

AFTRS Travel Guidelines

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1. INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

This document sets out AFTRS Guidelines and provides direction to all travellers travelling on official business away from their normal workplace and to managers approving official travel.

Where there is an inconsistency between these guidelines and a traveller's individual employment contract or common law contract the terms of the employment contract or common law contract will prevail to the extent of any inconsistency.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES, COMPLIANCE AND AUDITING

All travellers who travel, process travel or approve travel are responsible for complying with these guidelines.

Travellers who incur expenditure, or commit AFTRS to future expenditure, that is not in accordance with these guidelines risk misconduct action. Misuse of a corporate credit card may result in the traveller being required to reimburse AFTRS for inappropriate expenses incurred and/or an allegation of misconduct. Refer to 'Use of AFTRS Corporate Cards' document signed by each card holder prior to a card being issued.

Managers (refer to delegations schedule) are responsible for ensuring adherence to policy and guidelines and confirming the appropriateness of any expenditure before approving travel. If a manager approves travel entailing any deviation from AFTRS policy or guidelines, the reasons for the deviation are to be documented.

Travellers have a responsibility to read and be aware of AFTRS travel policy and guidelines, in particular regarding Airline Loyalty Programs, Frequent Flyer Points and the acceptance of gifts or winnings as part of promotions offered by Airlines while travelling. Following the introduction of the 'Whole of Australian Government' Travel Contract in 2011, frequent flyer points no longer accrue on AFTRS airline bookings. 2011 Further information is available at: [Gifts and Benefits \(Emoluments\) Policy](#).

All AFTRS travel is subject to scrutiny by Internal Audit and the Australian National Audit Office.

3. REPRESENTING AFTRS

When travelling and working temporarily at a location away from the home office, travellers will ensure that their behaviour is consistent with AFTRS' Code of Conduct, a copy of which can be found at: [Code of Conduct](#).

4. PRIOR APPROVAL

Prior to undertaking travel outside of the metropolitan area, travellers must obtain written approval in the form of a signed Travel Authorisation form.

In instances where travel is unforeseen (for example, an extension of travel arrangements or emergency travel initiated out of hours), prior oral approval is required. Both the traveller and the travel approver should formally record the outcome of their conversation in writing.

5. CLASS OF TRAVEL

All official travel will be made by economy class unless approved otherwise by the CEO.

6. BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES

Versatility and flexibility by travellers and their managers in matching business commitments to best value opportunities will result in reduced travel costs. Examples of such issues are:

- Consideration of non-travel alternatives such as teleconferencing;
- Seeking the lowest practical overall cost-outcome for the trip;
- Settling travel arrangements as far as practicable in advance to maximise use of discounted airfares;
- Matching business commitments to cost opportunities, e.g. alternate flight schedules, multiple business functions per trip;
- Scheduling appointments to coincide with available travel opportunities;
- Alternative methods of travel considered, e.g. Sydney to Canberra travel by rental car or AFTRS company car where appropriate; for multiple travellers sharing a vehicle or group bookings.

It is accepted that some best value opportunities could contain conditions that may increase the risk associated with the selected travel option, (e.g. the selected fare may reduce the flexibility to change airline flight date and times). Full fare / flexible should not be automatically chosen for the sake of convenience. However, it may be appropriate to have a best fare flight one way and a flexible fare on the return leg (or vice versa).

Our travel arrangements are part of the 'Whole of Australian Government' (WOAG) contract under which the selection of fully flexible fares, when discounted fares were available, is automatically reported to Canberra who may query AFTRS why the cheaper option was not selected. Under the WOAG contract, frequent flyer points no longer accrue, although we still quote Qantas Club or Frequent Flyer membership numbers because it assists with confirming spelling and seating preferences etc.

7. BOOKINGS

All bookings for flights and rental cars are to be made by the travel officer in the Finance department unless arranged otherwise with the Finance department. Any subsequent changes to a booking should all be made by the travel officer in the Finance department but never directly with the airline. If there are any last minute changes required after hours these changes should be made through our travel provider FCm Travel (1300139847 or outside Australia 61 7 3011 7821), with a follow-up notification to our travel officer.

Bookings for AFTRS vehicles are to be made at the Production Resources department.

The Finance department does not make bookings for accommodation. See Section 9 'ACCOMMODATION FOR DOMESTIC TRAVEL'.

8. DOMESTIC TRAVEL INVOLVING AN OVERNIGHT STAY

Allowances for meals and incidentals are paid to a traveller (usually before commencement of the travel), based on the details supplied on the Travel Authorisation form.

If a meal is scheduled to be provided during the flight the meal allowance will be adjusted accordingly.

If a meal is provided by the conference/course/meeting etc, it must be noted on the Travel Authorisation form, and the meal allowance will be adjusted accordingly.

If a meal is included with the cost of accommodation it must be noted on the Travel Authorisation form, and the meal allowance will be adjusted accordingly.

For PC1s and contractors, payment of allowances for meals and incidentals is at the discretion of the Division Director.

9. ACCOMMODATION FOR DOMESTIC TRAVEL

AFTRS uses accommodation rates for travellers as provided by the Australian Taxation Office as a guide. The rates can be found at S:\Accounts\TRAVEL\Accommodation rates. If, due to exceptional circumstances, reasonable accommodation cannot be found within the allowable rates, the traveller may apply for an increased rate from the Division Director. Detailed justification for the increased rate is required.

The preferred option for accommodation is that it is paid using a corporate credit card (e.g. by an Admin Manager) or that AFTRS is invoiced directly by the accommodation provider.

Another option is that the traveller pays the accommodation themselves. The traveller then submits the paid tax invoice to the Finance department for reimbursement. Finance will use the approved Travel Authorisation form as authorisation for reimbursing accommodation.

The Finance department does not make bookings for accommodation. The relevant divisional administrator can utilise their corporate MasterCard to take advantage of discounted accommodation through 'standby rate' providers like www.wotif.com.au or www.ratestogo.com. Alternatively the divisional administrator can book and pay for appropriate accommodation (excluding meals, room service and bar fridge) and take advantage of government rates that apply at the major hotel chains.

For PC1s and contractors, payment of allowances for accommodation is at the discretion of the Division Director.

10. INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Allowances for meals and incidentals are paid as per the procedure for domestic travel. All reasonable accommodation is reimbursed after submission of receipts to the Finance department. Travellers with a corporate credit card may use the card to pay for overseas accommodation.

Discretion has to be applied in regard to reasonable accommodation because of factors including safety of hotel location, travel costs to and from the hotel and seasonal factors (e.g. summer rates are more expensive than winter rates in a city such as London).

Reasonable accommodation can be typically characterised as 4 stars or less and within a 5 kilometre radius of the traveller's temporary work site or conference location.

Where an overseas trip is predominantly work related, the trip is automatically covered by AFTRS' normal travel insurance policy. If the trip is partly work related and partly personal, travel insurance for the whole trip may need to be purchased directly by the traveller if requested by Finance. The traveller will be reimbursed on a pro-rata basis for the work component of the trip, upon submission of a tax invoice to the Finance department.

In order to comply with ATO regulations, where an overseas trip includes personal time, and the work related component is equal to or less than 50% of the total days away, then the department will be charged a fringe benefits tax amount in addition to the airfare.

11. TRAVEL NOT INVOLVING AN OVERNIGHT STAY

A traveller who is required to be absent from their usual place of work on official business for a period of not less than 10 hours but is not absent overnight, will be paid a travelling allowance set by the Australian Taxation Office. As at 01/01/12 the rates are \$33.00 for non senior executive travellers and \$44.00 for senior executive travellers. Where a part day rate is paid no other form of travelling allowance is payable and there is no reimbursement of meals costs. Part-day travel allowance is prepared by the Finance department and paid through Payroll as required by the ATO.

12. OTHER COSTS ARISING FROM TRAVEL

Where a traveller incurs additional expenses as a result of undertaking work related travel, the manager may approve reimbursement of reasonable expenses.

In cases where travellers use their own cash for payment of small expenses such as bus fares, receipts should be obtained wherever possible and reimbursement claimed through Finance.

13. TAXIS

AFTRS will meet the cost of taxis to and from places of business, in the course of official travel.

Cabcharge vouchers are the preferred mode of meeting taxi expenditure. Cabcharge e-tickets are available from the Finance department if approved by the cost centre manager.

Taxis should only be used for official purposes, such as travel to and from the airport on the day of travel and from AFTRS offices to other work related locations. Taxis may also be used to travel between accommodation and work locations when such use represents efficient use of public money. Further information is available at: [Guidelines on Using Taxis](#).

14. TOLLS

Tolls incurred (for AFTRS business) on a personal electronic tag may be reclaimed by submitting a hard copy of the toll statement, with relevant tolls highlighted, to the Finance department.

Tolls incurred (for AFTRS business) at a cash booth may be reclaimed by submitting the toll receipt to the Finance department.

At the present time, rental car companies do not provide electronic toll tags with their vehicles. This will hopefully change in the future. In the meantime, there are several options for dealing with tolls.

- (a) Avoid using cashless tolls
- (b) Take your electronic tag from your own vehicle with you when using a rental vehicle
- (c) Use the cashless toll and make payment afterwards. Most cashless tolls have a sign showing the phone number to ring if you use the toll without an electronic tag. You must ring the number to make payment or to attach the toll to your own electronic tag account. In addition to the toll, there is a fine if you do not make payment within the time displayed. AFTRS is not responsible for such fines.

15. RENTAL VEHICLES

Rental vehicles may be used as a cost-effective alternative to air travel, taxi travel within a metropolitan area, or where travel by air is not feasible.

All bookings for rental cars are to be made by the travel officer in the Finance department unless arranged otherwise with the Finance department.

When requesting the hiring of rental vehicles the following points should be considered:

- (a) Close attention is to be paid to vehicle collection and return times, so as to minimise total hire charges.
- (b) Any traffic, parking or similar infringements remain vested with the driver and will not be paid or reimbursed by AFTRS.
- (c) Petrol cards are usually provided by the rental company. If a petrol card is not provided then the traveller may be reimbursed petrol costs as per normal reimbursement requirements. If a rental vehicle is not returned with a full tank of petrol, the rental company charges a premium to fill up the tank.

16. USE OF PRIVATE MOTOR VEHICLE

In general, private motor vehicles are not to be used for official travel except where alternative transport, including air, car rental, coach, or train, is either not available or not operationally efficient.

On those occasions when the use of a motor vehicle is deemed necessary, the use of a rental vehicle should be considered as the preferred option. Approval for travellers to use

their own motor vehicles will only be given if the use of the vehicle would result in greater efficiency.

Where private motor vehicle use is approved, motor vehicle allowance is payable at the rate provided by the Australian Taxation Office. Where the cost of this alternative exceeds the best airfare available for the day, travel funds will only be provided up to an amount equivalent to best fare of the day, minus GST and other government taxes.

Please note that any motor vehicle allowance will be paid through Payroll and be shown on a traveller's payment summary as assessable income. The traveller should maintain personal tax records to enable substantiation of any business travel related tax deduction claim in excess of the motor vehicle allowance received.

Where private vehicle use is approved, neither AFTRS nor the Commonwealth accepts responsibility for any financial liability or loss which may arise from events such as traffic or parking (or other similar) infringements, accidents or mechanical failure.

As AFTRS does not provide or carry insurance on private vehicles used for official purposes, the traveller's manager must be satisfied that the driver is licensed and that comprehensive insurance cover is in place before approving the use of the vehicle. Insurance details should be recorded for every use of private vehicles for official purposes.

17. SAFE DRIVING

Drivers undertaking long-distance trips, whether by rental vehicle or their own car, should ensure that they take rest breaks and other precautions to avoid driver fatigue. As a minimum this includes:

- Ensuring you get a good night's sleep before you start a long trip.
- Planning your trip so you're not driving at times when you're normally asleep – don't start too early in the morning and don't start a long trip after a full day's work.
- Sharing the driving wherever possible and don't try to drive too far in one day.
- Taking a break at least every two hours. Stop for at least ten minutes and get out of the car and move around.
- Making sure you get plenty of fresh air. If you're using the heater or air conditioner, shift the air flow control to "fresh air" or open a window every 20 minutes or so.

18. PARKING FEES

Parking fees incurred (for AFTRS business) may be reclaimed by submitting a hard copy of the parking fee receipt to the Finance department.

If you have any queries please contact the Finance department.