



GovTrip E-Gov Travel System and Smartpay 2

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Department of the Interior (DOI) employees have efficiently converted 80% of the Department from the GovTrip Online booking tool to Full GovTrip which allows travelers and preparers to create an authorization, reservation, and voucher in one system, plus receive payments via Electronic Funds Transfer all utilizing electronic document routing. To date, more than 40,000 travel vouchers have been successfully processed through GovTrip. The remainder of the Department will finish the conversion on November 10, 2008.

Another exciting change coming in November is the Smartpay 2 Government Charge Card program. The current DOI charge card program with Bank of America expires at midnight on **November 29, 2008**. DOI selected JPMorgan Chase (JPMC) as the new SmartPay2 charge card service provider beginning November 30, 2008.



To prepare for transition, cardholders should take the following actions to avoid an interruption in service e.g., airline tickets not being issued; and/or other vendor related problems:

- ~ Update your GovTrip profile to include your current Bank of America charge card information no later than 5:00 PM EST November 25. This will allow your new card number and expiration date to automatically transfer.
- ~ Note that GovTrip will be unavailable from November 26th through November 30, 2008 to transfer new accounts numbers to active profiles.

- ~ Avoid scheduling a trip that will include November 30.
- ~ If you must travel over the weekend that includes November 30 take both your Bank of America and JPMorgan charge cards with you.
- ~ Avoid making reservations using your Bank of America card for trips that will begin after mid-December.
- ~ Note all approved GovTrip and Sato travel reservations in the system, as of November 25, will be ticketed and charged to your Bank of America charge card.
- ~ Verify receipt of your new card as soon as you receive it, but do not attempt to use it before November 30, 2008.
- ~ Notify any vendors that you have recurring charges with, that your charge card account number will be changing; e.g., magazine subscriptions, cell phones, FedEx etc.
- ~ Follow your bureau's supplemental instructions.

If you have any questions or if you would like additional information on GovTrip, please contact your bureau lead for E-Gov Travel: http://www.doi.gov/pfm/etravel/egov_contacts.html.



The complete set of per diem rates for fiscal 2009, broken down by location and season, is available [here](#).

GSA Increases Per Diem in Various Locations

(Source: GovExec.com)

Starting Oct. 1, federal employees traveling to about 400 locations in the continental United States will receive a per diem that is higher than the national standard rate, which is \$70 for lodging and \$39 for meals and incidental expenses. The standard rate will remain unchanged from this year. Per Diem rates are available at www.gsa.gov/perdiem.

Federal employees traveling to Washington will see lodging per diems ranging from \$165 to \$233, depending on the season. That's significantly higher than the fiscal 2008 per diem rate

for the area, which ranged from \$154 to \$201 per night. Rates for meals and incidentals will remain unchanged from this year, at \$64.

Rates also will increase for other major cities, including Boston, Chicago, Denver, New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco. GSA added two towns -- Fayetteville, N.C., and Fredericksburg, Va. -- to the list of nonstandard areas, meaning they get their own rates. The per diem for Fayetteville will be \$85 per night for lodging, and \$49 for meals and incidentals. The rate for Fredericksburg will be \$74 per night, and \$54 for meals and incidentals.

Higher Fuel Prices, Airline Cutbacks Likely to Reduce Government Travel

By [GREGG CARLSTROM](#) Federal Times

September 05, 2008

The travel industry is buckling under a tough economy and high fuel prices, and that could affect federal travelers, industry officials warn.

The global airline industry is expected to cut capacity by more than 60 million seats during the last quarter of 2008. In the United States, that means at least 100 small-market airports will lose all commercial service, including Wilmington, Del.; Santa Fe, N.M.; and more than a half-dozen towns in Montana and Alaska.

Many of them are in remote rural areas, where losing service might not affect the business travel community — but it will hurt federal travelers.

“If the airlines cut capacity and reduce service to cities, that service is not coming back,” said

Marc Stec, president of the Society of Government Travel Professionals (SGTP), which held its annual education conference in Alexandria, Va., last week. “There’s no travel there.”

There’s currently “no end in sight” to the fare hikes, schedule reductions and surcharges in the airline industry, Stec said.

The General Services Administration has awarded more than \$2 billion worth of contracts for air travel under the City Pairs program for FY 2009.

The contracts cover more than 4,300 domestic routes, plus nearly 1,200 international ones. That’s a 10 percent increase from last year’s offerings. GSA says the average fare, effective Oct. 1, is 13 percent higher than in 2008 — the result of higher fuel costs. But City Pairs fares are still well below commercial fares.

Registered Traveler Programs

There has been significant inquiry by Federal agencies and employees regarding whether the individual membership fees incurred by Federal employees who register for an airport security fast pass are reimbursable by the Government. Members would go through special, shorter security lines, which require the individual member to give personal information in advance. Collection of the personal information would require

memberships to be obtained by individual employees as opposed to an agency. Thus, it is GSA’s position that in regard to its employees, unless authorized by a specific appropriation, use of funds for these membership fees is statutorily prohibited by 5 U.S.C. §5946. More information on this topic can be found under FTR Bulletin 08-05 and Financial Administrative Memorandum 2008-007.



Privately Owned Vehicle Mileage Rate Increase August 1, 2008

Travel Contacts and Web Sites

Newsletter/E-Gov Travel/Travel Policy:

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TMC/E-Gov Comments and Feedback Form:

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

DOI E-Gov Travel System and Online Booking Engine:

<http://www.govtrip.com>

DOI Travel Policy:

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

This newsletter is available on the Internet at:

http://www.doi.gov/pfm/trav&relo/travel_newsletter/index.html

GSA has amended the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) by increasing the mileage reimbursement rate for use of a privately owned vehicle (POV) when used for official travel. This new rate reflects current costs of operating a POV as determined in cost studies conducted by GSA. The government regulation increases the mileage allowance for the cost of operating a POV for official travel from \$0.505 to \$0.585 per mile effective for travel on or after August 1, 2008. This amendment also increases the mileage reimbursement for privately-owned motorcycles from 30.5 per mile to 58.5 cents per mile and the mileage reimbursement for privately-owned airplanes from \$1.07 to \$1.26 per mile.

The lower tiered reimbursement rates based on availability of a GOV remain unchanged.

GSA is responsible for reviewing the privately owned vehicle mileage reimbursement mileage rate on a yearly basis. However, by law, GSA may not exceed the standard mileage reimbursement rate for a privately owned automobile (POA) established by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).



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.



Traveler "TIP BITS"

Airlines look forward to implementation of Secure Flight

Airline passengers inconvenienced by the TSA's cumbersome terrorist watch list could catch a break next year if the federal Secure Flight program can overcome privacy concerns on Capitol Hill. Under the new program, the TSA would use passenger lists supplied by the airlines to check for suspected terrorists, rather than requiring airlines to do the screening themselves. "The airlines have been given assurances for more than four years that TSA would soon be taking over responsibility for vetting passenger names against government watch lists," the Air Transport Association said in a statement. "With recurrent TSA delays in meeting that commitment, airlines invested millions of

dollars in programming costs to minimize the number of misidentified passengers." [The New York Times](#) (9/1)

Government set to release smaller, cheaper passport

By SEAN HOLSTEGE
Source Federal Times

July 25, 2008

People who chafe at the cost of a passport or worry about carrying one to the beach soon will have a cheaper, easier option. The government is on the cusp of releasing passport cards that fit in a wallet and cost half the price of a new passport. About 350,000 Americans have applied for the new card, the latest step toward ratcheting up border security.

People who apply now can expect a four-week wait for

cards after the government mails them out to earlier applicants.

The State Department expects the number of applicants to swell to 4 million by June 1. That's when U.S. travelers cannot re-enter the country from Mexico, Canada or the Caribbean without a passport, a new passport card or an equivalent document.



Starting in January, travelers could no longer re-enter the country from Mexico or Can-

ada by verbally declaring their U.S. citizenship. They must carry valid travel and identification documents, but a grace period remains in effect until next summer. The changes stem from the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, one of a string of post-Sept. 11 security requirements. Gradually, the government has tightened travel ID procedures in an effort to better track who enters and leaves the country.

Ultimately, many millions of passport cards should be in circulation, helping day-trippers and frequent visitors who travel by land or sea. A regular passport is required for air travel.