will cause travel to grind to a halt faster than bad GTCC information. Without it, the GTCC vendor will decline a purchase, meaning the TMC cannot book reservations.
- **Traveler contact information:** Should the TMC have to contact the traveler, for instance, for a declined card or to confirm some aspect of the traveler's reservation requests, they must have the most current information.

4.6 Activate Your GTCC (Traveler)

As soon as you receive a new GTCC, call the number on the label on the front of the card to activate it. The TMC can't process tickets when a card is not activate.

4.7 Decide Whether Or Not to Contact the TMC (Traveler)

When travel plans change, you must decide whether to contact the TMC. Weigh the potential help the TMC can provide against the extra cost of requesting that assistance. Most TMC contracts have two TMC pricing levels – a lower fee when for using automated, electronic processes, and a higher fee when the TMC provides personal assistance. Of course, you must judge each situation on its own merits, but here are a few general rules.

Do not hesitate to contact the TMC when:

- An emergency or mission requirement demands short-notice travel (aka, "verbal

- orders of the Commanding Officer [VOCO])
- Changes are required while official travel is in progress
- You need to return any unused paper tickets

Think twice about calling the TMC:

- To request pre-travel reservation changes – prior to 3-business days of travel and when the reservations aren't ticketed. Instead, use the DTS Reservations Module.
- When you are having trouble with DTS – remember the TMC doesn't have access to the system. Instead, try:
 - Finding an answer through resources such as the [DTMO website](#) or the FAQs or Knowledge Center in the [Travel Explorer](#) (TraX).
 - Getting advice from your local help desk, DTA, AO, or experienced travelers.
 - Contacting the TAC.

Section 5: Common Problems and Their Solutions

Sometimes things still go awry. Let's take a look at some of common problems and what you can do to avoid them or fix them as quickly as possible.

5.1 Document Stuck at CTO SUBMIT

A document properly routing should change status from **CTO SUBMIT** to **CTO BOOKED** in less than 24 hours. If the document status remains at **CTO SUBMIT** for more than 24 hours, then you can consider the document "stuck" and should seek assistance.

There are many reasons a document may remain at **CTO SUBMIT**. Some are TMC issues; others are DTS problems. Either way, contacting the TAC should provide insight to the problem, as the TAC has access to DTS and TMC systems.

Travelers should NOT to call the TAC about a **CTO SUBMIT** status until at least 24 hours have passed.

5.2 Seats Not Available

Occasionally DTS displays a seat map with no selectable seats. One contributing factor to this situation is the fact that most airlines offer seat selection on a "first come, first served" basis, and demand is high. If you don't see an available seat, don't be overly concerned. If the flight appears in DTS for you to select, then at least one seat is available. Every airline restricts a certain number of seats from pre-flight selection.

Some common pre-flight selection restrictions are:

- Emergency row seats
- Seats reserved for frequent flyers
- Seats reserved for people who purchase tickets at the airport

The combination of pre-flight seat restrictions and high traveler demand can make pre-flight seat assignments difficult to obtain. However, the airline can confirm a flight reservation even without a specific seat assignment.

In order to increase your odds of getting your seat of choice, try to:

- Book as early as possible – booking early increases your chances of getting a reserved seat.
- Use the DTS seat selector, if available, to find an available seat then call the airline to reserve it. Be advised – the airline may charge a fee for this service; that fee is not reimbursable.
- Join the airline’s frequent flyer program. Doing so will allow you to take advantage of seats reserved for that class of traveler.
- Take advantage of early online check-in. You can usually select a seat when you check in.
- Check in early at the airport early on travel day – arriving early increases your odds of getting the seat of your choice.

5.3 Duplicate Bookings

Never make duplicate air bookings. Airlines do not allow travelers to hold multiple reservations to the same destination on the same day. Sometimes travelers re-book flights hoping to get a better price or book flights on multiple routes as a backup in case of flight cancellation. To some, such actions may seem like prudent planning, but to the airline, the traveler is tying up a seat they can’t use and the airlines can’t sell.

Restrictions against duplicate bookings apply even if you make the reservations in different travel classes or by different methods, such as booking online then calling the TMC or the airline. The restriction even applies if the bookings are on different flights.

Duplicate bookings waste time and money. When you make duplicate bookings, the airline will:

- Cancel all your reservations. You must re-book the cancelled reservations – and you may find that your preferred flights are no longer available.
- Fine the TMC. In most cases, the TMC will pass responsibility for paying the fine to the

DoD Component that made the duplicate booking.

Of course, duplicate booking is not strictly an airline issue. Other travel and transportation (bus, rail, hotel) vendors have similar rules:

- Many transportation vendors charge for all booked tickets, whether you actually use the seat or not.
- Most lodging providers charge a “no show” fee for the first night of the duplicate booking before cancelling any remaining nights.

Remember that DTS is a “book as you go” system, meaning that a reservation is held as soon as you select it. It is booked before you sign the authorization or the AO approves it, though DTS will cancel those reservations if you don’t sign or the AO doesn’t approve the document in time – see Section 5.6 for more information on the DTS auto-cancellation process). In other words, creating duplicate authorizations may well lead to duplicate reservations as well. Unless the TAC instructs you to do so, never create duplicate authorizations in DTS:

- Never use DTS to as a practice or estimation tool; only use the system to create real travel documents. Use practice tools, such as the Enterprise Web Training System (EWTS)*, or trip estimation tools, like the Trip Tools module in TraX, for training/estimation purposes.
- If you need to replace one reservation with another, do so in DTS whenever possible. Just make sure you remove the reservation you don’t need before you add the new one. If you need to replace the entire authorization for any reason, cancel all reservations on the old authorization before creating the new one.

* EWTS is a robust DTS simulator that provides DTS training in a threat-free environment. You can use EWTS without making any real reservations. For more information on how to access and use EWTS, attend the distance learning class, D205, EWTS Setup and Application.

To prevent duplicate bookings in a single authorization:

- Never ask the TMC to make reservations that already exist in DTS. If you call the TMC to replace reservations made in DTS, let the TMC know about them, so they do not make duplicate reservations by accident.
- Of course, the reverse is also true: never book reservations in DTS if you already have arrangements outside DTS (e.g., through the TMC or calling a provider directly).
- When creating a new DTS authorization, on any reservation screen in the **Reservations**

module (Figure 5-1), select **Skip this <type> booking** in the upper right corner.

The screenshot shows a web interface for flight reservations. At the top left is a back arrow and 'Trip Summary'. At the top right is a red-bordered button that says 'Skip this flight booking' with a right-pointing arrow. Below this is the heading 'Flight Step 1 of 3: Select a Flight'. The main content area contains a search form with three columns: 'DEPARTING FROM' with the value 'IAD - Washington Dul', 'ARRIVING AT' with the value 'SEA - Seattle-Tacom', and 'DEPARTING ON' with a calendar icon, the date '02/11/2018', and a dropdown menu set to 'Morning'. Below these fields are two checkboxes, both labeled 'Include nearby airports'. To the right of the form is a blue 'Search' button with a magnifying glass icon.

Figure 5-1: Sample Reservation Screen in the Reservations Module

For more information on how to manage reservations in DTS, take our document processing web based training classes. They are available through TraX.

5.4 Over-claiming Reimbursement for Reservations

When you make reservations in DTS, the system automatically incorporates them into the travel cost estimate. When you create the voucher, DTS automatically copies the cost into the document and you can update the information based upon actual costs. In other words, if you make reservations in DTS, do not follow up by manually making a duplicate claim for the same reservations. Doing so will result in duplicate payments and will probably leave you owing money to the Government.

Briefly, claiming the costs for reservations purchased outside DTS as follows:

- Enter air, bus, rail, and rental car costs in the **Expenses** module (Figure 5-2). Access it by selecting **Expenses** at the top of the screen, then go to the *Other Expenses* section and select **Add Expenses**.
 - Claim an air, bus, or rail cost as a **Ticketed Expense**.
 - Claim a rental car cost as a **Transportation Expense**.
- Enter a lodging cost in the **Per Diem** module (Figure 5-3). Access it by selecting **Per Diem** at the top of the screen and then select **Adjust Per Diem Amounts**.

Again, for more details about the above screens, attend a web based training class on document processing. Manually updating Per Diem if you will make or already made reservations through some means besides DTS.

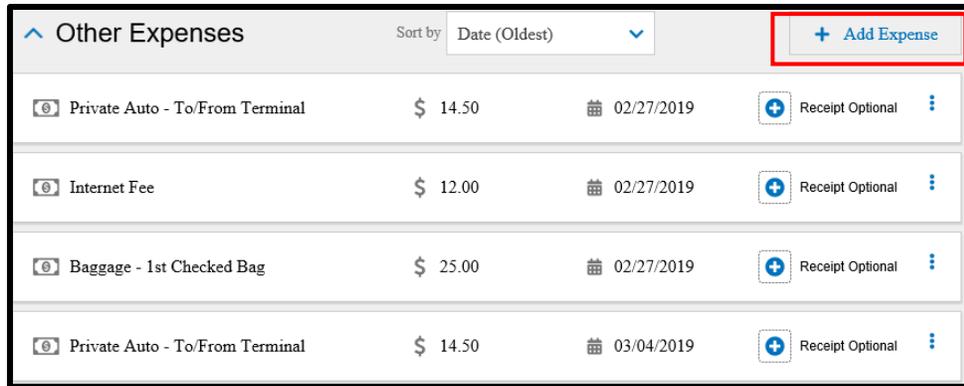


Figure 5-2: The DTS Expenses Screen > Other Expenses Section – Add Expenses

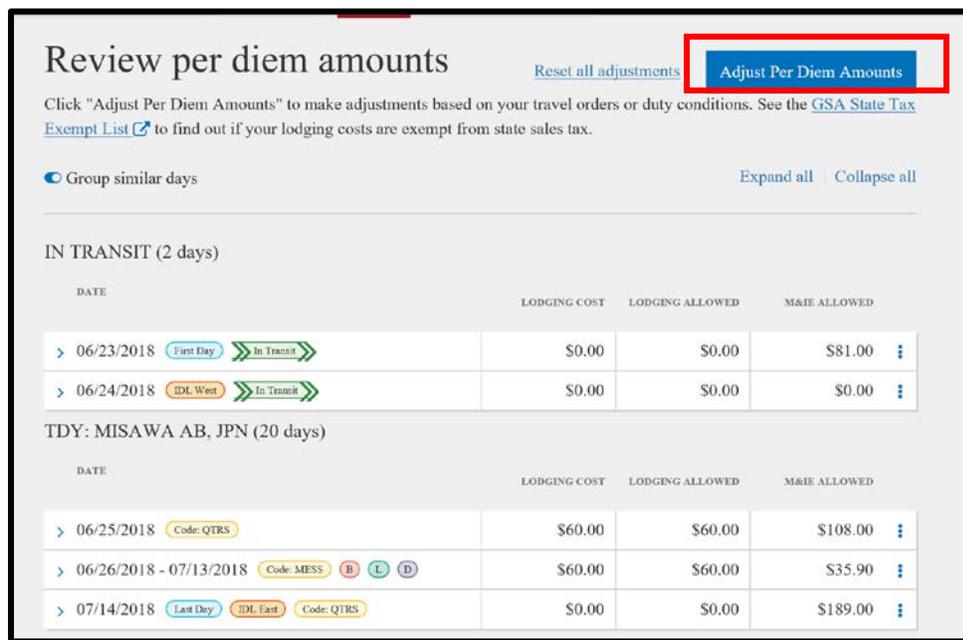


Figure 5-3: DTS Per Diem Module – Update Lodging Costs

5.5 Churning

“Churning” – that is, repeatedly creating and canceling reservations – is another practice that costs DoD money. Like duplicate bookings, the airline industry prohibits churning because it ties up seat inventory. As with duplicate bookings, the airline can fine a TMC that allows churning to occur. In most cases, the TMC passes responsibility for payment to the DoD component that is churning the inventory.

See Section 5.3 for more information on two more situations that lead to churning:

- Using DTS to research flight costs or travel schedules

- Creating authorizations in DTS for practice

5.6 Reservation Auto Cancellation

To prevent prospective DoD travelers from holding reservations that they aren't going to use, reservations are automatically cancelled when certain criteria aren't met.

1. When you exit the DTS **Reservations** module, DTS posts a warning that the system will cancel all changes to flight, hotel, and rental car reservations if you do not stamp the authorization **SIGNED** within 24 hours. This forces you to re-create all the cancelled reservations. This is called "churning," a poor business practice that is covered in Section 5.5. To prevent the system cancelling reservations, all you need to do is ... you guessed it ... sign the authorization within 24 hours. Yes, it really is that simple.
2. If a trip remains un-ticketed 72 hours* before the scheduled departure time, the airline may cancel all flight reservations in order to sell them to someone who is able to travel. Most such cancellations occur because the AO did not stamp the authorization **APPROVED**, or because the document is stuck at **CTO SUBMIT** (see Section 5.2 for more on stuck at **CTO SUBMIT**, and Section 2.2 for how to check whether the TMC has ticketed the flight).

*Applies to reservations made more than 72 hours before departure time. Each airline sets its own policy for cancellation timing of reservations made less than 72 hours before departure time.

5.7 Use of Restricted Airfares

This "problem" isn't actually a problem per se. It is an allowed alternative if the traveler follows the correct process and understands the rules and restrictions when using restricted airfare.

For starters, the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR) directs travelers to use Government contract (aka, "City Pair") fares, when they are available. To make it easier to follow that directive, DTS only offers restricted airfares in non-City Pair markets. However, in an effort to save travel dollars, travelers frequently go outside DTS to use restricted airfares. Per the JTR, to correctly take advantage of such airfares:

- The traveler must book the fare through the TMC. The traveler must not use alternate methods such as booking directly through the airline or by using any of the myriad online booking services.
- If a City Pair flight is available, the AO must fill out and retain the "[Restricted](#)"

[Airfares Checklist](https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/AP-RA-01.pdf),” (click the link or navigate to <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/AP-RA-01.pdf>). Using the checklist ensures the AO considers the ramifications of allowing the use of the restricted airfare. Some of those ramifications are potential:

- Flight change or cancellation fees should the mission change
- Ticket transfer fees should the traveler change
- Minimum stay requirements or blackout dates
- Advance purchase requirements or short notice travel restrictions
- Reservation cancellations if trips aren’t approved or if tickets aren’t purchased or used per arbitrary timeliness requirements
- Negative impact on the DoD’s ability to negotiate lower fares based on high travel volume

Section 6: Support Resources for TMC Issues

Unfortunately, even if you implement all the best preventive measures and best practices, and even if you use the best troubleshooting techniques, things may still go wrong that you cannot fix. Should the worst happen, it’s nice to know who you can contact for help.

In addition to the assets mentioned earlier, such as the TAC and TraX, you should be familiar with your supporting help desk. The help desk is a tremendous tool that can answer questions even the TAC and TraX cannot, such as your local policies and issues specific to your site.

In addition, another source is available to help when needed. The Quality Assurance Evaluator (QAE) or Contracting Officer Technical Representative (COTR) – different titles for the same role – is your site communications liaison between the Government and a private contractor, such as the TMC. If you need to verify some aspect of your TMC contract or need someone to intervene directly with the TMC, the QAE/COTR is the one to do it.

QAE/COTR positions are at the local level, so contact your local chain of command if you need to solicit their assistance.

Appendix A: Acronyms

AO	Authorizing Official
CBA	Centrally Billed Account
COTR	Contracting Officer Technical Representative
CTO	Commercial Travel Office (term now only used in DTS); see also TMC
DoD	Department of Defense
DTA	Defense Travel Administrator
DTMO	Defense Travel Management Office
DTS	Defense Travel System
EWTS	Enterprise Web Training System
GDS	Global Distribution System
GTCC	Government Travel Charge Card
NDEA	Non-DTS Entry Agent
PNR	Passenger Name Record
QAE	Quality Assurance Evaluator
TAC	Travel Assistance Center
TAW	Tickets Are Waiting
TMC	Travel Management Company (formerly known as the CTO)
TraX	Travel Explorer
VOCO	Verbal Orders of the Commanding Officer