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19 MAR 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
ASSISTANT SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
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DIRECTOR OF FORCE TRANSFORMATION
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Premium Class Travel Guidance and Reporting Requirements

This memorandum promulgates guidance on the use of premium class (first class and business class) transportation for all official travel. Effective immediately, I am directing all DoD Components, when using premium class travel, to follow the Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR) and Joint Travel Regulations (JTR). The attached document on premium class travel requirements contains a summary of major changes made to the JFTR and JTR.

In a recent General Accounting Office Audit (GAO #04-88), GAO reported that internal control weaknesses within the Department of Defense led to the improper use of first and business class travel, at increased cost to taxpayers. Consequently, the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) (USD(P&R)) chartered a multi-agency task force to clarify policy and recommend corrective action. An important outcome of the task force was the strengthening of the travel rules and approval authority for premium class travel.

To maintain effective oversight of this program, each addressee will be required to submit a report to OUSD (P&R) on the use of premium class travel. The first two report submissions will be due NLT July 31 and October 30, 2004, covering the periods from April 1 through June 30 and July 1 through September 30, 2004, respectively. Thereafter, a report will be due semiannually NLT April 30 and October 30. You will be receiving within the week additional guidance on the reporting format and procedures from OUSD (P&R).

Attachment:
As stated

OSD 03644-04

DOD PREMIUM CLASS TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE USE OF PREMIUM CLASS TRAVEL

- **It is Government policy that coach (economy) class travel accommodations will be used for all passenger transportation modes for all official government travel.**
- Premium class travel will only be permitted on an exception basis, when fully justified and approved by the appropriate premium class approval authority, and only for the situations contained in the Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR) and Joint Travel Regulations (JTR).
- Premium class accommodations must be made and authorized in advance of the actual travel unless extenuating circumstances or emergency situations make advance authorizations impossible. If approval is not subsequently obtained, the traveler is responsible for the cost difference.
- **Blanket authorization and justification for use of premium class travel are prohibited.**
- A major policy change is the justification for flights over 14 hours. These flights **do not automatically qualify for use of premium class travel. The traveler must make every effort to schedule his/her travel so he/she has a rest period prior to starting work. A rest period either enroute or at the TDY destination negates use of premium class travel. Premium class travel should be the exception, not the rule, for flights over 14 hours.**

APPROVAL LEVELS

- Officials who may authorize/approve premium class accommodations:
  - First Class:
    - Office of the Secretary of Defense and Defense Agencies: Executive Secretary, with no further delegation.
    - Military Departments: The Secretaries of the Military Departments. Approval authority may be re-delegated to Under Secretaries, Service Chiefs or their Vice and/or Deputy Chiefs of Staff, and four-star major commanders or their three-star vice and/or deputy commanders, and no further.
    - Joint Staff and Combatant Commands: Director, Joint Staff, or as delegated. Re-delegation may be no lower than to the three-star major commanders.
  - Business Class:
    - Officials with authority to authorize/approve first class accommodations, as shown above, are also business class authorization/approval authorities. The business class authorization/approval may be delegated but to no lower than general/flag officers at the two-star level or their civilian equivalents.

Premium class approving officials may not approve their own premium class travel. They must obtain approval from their reporting senior flag officer or civilian equivalent. Approval must be by someone senior to the traveler.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

The approval for premium class travel must be documented by placing a statement on the travel authorization/order that states, at a minimum, the following:

- The class of premium class travel approved, business or first class.
- The Name, Rank and Office Symbol of the approving official.
- The specific paragraph reference in the JTR or JFTR used to justify the premium class travel for the upgrade, which includes specific reference to the condition(s) met from the JTR/JFTR.
- The coach fare and upgraded fare for the premium class portions of the trip.
- Documents used for the approval of this premium class travel are on file in the office of the premium class approval official.

ENFORCEMENT PROVISIONS

- Commanders must ensure that travel offices and CTOs will not issue premium class tickets without the required approval being part of the travel authorization.
- In the event premium class tickets are issued in the absence of proper approval documentation, the traveler is responsible for the excess cost.

REPORTING PROCEDURES/MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT

- All Department of Defense Components will be required to submit semiannual reports to OUSD(P&R). The report will be due NLT than 30 April and 31 October. Additionally, all Department of Defense components are required to track the use of premium class travel, and will maintain applicable documentation for 6 years and 3 months. At a minimum, the following data must be captured and reported by each premium travel approving official:
  - Total number of premium class trips authorized during the given timeframe broken down by class of service.
  - Total cost to the government of those trips approved.
  - Name, grade and unit of traveler.
  - Approval official.
  - Class of service authorized.
  - Mode of travel (i.e., air, ship, train).
  - Dates of travel.
  - Origin and destination of each leg of the portion of a trip involving premium class travel.
  - Specific purpose of travel and corresponding condition(s) met in the JTR/JFTR.
  - Coach and premium class fares for each portion of a trip involving premium class travel.