

U.S. Department of the Interior

DOI TRAVEL NEWSLETTER

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IN THE NEWS

Airport Security Surcharge

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has announced the imposition of a security service fee in the amount of \$2.50 per enplanement for passengers of domestic and foreign air carriers in air transportation, foreign air transportation, and intrastate air transportation originating at airports in the United States. Passengers will not be charged for more than two enplanements per one-way trip or four enplanements per round trip. The security service fee will also apply to passengers using frequent flyer awards for air transportation, but may not be imposed on other nonrevenue passengers. Direct air carriers and foreign air carriers must collect the security service fee on air transportation sold on or after February 1, 2002.

"We're Back!"

The Office of the Secretary was reconnected to the Internet on May 7. This is the first issue of the Travel Newsletter since the December issue. We look forward to continuing to provide you with the latest travel news and tips. As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions regarding the newsletter!

Travel News Updates

- Interlining electronic ticketing systems is finally here. Four of the five largest airlines in the industry - American, Continental, Northwest and United - have interlining agreements for electronic ticketing systems. This will make it easier for passengers to switch from one carrier to another should flight changes be necessary. These agreements will enable passengers who have flights on any of these airlines to use a single E-ticket when flying. If, for example,

a flight is canceled on any of these interlining airlines, the traveler can re-book on one of the other carriers without having to exchange their E-ticket for a paper ticket. The airlines expect to continue to expand interlining with other carriers.

- Rental Car Security Screening: Dollar Rent A Car has initiated a customer fingerprinting program at fourteen on-airport locations. Any customer refusing to give a thumb-print will be referred to another rental car provider.

- The Transportation Security Administration has lifted the restriction on carrying the following items onto airplane cabins: tweezers, nail files and nail clippers.

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Other Travel Items of Interest:

- Traveler "Tip Bits"

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

Elimination of Airline Commissions and the Impact on Travel Service Fees

Delta Airlines announced, on March 14, 2002, the elimination of airline commissions on all tickets issued in the United States. Following Delta's announcement, American, Continental, Northwest, United Airlines, and U.S. Airways, announced the elimination of airline commissions.

Airlines commissions represent the principal source of revenue for travel service providers. These commissions also have a direct bearing on travel service fees. Under the terms of the Department's Task Order (executed in March 2000), the Department was obligated to pay Omega World Travel (OWT) \$22.95 for every airline ticket issued. At that time, airline commissions on Department travel averaged \$15.00 per ticket, thus reducing the OWT transaction fee to \$7.95.

The current base transaction fee of \$26.64 was effective March 22, 2002. This new OWT transaction fee will apply to all airline tickets issued after March 21, 2002. For DOI travel arranged through the on-line booking system (Trip Manager), the new transaction fee will be \$10.50 per ticket issued.

The separation of travel service costs from airline ticket prices increases the cost of travel for travelers. DOI is well positioned to manage future travel costs by increasing the use of Trip Manager - which lowers the per transaction cost of travel by approximately \$16.00. Please contact your bureau Trip Manager System Administrator for further information about your bureau's 2002 Implementation Plan for Trip Manager.



Reminder - DOI Travelers Should Complete Quality Assurance Forms

Now that Internet service has been restored within most of the Department, DOI employees are reminded of the importance of reporting customer service issues involving travel. The PFM web page contains a comment and feedback form (<http://www.doi.gov/pfm/tmc/feedback.html>). The information provided from this web-site allows the Department to manage travel-related issues to ensure that DOI travelers receive excellent service.

Trip Manager Corner

(Beginning with this issue, this space will provide monthly comments and suggestions on getting the most out of using Trip Manager)

Submitting Reservations for Purchase

Trip Manager is used for a variety of purposes, including: (1) obtaining information on flight availability; (2) checking hotel availability; (3) determining car rental choices; etc.

As the various choices and options are identified, Trip Manager steers users toward making a specific reservation for a particular flight, lodging establishment, or rental car.

Since Trip Manager anticipates that the system will be used in many different ways (i.e., to collect preliminary information, to look at travel options, etc.) one additional step beyond making the reservation is required if you actually intend to take the trip: **YOU MUST SUBMIT THE RESERVATIONS FOR PURCHASE**. If you do not take this step, you will not have a reservation!

Canceling or Modifying Trip Manager Reservations

Each time a traveler uses Trip Manager instead of calling OWT to arrange official travel, the transaction fee is decreased by about \$16.00 (from \$26.64 to \$10.50). When using Trip Manager, reservations are confirmed on-line and then submitted to the dedicated Trip Manager OWT Call Center in Jacksonville, North Carolina. Reservations arranged via Trip Manager can be modified or canceled by the traveler. If you require assistance after airline ticket issuance, you will need to contact OWT's Trip Manager desk (888-879-6020) or doi@owt.net for modifications or cancellation. At that point, OWT will charge their normal transaction fee in addition to the Trip Manager transaction fee. Auto rental and hotel reservations can be modified or canceled anytime before the scheduled date by the traveler or travel planner. To minimize Trip Manager assistance from OWT, contact your bureau Trip Manager Administrator prior to calling OWT.

A list of bureau Trip Manager Administrators is located at: http://www.doi.gov/pfm/tmc/trip_mgr_admin.html. The bureau administrators can determine whether OWT assistance is necessary. Remember, once OWT gets involved in this transaction (prior to issuance), a full transaction fee will be charged in place of the lesser Trip Manager fee.

TRAVELER “TIP BITS”

Tips for Healthy Flying

Airlines tell their passengers to “sit back and relax” and enjoy the flight. Flying, however, often takes a toll on the body. Here are some tips for healthy flying:

- Fainting is the most common medical emergency during flights. To reduce the risks of having fainting spells, never sit in the same position for a long time and, before moving away from your seat, stand up for a few minutes before walking.



- Do not pack prescriptions drugs in luggage - keep vital medications and supplies, such as insulin and syringes, with you at all times.
- Drink water frequently to compensate for low humidity in cabins.
- Because alcohol causes dehydration, the effects of which are worse at high altitudes, avoid drinking large amounts of alcohol before or during a flight.
- Diabetics should take snack food with them because the majority of airlines have reduced food service.

Traveling with Electronic Devices

When traveling with electronic devices such as boom boxes, laptops, cell phones, and even cameras, you may be surprised if the gate security agent requests you to turn on or even open your equipment! So, to be prepared, make sure your electronic devices are:

- Fully charged so they can be turned on. Your device may be confiscated or may delay your flight while it is searched.
- Easily accessible should you be requested to present it for an up-close review.

Clear Sandwich Bags—A Clever Use!

Would you believe that a clear, plastic sandwich bag can make your airline travel a little easier? You can use a sandwich bag to put in such things as cell phones, medications, keys, and other metal items. Using a clear, plastic bag allows such articles to be easily viewed by security personnel and you can just put the bag on security conveyor belt.

Travel Contacts and Web Sites:

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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

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!

