




United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
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Memorandum

To: Solicitor
Inspector General
Assistant Secretaries

From: P. Lynn Scarlett 
Assistant Secretary - Policy, Management and Budget

Subject: Travel Authorizations

Under the authority provided in the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR), many bureaus and offices within the Department use annual limited-open travel authorizations for different types of official travel. The purpose of this communication is to remind you that certain types of travel must be authorized on a trip-by-trip basis in order to comply with statutory, regulatory, and Departmental policy requirements. These are:

- **Conference Travel-** both the FTR and the Department's policy on conferences and meetings require that conference travel be authorized on a trip-by-trip basis. Travel to participate in internal meetings that have been exempted from the conference planning process may continue to be performed under a limited open travel authorization.
- **International Travel-** represents a highly visible, high-cost type of travel that is frequently subject to scrutiny by the Congress and GAO. A trip-by-trip travel authorization is necessary to ensure that the Fly America Act, GSA Contract City-Pair, and direct routing requirements contained in the FTR are fully adhered to. As in the past, prior approval to travel to foreign areas (except for Canada) must be obtained from International Affairs, Office of Policy Analysis, in sufficient time to obtain the necessary clearances from the Department of State.
- **Travel Received From a Non-Federal Source (Donated Travel)-** also represents a highly visible type of travel that is subject to scrutiny by Congress, and is further governed by statute (31 USC 1353). A trip-by-trip travel authorization is necessary to properly document and reconcile payment arrangements made between the donor organization and the DOI employee. As in the past, prior approval to accept donated travel must be obtained from the Departmental Ethics Office.

- **Training-Related Travel** - is governed under the provisions of the Training Act, and the payment of related travel expenses is negotiable. Thus, only expenses that are authorized can be paid. For this reason, trip-by-trip authorizations are required for authorizing all travel under 5 CFR 410.

- **Travel by Volunteers (Invitational Travel)**- must always be authorized on a trip-by-trip basis and treated as invitational travel. BOA “corporate accounts” that have been established for this purpose should be used to arrange transportation for volunteers.

Your cooperation in adhering to these guidelines will help ensure that the Department conducts mission-essential travel in an efficient manner while complying with statutory and regulatory requirements.

For additional information regarding the Department’s travel policy, please contact Ted Woronka, Deputy Director of Financial Management, on (202) 208-4701.

cc: Heads of Bureaus and Offices
Bureau Assistant Directors for Administration