

U.S. Department of the Interior

DOI TRAVEL NEWSLETTER

Published by: Office of Financial Management

Volume 1, Issue 4

October 2001



SEPTEMBER 11 AFTERMATH NEWS

Assistant Secretary's Memorandum on Travel Policy

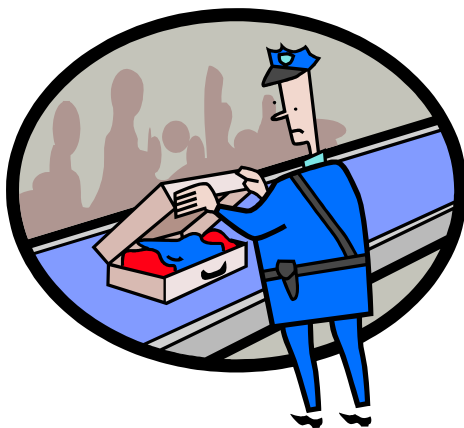
A memorandum to all Department of the Interior employees dated September 14, 2001, from P. Lynn Scarlett, Assistant Secretary - Policy, Management and Budget provided official travel guidance to all Interior employees following the attacks of September 11. Assistant Secretary Scarlett advised that Interior employees should resume normal business travel required to meet the mission of the Department. Employees should continue to use the Government Travel Charge Card for travel expenses whenever possible. You may access Assistant Secretary Scarlett's memorandum on the Office of Financial Management's Travel Web site at <http://www.doi.gov/pfm/travel.html>.

Cancellation Fees and Refunds

Most airlines announced that they would provide a refund, with no penalty, to travelers who were scheduled to travel in the September 11-25 time frame. Please contact your local Omega World Travel (OWT) office if you have questions relating to billings or refunds on flights that were scheduled for this time frame. Please remember that you must return all unused paper tickets in order to receive a refund (whereas unused electronic tickets are automatically submitted for refund.)

New Airport Security Measures

The September 11 incidents have had a wide-reaching effect on how airlines and airports conduct business. The following are some of the procedures and security measure that DOI travelers can expect:



Don't Leave Home Without It:

Travelers on official U.S. government travel must have **valid, government-issued identification** with them at all times. Airlines are accepting both paper and electronic tickets, but if you are traveling on e-tickets **you must bring your final itinerary with you.**

When to Arrive at the Airport:

Do not arrive at the airport until you have confirmed your flight information. Plan to arrive at least two hours before departure for domestic flights, and at least three hours before departure for international flights. Since the traffic and waiting times vary substantially among airports, it's a very good idea to ask your OWT travel agent for advice on recommended arrival times at the airports you will be traveling from.

What to Expect Upon Arrival: Airports have discontinued curbside check-in so you will have to go directly to the airline ticket counter to obtain a boarding pass and to

Inside this issue:

City-Pair Contracts	2
Per Diem Rates	2
Insurance Coverage	2
Government Travel Card	2
Frequent Flyer Miles	2
OWT Airline Ticket Data	3
Travel Transaction Fees	3



Data Sources for DOI Travel Newsletter: Much of the travel industry information contained in this newsletter was obtained from public domain sources such as newspapers and the Internet, and was current at the time of publication. Travel industry information is provided solely for the use and information of DOI employees.

SEPTEMBER 11 AFTERMATH NEWS

check baggage. In most instances, you will need a boarding pass before you are allowed to pass through the security checkpoint.

Luggage: You may be subjected to a hand-search of your belongings; you may also be searched with hand-held metal detectors. Items in luggage that may have passed through screening prior to September 11 may not make it through now. For example, knives of any kind are no longer allowable. This includes knives in luggage or knives carried in pockets

such as pocket knives. Avoid over-packing so that carry-on and checked luggage may open and close easily. Make sure that all luggage, whether checked or carry-on, have identification tags. Most of all - use the common sense rule: consider whether anything you are carrying may look suspicious.

Parking: Parking lots close to terminals may be blocked-off or closed so allow enough time to park at remote lots and get a shuttle back to the terminal.

OTHER DOI TRAVEL NEWS

New City-Pair Contracts for 2002

The General Services Administration (GSA) has negotiated a program that features airfares that are lower than the already discounted federal rates for a limited number of seats in some markets. The new city-pair contracts for 2002 have capacity controlled fares for 337 city-pairs and are available for certain regular long-haul services and on commuter airlines where reservations are on a first come first served basis. The new fares will be available on a limited number of seats so travelers would be wise to book early. Travelers may still purchase tickets using standard government rates that do not require advance purchase. All government contract fares have no minimum or maximum stay requirements, travel time limits, charges for cancellations, or blackout periods.

Per Diem Rates for Fiscal Year 2002

GSA has published the per diem rates for FY 2002. A complete file of the rates is available from the [Federal Register](#) or you can check on individual rates for either FY 2002, FY 2001, or FY 2002 by selecting the appropriate year from the Office of Financial Management web-site: [347 DM FTR Implementing Instructions](#).



Insurance Coverage

The Bank of America (BOA) Smart Pay Program Charge Card provides up to \$200,000 in travel accident insurance for individual travelers who purchase commercial transportation tickets and other travel related expenses with their government charge card. The program also provides travel accident insurance designed to reimburse cardholders for luggage that is lost and **not** recovered. To obtain a claim form and initiate the claims process, contact the BOA Claims Department at 1-800-735-1408.

Use of the Government Travel Charge Card

Employees are reminded that the Government Travel Charge Card is issued to individual employees for their travel requirements. Under no circumstance is it appropriate to charge another employee's travel expenses to your individual travel charge card. Any questions concerning this matter should be referred to your bureau travel coordinator.

Will Government Travelers Be Able to Keep Frequent Flyer Miles?

The House Government Reform Committee has approved a bill that would allow federal government employees to keep the frequent flyer miles they accumulate while on official travel. The bill (HR 2456) was approved by the House on July 30, 2001, and must next be approved by the Senate. Under HR 2456, federal workers could keep their miles as long as the frequent flyer programs used were obtained under the same terms as provided to the general public and cost the government no extra money. Other frequent traveler benefit programs, such as hotel point programs and car rental point programs, would also be covered under the bill. The legislation would be retroactive, allowing those federal employees already signed up to keep and use miles earned prior to the bill's enactment. The Bush administration added language in its proposed fiscal year 2002 defense authorization bill that repeals restrictions on the personal use of frequent flyer miles for both military and civilian employees.

AAdvantage
TRAVEL AWARDS PROGRAM

Delta Air Lines
SkyMiles

Continental
OnePass

OTHER DOI TRAVEL NEWS

Most airlines have procedures for tracking miles previously flown using e-tickets (up to a maximum of six months) which can be credited to your account over the telephone. Although this is not true for paper tickets, mileage credits for previously flown segments can be credited with proof of travel. Each carrier has specific guidelines regarding their award programs and the following telephone numbers are provided for your assistance:

United	Mileage Plus	1-800-421-4655
Delta	Sky Miles	1-800-323-2323
American	Advantage	1-800-882-8880
US Airways	Dividend Miles	1-336-661-8390
Alaska	Mileage Plan	1-800-654-5669
Continental	One Pass	1-713-952-1630
Southwest	Rapid Rewards	1-800-445-9267
Northwest	World Perks	1-800-447-3757

Increase in Travel Transaction Fees- Effective October 1, 2001

The \$7.95 transaction fee charged by Omega World Travel has been in place since May, 2000.

In mid-August, 2001, the airline industry announced that airline commissions on domestic travel would remain at 5%, but would be capped at \$10 for a one-way ticket, and \$20 for a round trip ticket. (The previous commission caps had been \$25 and \$50 respectively.)

Airline commissions represent a major revenue source for travel providers, and both the GSA Master Travel Management Center Contract and the Department's Task Order with Omega World Travel require that transaction fee adjustments be made when airline commissions change.

Approximately 35% of the Department's domestic air travel involves ticket prices in excess of \$400 (the point at which the new commission caps have an adverse financial impact on travel service providers), and hence a transaction fee increase was necessary. The new transaction fee, effective October 1, 2001, is \$9.80.

Month	Tickets Issued	Dollar Value (in millions)
Dec	7,328	\$2.82
Jan	13,788	5.20
Feb	15,066	5.80
Mar	18,204	7.03
Apr	16,164	6.30
May	15,628	6.25
June	14,407	4.70
July	14,177	5.55
Aug	16,847	6.63
Total	131,609	\$50.28

Travel Contacts and Web Sites:

Newsletter: Charlene Hutchinson, charlene_hutchinson@ios.doi.gov
202.208.3964

Government Travel Policy: Les Oden, les_oden@ios.doi.gov
202.208.6225

Omega World Travel: Viola Thompson, vthompson@owt.net
703.359.0200, ext.392

TMC Comments and Feedback Form:
www.doi.gov/pfm/tmc/feedback.html

DOI Online Quality Assurance Form:
www.owt.net/survey/doi/daily/doi_daily.asp

DOI Travel Profile:
<https://profile.owt.net/doi>

DOI Travel Policy:
www.doi.gov/pfm/travel.html

This newsletter is available on the Internet at:
www.doi.gov/pfm/travel_newsletter