**Per appendix P part 2, B.2 of the JTR:** 2. Do I have to use the contract carrier? Won't any airline do?

A Federal or uniformed traveler on official business is required to use the contract carrier (as a ‘mandatory user’) unless a specific contract exception applies. This required use is one of the incentives necessary to obtain airline participation in the city pair program and allows the airlines to anticipate the business volume necessary to offer discounted rates. Choosing not to use the contract carrier because of personal preference, frequent flyer clubs, etc., is a violation of the contract and of Service/Agency policy and regulations.

Commercial airfares can be highly volatile, so an exception to the mandatory use requirement allows a Gov’t traveler to take advantage of any low commercial airfares offered by contract – or U.S. certified non-contract carriers, if the airfares are also offered to the general public. Non-contract airfares that are offered only to a Gov’t traveler (sometimes called "DG" airfares) are not included in this exception. When Gov’t/Gov’t contracted transportation/CTO (App A1) or in-house services are available, it is still mandatory for the traveler to use those services when arranging official travel.

**As per appendix P part 2, D.3 of the JTR:** 3. How can I know that my travel was ticketed using the GSA Airline City pair airfare rate?

The ticket shows a three-letter airfare basis code with –CA (Contract Award) as part of it. Airline City Pair tickets are issued using one of the following airfare basis codes: a. YCA = Guaranteed GSA economy/coach city pair airfare which is a highly discounted unrestricted airfare. If the Gov’t contract city pair carrier offers a lower cost capacity controlled coach class contract airfare (MCA, QCA, VCA, etc.) in addition to the unrestricted coach class contract fares (YCA), the traveler should use the lower cost capacity controlled airfare when it is available and meets mission needs.

NOTE 1: Personal frequent flyer or mileage reward points use in conjunction with official travel is not a valid reason to request a YCA airfare when a –CA airfare is available. If the traveler elects to use the unrestricted coach class contract fares (YCA) when a lower cost capacity controlled coach class contract airfare is available and the cost exceeds the cost of the lower cost capacity controlled airfare, the traveler is financially responsible to the Gov’t for the cost difference between the YCA airfare and the lower capacity controlled airfare. CBCA 1511-TRAV, 7 May 2009.

**Per 41 CFR 301-10.106 (FTR):** When must I use a contract city-pair fare? If you are a civilian employee of an agency as defined in §301-1.1 of this chapter [This includes all Executive Branches], you must always use a contract city-pair fare for scheduled air passenger transportation service unless one of the limited exceptions in §301-10.107 exist.

Per the GSA City Pair Program the exceptions to the mandatory use requirement are contained in the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR § 301-10.107) and include:

* Space on a scheduled contract flight is not available in time to accomplish the purpose of your travel, or use of contract service would require you to incur unnecessary overnight lodging costs, increasing the total cost of the trip;
* The contractor's flight schedule is inconsistent with explicit policies of your federal department or agency regarding scheduling travel during normal working hours;
* Rail service is available, and such service is cost effective and is consistent with mission requirements; and
* Smoking is permitted on the contract flight and the nonsmoking section of the aircraft for the contract flight is not acceptable to you.

In the case of multiple local airports, then the GSA City Pair Program states, in accordance with Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) § 301-10.106, federal employees on official travel must choose the CPP contract carrier if the contract carrier fare is offered and has seats available. Travelers should utilize the contract carrier from the airport that offers established City Pair fares. If multiple sister airports (i.e. IAD, DCA, BWI are considered sister airports) offered on the city pair or a lower airfare is found, a traveler should ensure they incorporate the use of both CPP contract and non-contract air carriers [Note this is not the DG fare] in a way that results in an overall cost savings to the Federal Government. In line with FTR § 301-10.107, your agency may authorize use of a fare other-than a contract city-pair fare when:

* They offer a lower fare to the general public that, if used, will result in a lower total trip cost to the Federal Government (the combined costs of transportation, lodging, meals, and related expenses considered).
* Space on a scheduled contract flight is not available in time to accomplish the purpose of your travel, or use of contract service would require you to incur unnecessary overnight lodging costs which would increase the total cost of the trip.
* The CPP contractor’s flight schedule is inconsistent with explicit policies of your Federal department or agency with regard to scheduling travel during normal working hours.

**Policy Enforcement Requirements:**

**Supervisors of military travelers or AOs** – Per the JTR section U-1035 APPROPRIATE ACTION FOR FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE REGULATIONS - “A command/unit is expected to take appropriate disciplinary action when a traveler and/or AO fail to follow these Regulations. Disciplinary action should be for willful violations and may be in the form of counseling (oral/written), non-judicial action, or other appropriate personnel means.”

**Supervisors of civilian travelers or AOs** - Shall contact their servicing CG-1214 specialist for guidance and support prior to taking appropriate informal or formal disciplinary action when a civilian traveler and/or AO fail to follow these Regulations, as warranted by Ref D. Civilian Personnel Actions: Discipline, Performance, Adverse Actions, Appeals and Grievances, Commandant Instruction M12750.4A