



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S INSTRUCTION

**Title:** Travel

**Reference:** *Financial Management and Accountability Regulations 1997*  
Regulations 9 and 13

**Effective date:** 23 September 2013

### Purpose

1. This Chief Executive's Instruction is about undertaking domestic and international travel on behalf of the Department.

### Definitions

2. **employees** means those persons who are employed permanently or on a contractual basis by the Department.
3. **Travel** means travel where the Commonwealth is responsible for any of the direct or indirect costs associated with that travel, employees are expected to neither gain or lose financially as a result of undertaking travel.

### Instructions to all employees

4. Travel should only be undertaken where there is a demonstrated business need and where other communication tools, such as teleconferencing and videoconferencing, are not appropriate alternatives.
5. All employees must act in accordance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules when procuring travel (refer to CEI Procurement).
6. All employees are required to use the Best (Lowest Practical) Fare of the Day when making travel bookings, as set out in Finance Circulars 2012/04 and 2012/05. In accordance with the relevant Finance Circulars, employees are not permitted to do any of the following: book fully flexible fares when the flexibility is not required or justified for business needs; book non-WOAG fares where a contracted WOAG fare is available; select flights on the basis of airline preference; select flights on the basis of frequent flyer membership or select flights on the basis of the operating aircraft type (for example selecting a jet aircraft rather than a turboprop aircraft).
7. Supervisors are required to ensure that their staff are complying with this CEI when making travel arrangements.
8. The Department will pay for all fair and reasonable expenses incurred while undertaking official travel, generally through direct payment to the service provider using a Travel Card or, where the use of Travel Card is not possible, by reimbursement of personal expenditure.
9. In determining whether an expense is reasonable, employees and supervisors must consider the purpose, specific circumstances, business outcomes, and total cost of visit.
10. Employees are expected to exercise prudent business and personal judgment regarding decisions and expenditure for travel. In particular, employees are to consider the most cost effective outcome when arranging travel. Guidance to staff as provided from time to time should also be taken into account.
11. When considering the most cost-effective travel options employees should seek to maintain an appropriate balance between work and home responsibilities and ensure Work Health & Safety and personal safety issues are fully taken into account.

### **Instructions to employees undertaking travel**

12. Employees are not to enter into an arrangement for travel unless delegated the authority, or authorised to do so by a delegate.
13. All air travel must be booked through the Department's travel service provider. Employees are required to use the travel service provider's online booking tool to book all air travel except in circumstances where the proposed travel is unable to be booked via the online booking tool, where the Internet is not available or for complex (multi-sector and group) bookings.
14. All accommodation and hire car rental bookings must be booked through the Department's travel service provider. Contact details for the Department's travel service provider are available on the travel page on ENTR or by contacting the Travel Administrator.
15. In locations where the Department's travel service provider cannot provide accommodation or hire car rental bookings, such bookings can, with agreement from the supervisor, be made directly with other service providers.

### ***Domestic travel***

16. All employees must obtain agreement from their supervisor for their proposed travel plans.
17. Formal approval for travel is incorporated in the post-travel travel card acquittal process by both the traveller and their supervisor. Where travel plans vary significantly from those originally proposed, employees should consult again with their supervisor before proceeding with their travel or varying arrangements.
18. Where travel is being arranged for people who are not departmental employees, the same arrangements apply except that travel arrangements must be discussed and agreed with an employee at the SES-level prior to travel being booked. If travel arrangements are to vary significantly these should again be discussed with the relevant SES employee before travel arrangements are confirmed.
19. The class for domestic travel is economy class for non-SES employees and business class for SES-level employees.
20. Exceptions are where an employee is accompanying an official or other departmental employee who travels at a higher class and for work purposes the employee is required to maintain contact with that person.
21. The Secretary may approve an alternative class of domestic travel if, in relation to any trip involving more than three hours of travel, it can be demonstrated that the duration of the trip or the personal health of the employee warrants the alternative class.
22. Department of Infrastructure and Transport Enterprise Agreement 2011-2014 at Clause I11 provides guidance on the applicability of time off in lieu (TOIL) for APS employees undertaking domestic travel and at Clause I9 provides guidance on flexible hours for Executive level employees.

### ***International travel***

23. All employees must obtain prior approval from either the Secretary or a Deputy Secretary for their proposed international travel arrangements.
24. Business class or its equivalent will be the standard for international travel.
25. Travel at a class higher than business class requires prior approval from the Secretary or a Deputy Secretary.
26. Where international travel involves travelling time of more than 12 hours, the employee will not be required to attend work before having had a reasonable opportunity to recuperate, either at the destination or en route. An employee is taken to be at work during this rest period, which shall not exceed 48 hours.

27. The Department is registered as a Safe Travel Charter Partner. Employees are required to visit the Smartraveller website so that there is a clear understanding of local conditions before undertaking international travel.
28. All employees travelling overseas, both for work or personal business, are encouraged to register with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade before travelling. The registration information provided by you will assist in communicating with you in case of emergency.
29. Employees are covered under the Department's Comcover insurance policy while on official international travel. Please refer to the insurance guidelines available on ENTR.
30. It is recommended all employees carry an official passport while undertaking official international travel. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is the issuing authority of official passports. Please refer to the Passport Guidelines available on ENTR.
31. Employees are expected to sign the *Overseas Travel Briefing* form available on ENTR each time they travel internationally on official business.
32. Further information on this process can be found in the Department's Protective Security Manual available on ENTR.

#### **Travel costs**

33. All travel-related expenditure should be made through direct payment to the service provider using a departmental travel card.
34. There may be unforeseen circumstances during travel where the use of travel card is not possible. In these circumstances, travellers may need to claim reimbursement for travel purchases that have been made using a traveller's personal funds in accordance with the Department's reimbursement procedures.
35. In exceptional circumstances and for international travel only, where it is identified that the likelihood of non-acceptance of the travel card and the subsequent use of personal funds is high, approval can be sought, through the international travel approval process, to advance funds to the traveller's personal bank account. All funds advanced will need to be reconciled and fully acquitted post-travel.
36. Consistent with the CEI Credit Cards, credit cards must not be used for cash withdrawals.
37. The Department will not pay lounge membership fees.
38. Complimentary upgrades from economy to business class, or from business class to first class can be accepted where they are offered in accordance with the airline's normal practices, but should be declared by the recipient as part of the post-travel acquittal process.
39. It is Government policy that airline reward and loyalty points, where awarded for official air travel, are not to be used for private purposes and where possible should be used to reduce the cost of future flights required for official travel.
40. Accommodation used when on official travel should be at a standard which can be seen to be cost effective and appropriate to the purpose of the travel undertaken.
41. Where the situation warrants, such as security, conference venue or room availability, employees may stay at a higher level of accommodation. Any such decision should be in consultation with the relevant supervisor.
42. Accommodation bookings can be made either through the Department's Travel Service Provider or directly through the WoAG contracted service provider.
43. Contact details for the Department's Travel Service Provider and the WoAG contracted service provider are available on the Travel page on ENTR or by contacting the Travel Administrator.
44. As an alternative, employees may make their own private accommodation arrangements. In lieu of accommodation expenses, employees may contribute up to \$50 per night to assist in covering the expenses of their hosts. The contribution must be paid for using a travel card, and may include such purchases as a gift, wine, groceries, meals etc.

45. While travelling, employees are not expected to accept eating arrangements of a lesser standard than they would have at home, and reasonable expenditure on meals and beverages consumed with meals (both alcoholic and non-alcoholic) is considered a legitimate travel-related expense. Employees may select reasonably priced restaurants or eating places that suit their preferences, dietary or religious requirements. Purchase of bottled water without a meal is considered a legitimate travel-related expense where safe drinking water is not readily available or in particularly hot/humid climates.
46. Modest tips at establishments in countries where this is considered the cultural norm, or where gratuities are added to the account, are acceptable official expenses. Tipping in Australian establishments is not accepted.
47. Taxis are to be used as determined by business travel requirements. Chauffeur driven hire car services should not be used for general travel where taxis are readily available, unless it can be justified as the most cost-effective option.
48. Rental cars should be a type of vehicle appropriate for the type of business being undertaken.
49. Employees may use private vehicles for official travel in accordance with arrangements set out in the Department's Enterprise Agreement.
50. The Department will pay for other travel-related expenditure that it considers fair and reasonable. Employees are expected to use their personal judgement and take into consideration the need to defend or explain any such incidental expenditure.
51. Travellers must undertake post-travel expense reconciliation through the Department's credit card management system confirming that the costs were incurred for official travel purposes. The relevant supervisor must endorse that the costs are legitimate business expenses and are reasonable.
52. In determining whether an expense is reasonable, employees and supervisors must consider the purpose, specific circumstances, business outcomes, and the total cost of visit.
53. In instances where purchases made on the travel card are not considered reasonable by the Department, then those purchases will be deemed to be for personal and unofficial use and repayable by the cardholder to the Department.
54. Employees should ensure that use of travel cards and acquittal procedures are followed strictly in accordance with the Department's credit and travel card guidelines and procedures.
55. Supporting documentation, including relevant approvals, receipts and tax invoices relating to all expenses charged to Travel Cards must be managed as required by the Department's corporate credit and travel card guidelines and cardholder undertakings.
56. Receipts or tax invoices relating to all personal expenses requiring post-travel reimbursement must be retained and submitted with any claim for reimbursement

## Procedures/References

<a href="#">CEI Credit Cards</a>
<a href="#">CEI Procurement</a>
<a href="#">CEI Providing Gifts or Accepting Gifts or Benefits</a>
<a href="#">Department of Infrastructure and Transport Enterprise Agreement 2011-2014</a>
Departmental Protective Security <a href="#">Policy</a> and <a href="#">Manual</a>
<a href="#">ENTR Travel page</a>
Finance Circulars <a href="#">2012/04</a> and <a href="#">2012/05</a>
<a href="#">Overseas Travel Briefing form</a>

## Contact

Travel administrator: [travel@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:travel@infrastructure.gov.au)

Approved by: Secretary  
under Section 52(1) of the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*