

February Top 10 Tuesday Q & A

Q: How do you delete documents after mistakenly uploaded?

A: After attached documents have been attached and uploaded in TPAX, you cannot delete the file. If you erroneously upload personal (non-travel) documents, submit a PPC help ticket to request removal.

Q: When will adding documents into TPAX be mandatory?

A: Currently that is not something being looked at.

Q: What about split disbursement?

A: There is a Split Disbursement guide on the PPC travel web page.

Q: What happens when a member who works on a 10-month work schedule receives and audit? No one else will know.

A: Currently there are no reports available for commands to identify if a member is under an audit. The members should check the audit status in their TPAX account. They are currently working on including the AO in the audit email.

Q: How come when you use the DTOD Tool inside of WEB TPAX the distance does not match up with the distance you would get using the Official DTOD website? Is one more correct than the other for entitlements purposes (i.e. PCS Entitlements)?

A: The DTOD is managed and updated by DOD. The TPAX tool may not have been updated with the newest tables. The Official DTOD web site takes precedence.

Q: For "C" school students here at Yorktown, some have back to back schools. We cannot figure out how to not pay commercial M&IE for the 1st and last days. Tried CS TD CS MC. Still pays commercial M&IE.

A: TPAX is not programmed to compute M&IE rate other than 75% of the local rate. This has been an ongoing issue. You should submit a PPC help ticket for manual intervention. We will raise the issue again and get an updated status on how to process.

Q: When TVL Claims are kicked back, why aren't they kicked back to the AO for correction/training?

A: We are working on getting AO's included on the notification of Audit along with the member.

Q: A member completed their travel claim, they DID NOT use ADTRAV to reserve the Hotel, what do you do?

A: The use of ADTRAV is required by the JTR. If a member makes any reservations outside of ADTRAV they are subject to being reimbursed for the Per Diem rate for the local area. Member should explain in the remarks why ADTRAV was not used. The AO should also notify the member's supervisor anytime the member fails to use ADTRAV for lodging or common carrier transportation.

Q: What about crossover travel? Does member submit two separate claims?

A: No. There is a specific guide called Fiscal year Crossover Claims on the PPC Travel website that explains it.

Q: Are TTOHC claims ever going to be allowed for dependents in TPAX?

A: Because dependents cannot have a TPAX account, all claims must be submitted on paper. PPC manually processes these claims. There is an informational guide for this process on the PPC Travel website.

Q: When an AO sends a claim for review/approval, why is it that those approving the claim, instead of contacting the AO or member via email that there is an issue with the claim, they are deleting the reimbursement/entitlement and place a comment under remarks? The only way the AO or member knows of the change, is when the claim is reviewed and member questions why it is less than originally calculated.

A: When a settlement is altered or when the claimed amount is less than originally submitted, a note is recorded on the Travel Voucher Summary. Members should review the TVS for all settlements for accuracy.

Q: A member went TDY to South Korea. When completing his travel claim, the city/locality was not listed in TPAX. What should he use as the TDY city?

A: When traveling to a foreign country or territory, type the country name in the first block, do not enter anything in the zip code/city block and select the location from the county/locality drop-down. If the location is not listed, select Other.

Q: What should we do if ADTRAV is charging over the government rate but the hotel is actually honoring the government rate? Is ADTRAV aware that they need to book government rate for hotels? We have had a few claims where the hotel was above the government rate.

A: A traveler will only be reimbursed the maximum allowable rate for the area. Members should ensure ADTRAV is quoting the government rate when making reservations. Provide ADTRAV service concerns to [https://www.uscg.mil/psc/bops/govtrvl/TMC/ADTRAV/default_ADTRAV.asp#Want to provide feedback on ADTRAV's Service](https://www.uscg.mil/psc/bops/govtrvl/TMC/ADTRAV/default_ADTRAV.asp#Want%20to%20provide%20feedback%20on%20ADTRAV's%20Service). Be sure to provide specific details from the travel itinerary.

Q: If ADTRAV price for airfare is outrageously expensive, can the member use a commercial airline at a cheaper price?

A: Members should use ADTRAV. They allow unrestricted changes. If a member personally secures travel arrangements outside of ADTRAV they are responsible for any additional fees when arrangements are changed.

Q: Can personal email addresses be used for audit notifications? Reservists usually discover they are being audited close to the deadline to respond.

A: We are currently testing to see if the system will allow personal email notifications. We are also looking at including AOs in the audit emails.

Q: I understand there must be drop down responses for standard reasons for kickbacks. Can we get the policy i.e. JTR 2800.C.3(d) for any and all kickbacks?

A: When a settlement is returned, the reason is recorded in the comments. We are working on updating Kickback remarks.

Q: I have seen TONOs generated on FPD as the official document to travel and upload on TPAX, is this acceptable?

A: Yes, as long as all the pertinent order information is included on the FPD document, not just a MISC doc.

Q: Do we have a date that the updated 3PM will be released?

A: The 3PM, Chapter 2 rewrite is wrapping up now, hope to have that out soon.

Q: Does PPC have an official timeline for approving a claim submitted by the AO?

A: For manual claims, examiners try to enter info into WINIATS within 4 days of receipt, depending on workload. TPAX claims are automatically entered into WINIATS and sent to FINCEN for disbursement.

Q: The AO course won't load the statistics portion. So it won't allow me to complete the course.

A: This is a known issue. The owners of this tool are working on a solution for this.

Additional Comments:

Chief Curry: Approving Officials are encouraged to check out the GTCC website since there is travel, and traveler sources available there, such as ferry reservations and orders documented to use CBA. GTCC newsletters can also be helpful with travel information that impact AOs.

CWO Cockram: All Approving Officials are encouraged to take the AO Course! The course is located in the PPC Travel web page.

CDR Schaffer: Reminder: Invitation for everyone to join the DD-214 webinar next week. The link can be found on PPC Procedures web page.

Guest: PPC does not process PPM, POV shipment, POV storage or TLA claims. These claims should be sent to FINCEN.

Required Use of the Travel Management Center (TMC) for Lodging FAQs

References:

- A. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Financial Management Policy Manual
- B. 41 Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 301-11.11, Federal Travel Regulations (FTR)
- C. Joint Travel Regulations (JTR), 4130, A.4 and 5014

Background - Per Refs A through C, travelers must make all travel reservations, including lodging, for Coast Guard funded travel through the contracted TMC (ADTRAV). Booking lodging reservations directly with the hotel, using commercial websites such as Expedia.com, Hotels.com, AIRBNB, etc. violates these requirements. DHS requires that all reservations made outside of the TMC be authorized per travel order endorsement.

Why is this requirement all of a sudden being enforced? DHS has initiated audits of reservations made outside of the TMC following an Office of the Inspector General (OIG) audit of offline reservations made across DHS components. While the OIG's audit was primarily focused on travelers not using the online booking options offered via the TMC, the audit findings have resulted in DHS increasing their oversight of these transactions.

What if I plan to utilize military lodging? If your orders direct you to use Government Lodging or you elect to use government lodging (Ex: BOQ, Barracks, AF Inn, etc.), then use of the TMC is not required. The TMC does not have the ability to make reservations at government lodging facilities.

What should I do if I have pending travel and already made my own reservations? If the current reservation can be canceled without penalty, you should contact ADTRAV to have a new reservation made, and then cancel the original reservation that was made. Ensure you receive confirmation that the reservation was canceled to avoid any "no show" penalties.

Why is the ADTRAV fee for a hotel only reservation charged immediately? When ADTRAV makes a reservation for airfare and other items like hotel or a rental car, the service fee is assessed when the airline ticket is charged. However, when there is no airline reservation, such as a hotel only reservation, the service fee is charged immediately.

Am I responsible for paying the ADTRAV fee for a hotel only reservation before I complete the travel? Cardholder's are responsible for paying the GTCC balance in full on or before the due date, regardless of reimbursement. Travelers may request a travel advance via TPAX if paying the ~\$4 service fee will cause a financial hardship.

Does this requirement apply to PCS Lodging, such as Temporary Lodging Expense (TLE) or Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA)? No. Reservations for TLE or TLA lodging are not required to be made through the TMC. However, for PCS travel per JTR par. 5014 it is mandatory policy for all members to use an available TMC for all official transportation requirements. So when a member travels by air, train or ferry during PCS travel they are required to use a TMC. Even though JTR Chapter 4, which addresses TDY travel, requires TMC

use for lodging there is no such requirement in JTR Chapter 5 (PCS travel). For PCS travel TMC use is not required for lodging.

If I am a civilian employee attending a conference or other other group function where a block of rooms have been reserved, do I need to make my reservation for lodging through the TMC (ADTRAV)? Yes, there is no conference exemption for travelers covered by the FTR. If the traveler has a specific hotel in mind, they can ask ADTRAV to try to secure a reservation there (recommend the traveler provide any group lodging information that they may have from the conference to the agent). If ADTRAV is unable to secure a lodging reservation at that specific location within per diem, then they will search for other lodging at the TDY location (City/State) that is within Per Diem. If they are unable to secure lodging within per diem at the TDY location, then they will note this on the RezConfirm document and the traveler is free to proceed with trying to book the lodging on their own or engaging their Approving Official for above per diem lodging authorization on the orders.

As a Coast Guard Reservist with Active Duty for Training (ADT) orders, am I required to make my reservation for lodging through the TMC (ADTRAV)? Yes, just like any TDY orders if commercial lodging is authorized, then the reservation shall be made via ADTRAV.

Does group lodging requests need to be processed through the TMC(ADTRAV)? Yes, if the orders include authorization for commercial lodging then the reservation shall be made via ADTRAV. Please refer to the link below for more information on making group reservations. https://www.uscg.mil/psc/bops/govtrvl/Traveler/default_Traveler.asp#How_do_I_make_Group_travel_Reservations

I am trying to make a reservation in a remote location and there is no lodging listed in the online system, what do I do? You will need to call ADTRAV and speak with an agent. If you have a specific hotel in mind, provide them with that information. Please note that the online booking system is based on the hotel paying to be included in the Global Distribution System (basically the travel industries network). If the hotel is a small mom & pop enterprise they may not pay for this service so the agent would have to call the hotel directly to make the reservation.

Are there any exemptions for emergency deployments, OCONUS travel, evacuations/safe haven lodging, last minute/unanticipated lodging, medical leave, invitational travel or rest over-night lodging requirements? No, the only known exemptions are listed in the references, ALCGPSC 120/16 and this FAQ.

What if I don't have a travel card; am I required to use the TMC for lodging? Yes if you are also arranging commercial travel that will be billed to the CBA, the TMC shall be used to secure lodging. This ensures the travel fee is billed at the time travel is ticketed. If no commercial travel is required, such as travel by GV or POV, use of the TMC is not required.

Can I request a waiver of this policy? If a command disagrees with this policy interpretation or desires a waiver of the lodging reservation requirement, they may submit a memo detailing their issue with any JTR/FTR analysis and specific documentation/justification for the request to COMDT (CG-1).

Added 24 Jan 17:

What should I do if the only lodging available through ADTRAV is above the local lodging per diem rate? In this case, you should request the ADTRAV agent provide a statement to you via e-mail. The ADTRAV agent will send an e-mail that states “Unfortunately, ADTRAV is unable to find any available, suitable commercial lodging that is within the per diem limits for your requested travel to CITY, ST on the dates of MM/DD/YYYY to MM/DD/YYYY.” With this information, you may request your Approving Official authorize a higher per diem rate on your travel orders and complete the reservation with ADTRAV. Alternately, if you are able to find a within per diem rate directly from a hotel without going through a 3rd party internet service like Travelocity, Hotels.Com, etc. then you can make your reservation directly. The e-mail from the ADTRAV agent would serve as the documentation of non-availability detailed in paragraph 3.E of ALCGPSC 120/16.

Required Use of ADTRAV:

Is the use of the Travel Management Center (TMC) Contractor Mandatory? All official travel (e.g. airline, bus, ship, trains, Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS), rental vehicle) must be arranged through a Government Contracted TMC in accordance with the JTR/FTR, even if a non-contract fare is being purchased. The contracted TMC for the Coast Guard is ADTRAV.

Why are the ADTRAV issued GSA contract tickets so expensive? They are not if you compare equivalent fares. The GSA Contracted fares are fully refundable tickets and cannot be compared with non-refundable ticket pricing available from online travel websites such as Orbitz or Travelocity. The City Pair Program (CPP) offers fares discounted considerably off comparable commercial fares--saving the federal government billions of dollars annually. In addition to the tremendous price savings, the City Pair Program has many features which allow government travelers all the flexibility possible in planning official travel. The benefits of this service include:

- Fares priced on one-way routes permitting agencies to plan multiple destinations;
- No advance purchase required;
- No minimum or maximum length stay required;
- Tickets fully refundable;
- Last seat availability;
- No blackout periods;
- Stable prices enabling travel budgeting; and,
- Dual fares availability.

What benefit does the CG receive for the ADTRAV fees? While the primary benefit of paying the nominal fee for full-service or less for self-service for travel support is access to the CPP contracted fares, there are many other benefits provided to the traveler and the CG. These benefits include:

- Ensuring travel options are in accordance with FTR and JTR regulations including GSA's Airline City Pair, Fly America Act and Open Skies Agreement.
- Controlling the use of premium class service in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulations 41 CFR 301-10.121 through 301-10.124 and JTR.
- Providing access to the Government Car Rental Program which includes vehicle insurance as part of the contracted price. Specific details available at <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/rentalCar.cfm>.
- Travel Agent availability 24x7.
- Ability to use the Centrally Billed Accounts, travel order reviews, and reconciliation of over 5,000 CBA charges each month so FINCEN can process the payment and distributed the charges to the correct TONO and line of accounting.
- Consolidated monthly reporting and travel data for all CG travelers.

How can the traveler provide feedback on ADTRAV's service delivery? To provide feedback to the Coast Guard's Contracting Officer's Technical Representative for the ADTRAV Contract, please go to our website - www.uscg.mil/psc/bops/govtrvl/TMC/ADTRAV/default_ADTRAV.asp.