

Travel Policy

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VERSION 5

AUTHORISED BY Deputy Secretary, Finance Strategy & Operations

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Policy Statement

NSW Department of Industry will provide reasonable and economical travel arrangements for staff who travel overseas or domestically on official departmental business. Staff will ensure they meet their obligation to be efficient, economical and ethical in their use and management of public resources when undertaking travel. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the [Travelling Compensation Guidelines](#).

Scope

This policy applies to all senior executives and non-executive employees within the department and also applies to Public Service senior executives in Executive Agencies that are related to the department and for whom the Secretary exercises the employer function.

Requirements

1. Travel Expenses Principle

The department will meet any authorised official travel and associated expenses that are consistent with the Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2009 (the Award) and that have been properly and reasonably incurred by an employee who is required to perform duty at a location other than their normal headquarters.

2. Travel Compensation

The department will comply with the provisions of the Award in relation to compensation to be applied for official travel on the following basis:-

- a. All employees are required to book flights through the department's contracted travel provider
- b. Wherever possible the department will adopt the method set out in the Award of electing to provide accommodation for employees and paying set meal allowances for each meal that incurs an expense during the absence of the employee in a 24 hour period whilst on official travel. The incidental allowance and actual meal expenses properly and reasonably incurred for any residual part day travel will also be reimbursed.
- c. All award employees are required to book accommodation by one of the following methods;
 - i. Through the contracted travel provider with costs charged directly to the department's relevant virtual travel card.
 - ii. If the contracted travel provider is unable to book suitable accommodation the traveller may book via internet hotel sites, by phone or over the hotel counter, with costs charged directly to a department purchase card at time of check-out.
- d. Where the contracted travel provider is unable to source accommodation in the regional or overseas location, and the employee does not possess a purchase card, or accommodation costs cannot be prepaid by the department, the employee can elect to be paid either daily allowance or the payment of actual expenses as prescribed by the Award. In these circumstances a *Level 3 Authority eg SE Band 2 Executive Director* approval will be required with reference to section e. following.
- e. It is a matter for the *Level 3 Authority eg SE Band 2 Executive Director* as to whether travel and per diem allowance payment is necessary. The decision will be made in accordance with the purpose this policy, and alternatives include;

- i. the travel does not occur, or
 - ii. the staff member camps and receives a camping allowance, or
 - iii. the staff member travels to the nearest 3 star rated accommodation and pays using a virtual travel card or a purchase card
- f. Public Service senior executive employees will be compensated for actual and reasonable expenses incurred for any accommodation that they book subject to any daily limit restrictions set out in Circular C2013-09 2013 Australian and Overseas Travelling Allowances for Official Travel for Senior Officials, issued by the Department of Premier and Cabinet and any subsequent Circular issued for this purpose.

3. Travel Claims

All employees will submit claims for out-of-pocket expenses, daily meal claims (and accommodation per diems where approved) through the SAP ByDesign system. All employees are required to acquit all related travel expenses, and purchase card related travel expenses via the expense management system. Travel claims are to be processed in accordance with the procedures listed in this policy.

Staff that stay over-night on a farmer's property are entitled to a camping allowance only. If the property is a recognised Bed & Breakfast, this is considered commercial accommodation and payment would be using a purchase card.

4. Frequent Flyer Schemes

Employees undertaking official travel are not to seek or accept frequent flyer points from any airline. No frequent flyer points are to be sought or allocated and choice of airline is not to be influenced by the availability of frequent flyer points. Benefits from airline car or hotel loyalty schemes or lounge memberships are not to influence travel decisions.

5. Airline Lounge Membership

The Secretary will, upon application, determine whether a Public Service senior executive will be compensated for the cost of joining and maintaining membership of airline lounge facilities or similar services. The Secretary will take into account the frequency and duration of official travel and the scheduling of flights and official business commitments. This membership will generally not be approved for non-executive employees. Nothing precludes an employee from joining and maintaining membership of such facilities at their own expense irrespective of the nature and extent of their official travel.

6. Domestic Travel

Domestic travel is to be undertaken under the following conditions:-

- a. Department travel should only be undertaken where consideration for other options has occurred. Other options include video conferencing; teleconference, management of travel appointments to minimise the need for travel. Managers are responsible for confirming the need for department travel prior to staff members booking the travel.
- b. An employee is required to choose the most cost effective and direct route and method of transportation. For all official travel, the lowest logical fare of the day must be used for all domestic flights. All employees are required to fly economy class for official travel within Australia. Public Service senior executives are however permitted to fly business class or premium economy to Western Australia and the Northern Territory.
- c. To reduce cost, the lowest logical fares will be sought where possible. For example the initial leg of the journey should be a restrictive (non-flexible) fare as it is less likely this will be required to change. The NSW Government appointed supplier has in place systems to capture and manage credits arising from changes to flexible fares to reduce any possible wastage. Staff should use their credits when possible.
- d. The use of motor vehicles is to be in accordance with the department's motor vehicle policy and procedure. This includes the use of hire cars and private vehicles. Where a private vehicle is being considered prior approval must be sought. Compensation for the use of a private motor vehicle will be in accordance with the Award provisions issued by Treasury, and will only be made once a current and validated copy of the vehicle's comprehensive insurance policy and registration papers are made available to the Corporate Operations Branch.

7. Overseas Travel

Overseas travel is to be undertaken under the following conditions:-

- a. Approval for overseas travel must be obtained from the Secretary on the recommendation of the relevant line management. Approval will not be provided where travel reports from previous trips are outstanding.
- b. Generally employees should not seek to extend official overseas travel to take private leave or conversely extend private overseas travel for official purposes. Consideration will be given to such requests in special circumstances and this must be included in any travel approval submission.
- c. All employees are required to fly economy class for all official overseas travel except for the following:-
 - i. Public Service senior executives may fly premium economy or business class.
 - ii. An employee travelling with a Minister may, if required, travel in the same class.
 - iii. An employee travelling with a government delegation may, with the approval of the Secretary, travel in the same class as other delegates.
 - iv. The Secretary may waive the requirement to fly economy class for medical reasons.
- d. All employees are required to book their overseas flight, accommodation and hire car requirements through the department's contracted travel service provider.
- e. Official representation at overseas conferences is to be kept to a minimum. The presence of one or two employees should be sufficient for the department to be adequately represented. Higher numbers will be considered for approval only in exceptional circumstances.
- f. Official overseas travel does not include travel overseas by employees for the sole purpose of undertaking an approved course of study or a study program under a scholarship or study scheme.
- g. Employees are to be compensated for overseas travel in accordance with Circular C2013-09 2013 Australian and Overseas Travelling Allowances for Official Travel for Senior Officials issued by the Department of Premier and Cabinet and any subsequent Circular issued for this purpose.

Procedures are located within the [NSW Department of Industry intranet](#)

- OBT (On-line Booking Tool) User Guide
- ByDesign: How-To Guide- Claiming 24hr Meal and Incidental Allowance
- Expense Management System: User Manual
- FAQs available on intranet
- Process Flowchart: NSW Department of Industry Travel Process 2015 – Non Executive Employees
- Overseas Travel Procedure

Roles and responsibilities

- All Staff: Must adhere to the above procedures
- Employees: Must be efficient, economical and ethical in their use and management of public resources when undertaking travel in accordance with this policy
- Managers/Supervisors: Should provide reasonable and appropriate travel arrangements for staff travelling on official business in accordance with this policy having consideration for the safety of the employee, the business requirements and the financial costs to the department.
- Senior Executives: Ensure their employees comply with this policy and the associated procedures including providing their recommendation to the Secretary on any request for overseas travel.
- Executive Director Corporate Operations: Provides procedures and processes to effectively manage travel & accommodation bookings and travel claims for both domestic and overseas travel.
- Director Industrial Relations: Provides the department's interpretation of travelling compensation entitlements for employees who travel on official business based on the provisions of the Award.

Safety considerations

All employees have an obligation to ensure they travel in a safe manner. When approvers are considering requests to travel they should ensure that sufficient time is being allowed for the employee to safely reach their destination and that the appropriate method of transport is being used in the circumstances. For overseas travel medical advice should be sought when travelling long distances. Employees should familiarise themselves with the content of the Travel Health section of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Smart Traveller website and take any action that is necessary in the circumstances.

Delegations

- See department delegations

Definitions

Lowest logical fare: This is the cheapest fare available that meets the traveller's logistical needs. An example of applying lowest logical fare is; your meeting start time is fixed, but you may end the day earlier than expected. The lowest cost flight should be chosen for the first flight, but for the return flight, it may be more logical to book a flight with flexibility. A reason code will still need to be input on the OBT, at time of booking.

Legislation

- *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*
- *Government Sector Employment Act 2013*

Related policies

- Department of Premier and Cabinet Policy on Official Travel Within Australia and Overseas
- NSW Department of Industry Motor Vehicle Policy
- NSW Department of Industry Purchase card (Pcard) policy

Other related documents

- C2013-09 2013 Australian and Overseas Travelling Allowances for Official Travel for Senior Officials
- C2003-05 Travelling Overseas on Official Business - Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Travel Advice
- C2003-07 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome - Travelling Overseas on Official Business
- C2002-29 Frequent Flyer Points
- M2013-08 Official Travel within Australia and Overseas
- Overseas travel risk assessment
- Overseas travel application form
- Travelling Compensation Guidelines

Superseded documents

This policy replaces:

- A-040 NSW Trade and Investment Travelling Compensation Policy
- TI-P-132 NSW Trade and Investment Domestic Travel Policy
- TI-P-133 NSW Trade and Investment Overseas Travel Policy

Revision history

Version	Date issued	Notes	By
2	21/10/14	New Travel Policy - removes per diem allowance related to accommodation	Executive Director, Corporate Operations
3	18/9/15	Provide options for booking and payment of domestic hotels	Executive Director, Corporate Operations
4	26/11/15	Clarification in sections 2c), 2d) and 3.	Executive Director, Corporate Operations
5	1/3/2016	Prioritises use of on-line booking tools and removes references to specific contracted system names	Executive Director, Corporate Operations

Review date

1/6/2016

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