

U.S. Department of the Interior

DOI TRAVEL NEWSLETTER

Published by: Office of Financial Management

Volume 5, Issue 2

October 2005



IN THE NEWS

Bill Webber Retires!

In case you haven't heard, Bill Webber, Focus Leader, Asset and Debt Management, Office of Financial Management (PFM), retired on September 30, 2005. Bill worked for the Federal Government for 36 years and 11 months. As the Focus Leader in PFM, Bill was responsible for planning, overseeing and coordinating financial management policy and implementation of Departmental asset and debt management, receipt/payment, revenue/cost accounting, and performance management initiatives. Bill supported assigned initiatives focusing on quality of deliverables, excellence in service to customers, and achievement of results. Bill always took necessary action to achieve agency GPRA goals in the area of asset and debt management. He represented PFM on DOI's Activity Based Costing (ABC) Steering Committee. He worked across traditional organizational



lines to ensure decision and actions were shared, well coordinated, promoting diversity in the workplace; and emphasized cooperation and support for other PMB offices, bureaus, and customers. Bill continuously sought improvement in the Department's asset and debt management functions by using resources effectively; keeping abreast of the latest technological developments, laws, regulations, and standards in the field; and promoting/supporting streamlining efforts. The Department will certainly miss Bill, and wishes him all the best!

New Orleans Airport

The city's port and airport are open. Northwest, Continental, Southwest, American

and Delta are currently offering limited service to Armstrong International. Limited taxi cab, shuttle and rental car services are available, as well as some food and beverage, news and gift and banking services.

Amtrak Acela Express Service Returns

On September 26 Amtrak began operating eight weekday roundtrips between Boston, New York and Washington, D.C., increasing weekday service to and from Boston by four roundtrips. Acela service between New York and Washington, D.C. remains at 14 weekday roundtrips. Acela Express service was suspended from April 15 to July 11 to accommodate the redesign, manufacture and replacement of brake discs after the discovery of cracks in the rotors' spokes.

Independence Air to Reduce Flight Schedule

On October 31, Independence Air is discontinuing flights to five airports: New York's John F. Kennedy, Cleveland, Indianapolis, Louisville and Stewart Interna-

Inside this issue:

Airport Security	2
DOI Policy Changes	2
Hurricane Katrina Guidance	2
FY 06 City-Pair Contracts	2
2006 Per Diem Rates	3
FedRooms	4
Travel Kit for Relief Workers	4
Fare Rules	4
Traveler Tip Bits	5
DOI Travel Data	6



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.

DOI TRAVELER INFORMATION

tional Airport in New York's Hudson Valley. The carrier will drop all West Coast service by December 1: Los Angeles on October 1, San Diego on November 1, and Seattle and San Francisco on December 1. The airline pulled out of San Jose, California, in August.

Test Program for Airport Security Ends

The registered traveler program, that allowed travelers to avoid extra security in exchange for volunteering for background checks, has ended. The program began in July 2004 with an emphasis on better security and shorter lines at the lowest cost. About 10,000 frequent fliers were enrolled at airports in Boston, Houston, Los Angeles, Minneapolis and Washington. The program will continue at Orlando airport, where a privately run version began in June. Registered travelers complained the program wasn't useful because they were limited to one airline at the airport where they registered. People board planes 600 million times in the United States every year, half of those trips are made by 8 million people. Speeding security checks for pre-investigated frequent travelers would allow security officials more time to focus on higher risk passengers.

DOI Policy Changes

Mileage Rates

Mileage rates were modified to reflect high gasoline costs effective 09/01/05 for temporary duty travel. The IRS increased the automobile moving expense rate, also. For more detail, visit:

- Reimbursement for Use of Privately Owned Conveyances (FTR Amendment 2005-04; FTR Case 2005-307) <http://www.doi.gov/pfm/fam05-13.html>
- Internal Revenue Service Mileage Rates - September 1 through December 31, 2005

Table 1
2005 and 2006 Awards for DOI Most Frequently Used City Pairs

City Pair	2005 Awarded Airline	2005 Standard City Pair	2005 Capacity Controlled	2006 Awarded Airline	2006 Standard City Pair	2006 Capacity Controlled
Albuquerque - Phoenix	Southwest Airlines (WN)	\$75	\$37	Southwest Airlines (WN)	\$80	\$42
Anchorage - Fairbanks	Alaska Airlines (AS)	\$194	None	Alaska Airlines (AS)	\$200	\$171
Boise - Salt Lake City	Delta Airlines (DL)	\$89	\$68	Southwest Airlines (WN)	\$88	\$76
Washington D.C. (Reagan National) - Denver	American Airlines (AA)	\$204	\$90	Frontier Airlines (F9)	\$199	\$159
Denver - Washington D.C. (Dulles)	United Airlines (UA)	\$358	None	United Airlines (UA)	\$358	None
Denver - Las Vegas	America West Airlines (HP)	\$186	\$97	Frontier Airlines (F9)	\$149	\$99
Denver - Phoenix	America West Airlines (HP)	\$130	\$99	United Airlines (UA)	\$112	None
Denver - Salt Lake City	Delta Airlines (DL)	\$89	\$69	United Airlines (UA)	\$85	None

<http://www.doi.gov/pfm/fam05-11.html>

Hurricane Katrina Guidance

A memorandum providing guidance and procedures to Department personnel for temporary duty (TDY) and/or relocation travel to and from areas impacted by Hurricane Katrina can be found at:

<http://www.doi.gov/pfm/fam05-12.html>

Fiscal Year 2006 City-Pair Contract Awards

The Fiscal Year 2006 contracts were awarded on August 26, 2005. The new rates are effective October 1, 2005. Under the city-pair program, federal travelers receive discounted fares, last-seat availability, full ticket refunds and penalty-free cancellations and schedule changes for 3,978 domestic and 725 international routes. Awards are based on average flight time, the number of flights, price and flight distribution. For nearly 2,400 city pairs, federal travelers have a choice between two discount fares. The lower fares are reserved for a

limited number of first-come, first-serve tickets. In FY 2006, thirteen airlines will provide fully refundable discounted fares: American Airlines, Delta Airlines, United Airlines, US Airways, Northwest Airlines, Southwest Airlines, Alaska Airlines, America West Airlines, AirTran Airways, Frontier Airlines, Midwest Airlines, Hawaiian Airlines, and ATA.

For contract city pair fare schedules visit: <http://www.fedtravel.com/gsa/Flights.asp?flights=&cars=&hotels=&trains=&PDA=&Home=Y>

For the contract city pair fare finder, click on: <http://apps.fss.gsa.gov/citypairs/search/>

All fares are listed one-way and are valid in either direction. Domestic fares include taxes, but not fees such as passenger facility charges, segment fees, and passenger security service fees. International fares are exclusive of taxes and additional fees.

Table 1 shows a comparison of 2005 and 2006 Awards for DOI Most Frequently Used City Pairs.

DOI TRAVELER INFORMATION

General Services Administration (GSA) 2006 Per Diem Rates Released

GSA released the fiscal year 2006 CONUS area (48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia) per diem rates for government travel on September 1, 2005. The new rates will be effective for travel beginning on October 1, 2005. The standard CONUS rate (those locations not listed) increased in 2006 to \$99 (\$60 lodging; \$39 M&IE) from the 2005 rate of \$91 (\$60 lodging; \$31 M&IE). When setting rates, GSA is required by law to use only properties that are approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as being fire safe and in compliance with the Hotel Motel Fire Safety Act of 1990. In addition to the annual lodging study, GSA conducted a nationwide meals study to more accurately reflect actual prices charged by restaurants in areas frequented by federal travelers. Based upon data received from more than 10,000 restaurants, the Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) tiers will now range from \$39 - \$64 for 2006, while the range for 2005 was only \$31 to \$51.

The following changes are highlighted for the FY 2006 per diem rates:

- The M&IE rate tiers have increased to \$39, \$44, \$49, \$54, \$59 and \$64. The M&IE breakdown for the new rate tiers are provided below.
- The standard CONUS per diem rate has increased to \$99 (\$39 - M&IE and \$60 – lodging). The standard CONUS lodging rate will remain unchanged at \$60.
- Increases/decreases in the maximum per diem amounts in existing per diem localities.
- Increased number of seasonal rates have been established.

Table 2

City	FY 2006				FY 2005			
	Seasonal Dates	Maximum Lodging Rate (Excludes Taxes)	M&IE Rate	Maximum Per Diem Rate	Seasonal Dates	Maximum Lodging Rate (Excludes Taxes)	M&IE Rate	Maximum Per Diem Rate
Albuquerque		\$66	\$49	\$115		\$68	\$43	\$111
Boise		\$73	\$49	\$122		\$70	\$43	\$113
Denver		\$119	\$49	\$168		\$112	\$47	\$159
Las Vegas	09/01 - 04/30	\$112	\$64	\$176	09/01 - 05/31	\$122	\$43	\$165
	05/01 - 08/31	\$99	\$64	\$163	06/01 - 08/31	\$106	\$43	\$149
Phoenix	01/01 - 03/31	\$127	\$59	\$186	01/01 - 05/31	\$121	\$47	\$168
	04/01 - 05/31	\$109	\$59	\$168	06/01 - 09/30	\$75	\$47	\$122
	06/01 - 12/31	\$84	\$59	\$143	10/01 - 12/31	\$103	\$47	\$150
Salt Lake City		\$78	\$54	\$132		\$79	\$39	\$118
Washington D.C.	01/01 - 05/31	\$187	\$64	\$251		\$153	\$51	\$204
	06/01 - 08/31	\$145	\$64	\$209		\$153	\$51	\$204
	09/01 - 12/31	\$166	\$64	\$230		\$153	\$51	\$204

• For your convenience, the complete list of FY 2006 per diem rates can be found at the following internet address: <http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem/>

Changes for the CONUS cities most frequently visited by the Department are shown in Table 2.

M&IE breakdown for the new 2006 rate tiers are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

M&IE	\$39	\$44	\$49	\$54	\$59	\$64
Breakfast	\$7	\$8	\$9	\$10	\$11	\$12
Lunch	\$11	\$12	\$13	\$15	\$16	\$18
Dinner	\$18	\$21	\$24	\$26	\$29	\$31
Incidentals	\$3	\$3	\$3	\$3	\$3	\$3

DOI TRAVELER INFORMATION



Introducing FedRooms: An Easier Way to a Better Stay!

In September 2004, FedRooms, previously known as the Federal Premier Lodging Program (FPLP), experienced a new beginning. The General Services Administration (GSA) awarded a task order to Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CW) to manage the enhanced Governmentwide lodging program. FedRooms is dedicated to offering specially negotiated hotel rates at or below per diem and often includes value-added amenities (such as free breakfast). CW and the GSA have partnered to develop an improved, more robust program that is expected to reduce travel costs. Additionally, all FedRooms are “fire safe” facilities that meet the fire safety requirements of the Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act of 1990, as amended (see 5 U.S.C. 5707a). There are more than 2,500 properties participating in the FedRooms program to date, with a projected increase to 4000 during FY 2006. Prior to the program revitalization, there were only 636 properties, and many times travelers could find a lower rate.

While using this program is not mandatory, Federal Travel Regulation 301-50.6 states when selecting a commercial lodging facility, first consideration must be given to the commercial lodging facilities under FedRooms, unless the location you are traveling to: does not have a FedRooms facility available, has other contractual arrangements in

place, has facilities with lower costs, is for conference attendance with prearranged lodging accommodations, or is OCONUS.

Travel Kit for Relief Workers

Relief workers should consider packing the following items:

Toiletries

- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Toilet paper
- Sunblock (SPF 15 or higher)
- Insect repellent containing DEET or Picaridin
- Repair kit and protective case for eyeglasses, copy of prescription
- Lip balm
- Scissors*
- Nail clippers/tweezers*
- Q-tips, cotton swabs

*packed in checked baggage, may be confiscated if in carry-on bag on commercial airliner

Clothing

- Comfortable, light-weight clothing
- Long pants
- Long-sleeved shirts
- Hat
- Boots
- Shower shoes



- Rain gear
- Bandana/handkerchief
- Towel
- Leather and rubber gloves

Activities of daily living

- Sunglasses
- Safety goggles
- Waterproof watch
- Flashlight
- Spare batteries
- Money belt
- Cash
- Cell phone (with charger)
- Candles, matches, lighter in a ziplock bag
- Ziplock bags
- An item of comfort (i.e., family photo, spiritual or religious material)

Fare Rules

The Department is a mandatory user of contract city pair fares (DOI FTR 301-10.107

<http://www.doi.gov/pfm/oden/ch301-10.html#AIR301-10>), however, the Federal Travel Regulation does permit the use of a non-contract city pair fare when specific conditions exist (FTR 301-10.107 <http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/channelView.do?pageTypeld=8199&channelld=->

16524&specialContentType=FTR&file=FT R/Chapter301p010.html#wp1088792). When using GetThere, the only Department approved online booking engine (OBE), always read and understand the fare rules for the ticket you are purchasing. These rules are available online before confirming your ticket purchase. Using the OBE to make a travel reservation can be easy and convenient, and understanding the fare rules is essential. Every published fare has a published set of fare rules. These rules govern the conditions that must be met for a passenger to qualify for this fare. These

DOI TRAVELER INFORMATION

conditions may include, for example, advance purchase requirements, minimum and/or maximum stay requirements, day of week restrictions, time of day restrictions, routing restrictions, season restrictions, change penalties, cancellation penalties, etc.

When purchasing a non-city pair fare, pay close attention to:

- What amount, if any, is refundable?
- Can the value of the ticket be used for future travel?
- Does the ticket have an expiration date?

Is there a service charge to make changes?

- What is the change fee?

It's always a good idea to print the rules at the time you purchase the ticket, and carry them with you when you travel. If a dispute arises between you and the airline agent, you will have your fare rules to defend you (assuming you're following them).

Table 4 explains basic fare rules.

Traveler "TIP BITS"

Airline Seating

When you are arranging air travel, always choose a seat. Advance seat selection almost always guarantees that you won't be bumped off an oversold flight. When you reserve a seat in advance, chances are good for a seat at the front of the plane, and you will in most cases avoid the dreaded middle seat. One word of caution - don't arrive at the gate too late. At a certain time before the flight leaves, the gate agent will release all the advance seats to accommodate standby passengers. The airline reserves the right to do so at a set time before departure. You may still get a seat on the flight, but it may be far less desirable than the one you had reserved.

Many travelers prefer emergency exit row seating because more legroom is available. An emergency exit row is a row adjacent to one of the aircraft's emergency exits. Usually this row has more space, so in an emergency it is easier for passengers to use the emergency exit. Anyone sitting in this row must be willing and able to open the emergency exit in case of emergency.

Table 4

Rule	Explanation
Booking Rule	Using booking classes, the airlines control how many seats on each flight are available for each fare. To be profitable, the airline allocates only a certain number of seats at each fare level for each flight based on many factors, such as the route involved, the time of year, the usual business/leisure passenger breakdown on that route, the time of day, etc.
Penalty	What part of the fare, if any, is refundable? Can the value of the ticket be used as a credit for future travel? If so, what is the service charge? What is the change fee? (You can't always change the ticket for the change fee.)
Reservation/Ticketing	When must the reservation be made? (e.g. 7,14,21 days in advance) When must the ticket be issued? (e.g. 24 hours after making reservation) Usually the earlier of the two deadlines takes precedence.
Minimum Stay	e.g. must stay over a Saturday night (often stated technically as "return travel valid on the 1st Sun after 12:01 am")
Maximum Stay	e.g. 30 days, 60 days, 365 days
Day/Time	Some fares are only valid on particular days of the week, or at particular times. For example, some fares are valid Mon-Thu only, or from 7 pm - 6 am only.
Season	Some fares, particularly overseas fares, have an associated season (e.g. 15SEP-12DEC). For overseas travel, usually the departure date determines the season for the round trip fare.
Blackout Dates	Some fare are not valid on certain dates - e.g. over a holiday weekend.
Effective/Expires	Many seat sale fares must be purchased by a certain date. Find this date in this section of the rules.
Flight Application	Certain fares are only valid for particular flights - e.g. nonstop only, or flight 123 only.

DOI TRAVELER INFORMATION

Tables 5 and 6 show recent DOI travel data for online bookings and travel tickets issued.

Table 5

Month	BLM	FWS	NPS	BIA**	BOR	OSM	MMS	USGS	OS**	Average
Mar 05	52%	46%	48%	15%	60%	44%	33%	53%	27%	44%
Apr 05	75%	67%	65%	24%	79%	51%	60%	75%	37%	62%
May 05	69%	63%	62%	19%	83%	52%	64%	73%	37%	61%
Jun 05	54% *	61%	60%	23%	79%	53%	69%	72%	35%	57% *
Jul 05	26% *	65%	58%	27%	85%	49%	62%	74%	34%	51% *
Aug 05	36% *	60%	58%	21%	86%	67%	66%	68%	34%	52% *
AVERAGE	50% *	60%	58%	22%	78%	52%	59%	69%	34%	55% *

* Percentage dropped due to Emergency Fire Season Travel – OBE could not be used.

** Disconnected users are the main cause for these low percentages of use.

Table 6
Total Tickets Issued

Week	BLM	FWS	NPS	BIA	BOR	OSM	MMS	USGS	OS	TOTAL
Mar 05	1,630	1,889	2,066	1,353	1,150	122	280	1,788	982	11,260
Apr 05	1,853	2,121	2,297	1,617	1,377	186	432	2,058	1,117	13,058
May 05	1,581	1,470	1,702	1,057	1,227	157	301	2,117	1,009	10,621
Jun 05	1,637	1,533	2,007	1,047	1,121	162	227	1,690	1,006	10,430
Jul 05	2,388	1,399	1,638	1,199	952	134	249	1,638	771	10,368
Aug 05	1,875	1,533	1,709	1,042	1,049	111	262	1,495	985	10,061
TOTAL	10,964	9,945	11,419	7,315	6,876	872	1,751	10,786	5,870	65,798

Travel Contacts and Web Sites:

Newsletter:

Tamara L. Peyton
tamara_l_peyton@ios.doi.gov
202.208.6227

eTravel Lead/TMC Administrator:

Tamara L. Peyton
tamara_l_peyton@ios.doi.gov
202.208.6227

FBMS Travel/ePCS Functional Lead:

Tammy Coble
Tammy_Coble@fbms.doi.gov
303.202.4042 (office)
303.875.1545 (mobile)

Carlson Wagonlit Government Travel:

866-227-5638
(for reservations and help desk)

TMC Comments and Feedback Form:

<http://www.doi.gov/pfm/tmc/feedback.html>

DOI Travel Profile and SABRE/GetThere:

<http://www.cwgt.com/default.asp?PageMode=Profile&AgencyIDPK=721>

DOI Travel Policy:

<http://www.doi.gov/pfm/travel.html>

This newsletter is available on the Internet at

http://www.doi.gov/pfm/travel_newsletter