TRAVEL MANAGER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

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TRAVEL MANAGER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

I. User Roles and Access

Q1. What form is required to gain ITM 9.0 access?

A1. The ITM User Access Request Form and instructions can be found at:

http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~cbs/forms.htm

This form needs to be filled out, signed and sent to NOAA Client Services Help Desk with the appropriate signatures. This can be done by scanning the signed copy and sending an email to clientservices@noaa.gov or faxing the signed copy to 240-632-2886.

Q2. Which ITM role on the form do I choose?

A2. A user may have multiple roles in the system depending upon their duties in their office. Those roles designated as Finance are only applicable to Finance Office employees. The other roles are designated as:

***ITM USER** – creates, edits, views, and prints travel authorizations, vouchers, and local vouchers for themselves only (Employees only)*

***ITM REVIEWING OFFICIAL -** access to their own travel documents and those named in a specified group for reviewing purposes. When requesting access, the user must also include the Travel Manager Group Name in order to review travel documents for invitational as well as employee travelers. To obtain the Group Name, you may check with your Group Administrator in the office.*

***ITM APPROVING OFFICIAL** – access to their own travel documents and those named in a specified group for approval purposes. When requesting access, the user must also include the Travel Manager Group Name in order to approve travel documents for invitational as well as employee travelers. To obtain the Group Name, you may check with your Group Administrator in the office.*

***ITM GROUP ADMINISTRATOR** – creates, edits, views, and prints travel authorizations, vouchers, and local vouchers for a specified group of travelers as well as themselves.*

***Note: This role also requires the signature of the FMC Travel Coordinator.** The FMC Travel Coordinator listing can be found on the same webpage as the forms. When requesting access, the user must also include the Travel Manager Group Name in order to create, edit, etc. travel documents for those travelers.*

ITM ROUTING ADMINISTRATOR *– the ability to create and maintain electronic routing lists for their own office or organization. Access is limited to the routing administrator's Line Office & FMC (e.g. H-06-02).*

Note: This role also requires the signature of the FMC Travel Coordinator. *The FMC Travel Coordinator listing can be found on the same webpage as the forms.*

Effective April 12, 2010*, all NEW Routing Administrators are required to take training prior to requesting the role in ITM. The Routing Administrator Certificate of Training must accompany the ITM User Access Request Form in order for the role to be granted.*

Q3. What are the responsibilities of the various roles within Travel Manager?

A3. ***ITM USER*** *– is dependent upon each office. Some users create their own travel documentation in the system. Others are only required to sign/stamp their travel voucher in the system.*

ITM REVIEWING OFFICIAL - *is responsible for the review of travel documents and generally associated with an individual acting in an administrative capacity (i.e., budget office, requesting official, etc…). This is an optional level of the routing list depending on internal business needs.*

ITM APPROVING OFFICIAL *– is responsible for the approval of travel documents and* ***must*** *be an individual with the authority or delegated authority to authorize and/or approve travel as listed in the regulations (NTR 301-1.20) as well as having the authority to obligate funds within the Core Financial System (CFS).*

ITM GROUP ADMINISTRATOR *– is responsible for coordinating travel arrangements and preparing travel documents (authorizations & vouchers) in the system for travelers contained within their group (LO/FMC). They are also responsible for creating/maintaining their group listing. That listing is done using the ITM Group Maintenance form, which can be found at:*

http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~cbs/forms.htm

ITM ROUTING ADMINISTRATOR *– is responsible for creating and updating their routing lists, approval chain and travelers for the documents to be electronically routed through the system.*

Q4. How do I identify my FMC Travel Coordinator?

A4. The FMC Travel Coordinator listing can be found at: http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~cbs/index.html

Q5. Do I need to submit another ITM User Access Request form to get another role?

A5. Yes. Anytime an additional role is needed, resubmit the form with the additional role selected and the proper signatures associated with the role prior to submitting the form to NOAA Client Services Help Desk. This can be done using the drop-down listing and selecting Add Role.

Q6. I'm a new employee what do I need to do before I can travel?

A6. A person must have a valid CFS Vendor Number prior to requesting the ITM system access. The National Finance Center's (NFC) interface normally establishes the vendor record within the Core Financial System (CFS). Once they have their CFS Vendor Number, they will need to fill out the ITM User Access Request Form, so they may be added as an ITM User.

Q7. How does a new employee get a CFS Vendor Number?

A7. The National Finance Center's (NFC) interface normally establishes the vendor record within the Core Financial System (CFS).

Q8. What if the new employee needs a CFS Vendor Number immediately for travel and the National Finance Center's interface has not processed?

A8. The new employee should complete the CBS Individual Payment Profile form and make sure to check the New/Prospective NOAA/BIS employee in order to make sure there will be no duplicate numbers. Then submit the form to vendor.support@noaa.gov. The form can be found at: http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~cbs/indivpayform.htm

Q9. Are CFS Vendor Numbers required for Contractors to access Travel Manager?

A9. No. Only NOAA employees/Invitational Travelers require valid Vendor Numbers in Travel Manager. Contractors may not have access to Travel Manager in order to travel; they may, however, have access to create travel documents for other individuals. The reason for this is their travel has to be covered under their contract.

Q10. How does an Invitational Traveler get a CFS Vendor Number?

A10. The Group Administrator should complete the CBS Individual Payment Profile form and must check the "Invitational Traveler" to avoid creating duplicate numbers. Then submit the form to vendor.support@noaa.gov. The form can be found at: http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~cbs/indivpayform.htm

However, prior to submitting the form, contact the NOAA Client Services Help Desk to see if the Invitational Traveler has an existing Vendor Number.

Q11. How can the Traveler or Group Administrator find out the CFS Vendor Number?

A11. Upon submission of the CBS Individual Payment Profile form, include a Bureau Contact email address at the bottom of the form for notification when the vendor number has been created.

If one already exists, but no notification was sent, they may contact NOAA Client Services Help Desk.

Q12. How can an FMC Travel Coordinator verify the current roles that are assigned to individuals in my office(s)?

A12. Submit inquiries to the NOAA Client Services Help Desk via email to clientservices@noaa.gov.

II. Training and Documentation

Q1. What is the email for Client Services Training?

A1. The email address is: cbs.trainingservices@noaa.gov

Q2. Where can I find the training schedule for Travel Manager?

A2. The CBS Training Schedule is available from the training link on the Financial Systems Division (FSD), Client Services Training web site at: http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~cbs/cbs_training_schedule.htm

Q3. How can I sign up for the ITM training?

A3. Registrations for Instructor Led Training (ILT) are processed via the Commerce Learning Center (CLC). Access Client Services training information directly from the CLC at NOAA: https://doc.learn.com/noaa.

FSD/Client Services Training Registration Process

1) *Access the CLC at NOAA: https://doc.learn.com/noaa **OR** click the **NOAA Learning Center** link on the CLC at https://doc.learn.com/*
2) *Click on the **Program Areas** section on the Home page*
3) *Click on the **FSD/CBS** link on the NOAA Program Areas page*
4) *Scroll through the available FSD classes*
5) *Click on the desired class name*
6) *In the new window, click on the ENROLL button in the upper right corner*
7) *An acknowledgement of your enrollment is displayed and a system generated message is sent via email with information for the specific class*
8) *Registration status is available on the CLC at NOAA by clicking **MY TRAINING PLAN***

Q4. How can I cancel my Travel Manager training enrollment within the CLC?

A4. FSD/Client Services Training Cancellation Process

1) *Access the CLC at NOAA: https://doc.learn.com/noaa OR click the NOAA Learning Center link on the CLC at https://doc.learn.com/*
2) *Click on MY TRAINING PLAN*
3) *Scroll to the Enrollments section*
4) *Click on the desired class in the Enrollment Name column*
5) *In the next window, click on the Drop button*
6) *An acknowledgement of your removal is displayed and a system generated message is sent via email*

Q5. Can training sessions be done at field locations?

A5. Yes. Submit special requests, or interest in training at other locations, to cbs.trainingservices@noaa.gov. Training at field locations may be adjusted to accommodate specific needs.

Q6. Where can I find Travel Manager Documentation?

A6. Travel Manager Training documents can be found at:
http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~cbs/training_materials.htm

Travel Manager Reference Library can be found at:
http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~cbs/travel.htm

Q7. If I need an FSD representative to participate in a Conference or Question/Answer session for my Line Office, whom do I contact?

A7. Make requests to NOAA Client Services Help Desk by either: email at clientservices@noaa.gov or phone at 301-444-3400, Option #2 for Travel Help.

Q8. Am I required to take Travel Manager training?

A8. No. Travel Manager training is not required for all users; however it is highly recommended users attend training.

Beginning on April 12, 2010 *new users performing as Routing Administrators are required to complete Routing Administrator training and submit the Routing*

Administrator Certificate of Training along with the ITM User Access Request Form.

III. Electronic Routing

Q1. What is electronic routing?

A1. Electronic routing is a behind the scenes process allowing the electronic version of the travel document to go through electronic reviews and approvals. This electronic routing should mimic how the hard copy of the travel documents move through the traveler's office or organization. Electronic routing also provides the following benefits:

- *Pre-Audit messages*
- *Email Notifications*
- *ACCS and Funds Validations*
- *Near real-time posting and confirmation of the obligation of funds*

Q2. What kinds of electronic routing are there?

A2. There are two kinds of electronic routing - Full and Simplified.

Q3. What is the difference between Full and Simplified Routing?

A3. The main difference is how the travel document moves electronically through the system for reviews and approvals.

***Full Routing** – This process allows the document to move electronically through the system, with automatic email notifications sent to the reviewers and approvers from the traveler's routing list. These types of documents will remain in the Reviewer/Approver's Review Queue until they take action with those documents. Routing lists are required for this process.*

***Simplified Routing** – This process requires reviewers and approvers to manually retrieve the document and requires communication between the preparer and the Reviewer/Approver outside of Travel Manager as there are no automatic email notifications. This also means the documents will not be in the Reviewer/Approver's Review Queue. Travelers for this type of routing process are not be included on a routing list, but the Reviewer/Approver must have access to the traveler in the system by their group in order to view their documents.*

Q4. Who uses Full Routing? Who uses Simplified Routing?

A4. Most NOAA employees/travelers use the Full Routing. Invitational and/or Bargaining Unit Travelers are the main users of Simplified Routing.

Q5. Why are the Invitational and Bargaining Unit Travelers utilizing the Simplified Routing Process?

A5. Bargaining Unit Travelers have been exempted from having access to the system in order to stamp their voucher "SIGNED" in the system. Invitational Travelers can not have access to the system at all.

Q6. Does my Line/Staff Office have the option of using Simplified Routing rather than Full Routing?

A6. No. Travel Transmittal Number 22 mandates the use of full electronic routing within Travel Manager for all employees, excluding those Bargaining Unit employees who have a temporary exemption and Invitational Travelers.

Q7. What are Routing Lists?

A7. Routing lists designate the path documents are required to follow when moving electronically through the system for reviews and approvals. Routing lists are required for all travelers utilizing the Full Routing method.

Q8. Are there separate routing lists for authorizations and vouchers?

A8. No. A traveler can only be associated with one routing list. This routing list must be inclusive of all travel documents (i.e. Travel Authorizations, Travel Vouchers, Government Vouchers, Reclaim Vouchers & Local Vouchers).

Q9. Will routing lists need to be set up for my office?

A9. Yes. All NOAA and BIS offices utilizing the Full Routing process are required to have routing lists.

Q10. Will routing be enforced on all documents?

A10. Yes. On April 12, 2010, the Integrated Travel Manager (ITM) system will begin to enforce the proper use of electronic routing and document stamping in support of both NOAA Finance Office business processing procedures and ongoing Paper Reduction efforts. As a result, additional Pre-audits and Stamping Edits will be implemented to verify documents are processed accordingly. For the first 60 days, the Pre-audits and Stamping Edits will appear as "Warnings" allowing users the necessary time to take corrective action.

*On June 14, 2010, the Pre-audits and Stamping Edits will begin to appear as "Failures." Any document failing a Routing Enforcement Pre-audit and/or Stamping Edit due to non-compliance **must** be corrected before it will be allowed to continue processing.*

ITM Dispatch #12 addresses Routing Enforcement in detail:
http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~cbs/travel.htm

Q11. Who is responsible in my office for creating and maintaining these routing lists?

A11. The person designated in your Line/Staff office as a Routing Administrator.

Q12. Is there a way to find out who in my office is a Routing Administrator?

A12. Yes. Within Travel Manager there is a report called the User Configuration Report. An ITM User may query themselves or a Group Administrator may query individual users within their group using the CFS Vendor Number to find information such as:

- *Routing Administrator(s)*
- *Organization*
- *Group Membership*
- *Routing List Name*

Q13. Can there be an alternate to the Routing Administrator?

A13. Yes.

Q14. Is there a limit to the number of Routing Administrators allowed per FMC?

A14. No. However, the number of people with the Routing Administrator role should be based on the Line/Staff Office needs. It's important to note all Routing Administrators within an organization have the ability to view and edit/modify all routing lists within that organization. Routing Administrators should not modify routing lists created by others without first coordinating with the creator of that list.

Q15. Can the FMC Travel Coordinator be a Routing Administrator?

A15. Yes. There is no system limitation preventing a user from having numerous roles within Travel Manager.

Q16. What help is available for Routing Administrators?

A16. The NOAA Client Services Help Desk can help Routing Administrators. They may be reached at 301-444-3400, Option #2 for Travel Help or via email at clientservices@noaa.gov. Assistance is available between 7:00 AM and 5:00 PM ET, Monday through Friday.

Check the FSD Client Services Training schedule for additional routing classes. Routing training documents can be found at:

http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~cbs/cbs_training_schedule.htm

Q17. Can a routing list contain primary and alternate reviewers/approvers?

A17. Yes. Each primary signature on a routing list can have one or more alternates. There is no limit to the number of alternates that can exist for each primary signature. However, it is important to note the software does not differentiate between primary and alternate signatures. All signatures for the same Doc Type, Doc Status, and Process Name at the same level are viewed as equal. When documents are routed for review/approval, the primary and all alternate signatures for the same Doc Type, Doc Status, and Process Name at the same level will receive email notifications at the same time. The document will reside in the review queue for all of them until any one of them takes action on the document. At that point, the document is removed from all of their review queues and sent to the next level of review/approval. It is up to these officials to determine amongst themselves when the primary will stamp the document and when the alternate(s) will be responsible for stamping the document.

Q18. How many alternate signatures can you have for each primary signature?

A18. There is no limit to the number of alternates that can exist for each primary signature. However we suggest there should be at least one primary and one alternate.

Q19. How do you set up an alternate reviewing/approving official?

A19. When establishing alternate officials in an approval routing chain, they need to be assigned using the same Doc Type, Doc Status, Level, and Process Name as the primary signature. The easiest way to do this is to create the signature record for your primary reviewer/approver, and then use the Copy feature to copy their signature record. To do this, click on the Copy icon on the line for the signature that should be copied. This will open the Signature Details screen. Change the Signature Name to reflect the name of the alternate. Click Save in the upper right corner.

Q20. Am I limited to the status codes used in a routing list?

A20. Yes. Although the status code field contains 13 available selections, only three (3) are valid for use when setting up a NOAA/BIS routing list:

- ***REVIEWED** – This status code is generally associated with an individual acting in an administrative capacity (i.e. budget office, requesting official, etc.) and is **optional** on all routing lists.*

- ***PROCESSED** – This status code is associated with foreign travel processing by the NOAA Travel Office and is **mandatory** on all **NOAA** routing lists as a conditional routing process for **foreign travel authorizations only.***

- ***APPROVED** – This status code needs to be assigned to those individuals with the authority or delegated authority to authorize and/or approve travel as listed in the regulations (NTR 301-1.20) as well as having the authority to obligate funds within the Core Financial System (CFS).*

Q21. How is routing handled if an employee from my office is traveling for another office?

A21. The electronic routing will still go through the employee's "home" office. However, the Approving Official for that employee's office should not apply the APPROVED stamp without written or verbal confirmation from the funding office. The preparer should send a copy of the draft authorization to the funding office for approval. When the preparer receives approval from the funding office, a statement to that effect - i.e. Funding Approved – see Jane Doe email dated 10/28/09 -- should be included in the comment section of the document. If the

approval was via email, attach a copy of the email to the hard copy travel voucher.

NOTE: Effective November 16, 2009, the requirement for hard copy signatures will be relaxed. Only those Travel Authorizations justified as "Emergency", "Mission Critical" or "System Downtime" will require an ink signature on the hard copy travel authorization.

Q22. What is conditional routing?

A22. Conditional routing was established in the system to accommodate special travel conditions requiring alternate, additional, and/or higher levels of approval as prescribed by the business/travel policies and regulations.

Q23. Must conditional routing occur at specific levels within the routing approval chain?

A23. Yes. There are three process types set up in Travel Manager to reflect the types of travel listed in NTR 301-1.20.

***NONDELEGATED** – This level of conditional routing is the highest level of approval. Typically the types of authorizations these individuals need to see are:*

- *Foreign*
- *Premium Class*
- *Non-Federally Funded*

These travel types require reporting to Congress. Authorizing Officials will also see these vouchers if there were changes made to the trip that were not included on the authorization (post-approvals).

Note: The ITM 9.0 Conditional Routing Template provides of listing of travel conditions as they apply to specific Line Offices and/or FMCs and can be found at:

http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~cbs/pdfdocs/ITM/ITM-CR-Template-Revised-Aug-2011.pdf

***DELEGATED** – This level of conditional routing is the next highest level of approval. Typically the types of authorizations these individuals need to see are:*

- *Invitational*
- *Blanket*
- *Actuals*

- *Conferences*

Approving Officials will also see these types of vouchers if there were changes made to the trip that were not included on the authorization (post-approvals).

Note: The ITM 9.0 Conditional Routing Template provides of listing of travel conditions as they apply to specific Line Offices and/or FMCs and can be found at:

http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~cbs/pdfdocs/ITM/ITM-CR-Template-Revised-Aug-2011.pdf

***REDELEGATED** – This level of conditional routing is the lowest level of approval. Typically the types of authorizations these individuals need to see are:*

- *Domestic with no special conditions*
- *All vouchers with no post-approval conditions*
- *Local Vouchers*

Q24. Does the system prevent anyone other than the preparer from making changes to the document?

A24. No. Anyone having access to the document can make changes. This includes the Traveler, Group Administrators and their alternates, and Reviewing/Approving Officials and their alternates.

For authorizations, once the SIGNED stamp is on the document, anyone needing to make changes, including Reviewing/Approving Officials, will need to open the document using their signature PIN. This puts the document in an adjustment status in order to stamp the document. However, the system will not restrict them from making changes also. If changes are made by anyone other than the preparer, remarks should be entered on the Document Status screen to state what changes were made. If the Reviewing/Approving Officials are not making changes to the document after opening it, they should check the checkbox marked "Stamp without Adjustments."

For vouchers, the process works the same as for the Reviewing and Approving Officials. However, once the preparer creates the voucher, the Traveler must stamp the voucher SIGNED. For them, there is no "signing in" to stamp their voucher. The system still sees the document as in create mode. The Traveler should not make changes to the document without conferring with the person that created the voucher.

IV. Electronic Approval

Q1. Why are we doing electronic approval of travel documents in Travel Manager?

A1. For Travel Authorizations, the electronic approval generates, in near real time, a posting of an approved undelivered order (UDO) and obligates funds within CFS. For Travel Vouchers, this means no-match documents should no longer exist within CFS. This helps the budget staff because the money obligates up front and the voucher claims will go against that obligation. Local Vouchers will remain as no-match documents as they do not require an authorization and thus will not be obligated.

Q2. Will the electronic review/approval of documents in Travel Manager eliminate the need for hard copy signatures?

A2. Yes, however the transition to electronic review/approval of travel documents is being implemented incrementally. Beginning November 16, 2009 hard copy signatures are only required on Travel ***Authorizations*** justified as "Emergency", "Mission Essential, or 'System Downtime".

Q3. Why are hard copy signatures still required when electronic approvals are in the system?

A3. Effective November 16, 2009, the requirement for hard copy signatures on ***Travel Authorizations*** *will be relaxed. Travel Authorizations which are electronically approved in ITM 9.0 and have successfully been interfaced into CFS will no longer require a hard copy signature. Only those Travel Authorizations justified as "Emergency", "Mission Critical" or "System Downtime"* ***will*** *require a hard copy signature.*

NOTE: Hard copy signatures must still be applied to Travel Vouchers that have been electronically approved in ITM 9.0. *However, efforts are underway to streamline the existing process for travel vouchers.*

Q4. Should the approval signature(s) on the hard copy voucher match the electronic signatures applied in Travel Manager?

A4. Yes. However, there may be exceptions where they may not match (i.e. funding office signs hard copy and electronic copy stamped APPROVED by employee's supervisor).

Q5. Can hard copy voucher and supporting documents be sent electronically to the Finance Branch?

A5. No. The Finance Branch requires original signed travel vouchers and supporting receipts in hard copy. However, efforts are underway to reevaluate this process.

Q6. How will an Approving Official ensure the traveler submitted correct and legitimate receipts for reimbursements if paper documents are eventually phased out?

A6. We are currently evaluating this as part of the Paper Reduction Initiative.

Q7. How do you foresee going completely paperless when the Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) requires retaining original receipts for the voucher. Also how does this affect record keeping per National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) regulations?

A7. We are currently evaluating this as part of the Paper Reduction Initiative.

Q8. Will offices be able to print a complete copy of the travel document(s) with all electronic signatures for record keeping?

A8. We are currently evaluating this as part of the Paper Reduction Initiative.

Q9. Will the traveler receive email notification once a document is electronically approved?

A9. Yes. Beginning April 12, 2010 travelers with a valid email address assigned to their Traveler Information profile record will begin to receive email notification upon approval of all document types (Authorizations, Vouchers, and Local Vouchers).

V. Document Preparation

Q1. Are individual traveler(s) required to prepare their own travel documents?

*A1. No. The only requirement for Travelers is to stamp their vouchers SIGNED, with the exception of bargaining employees and invitational travelers. However, depending on office policies, they **may** be required to create their own documents.*

Q2. Can a Group Administrator electronically stamp a Traveler's Voucher SIGNED with supervisory permission?

*A2. No. The only exception to this is for Bargaining Unit Employees and Invitational Travelers, which can be stamped SIGNED **AFTER** the Traveler signs the paper copy. All other Travelers are required to electronically stamp their own voucher SIGNED as well as to acknowledge the voucher certification statement. Group Administrators should not log in as the Traveler to initiate this process as it constitutes a security violation.*

Q3. If a travel voucher is not electronically stamped signed and/or approved in Travel Manager, will the Finance Office be able to process the voucher?

A3. No. The voucher must be electronically stamped signed by the traveler and approved by the approving official in order to DATALINK to the Core Financial System (CFS).

Q4. If a travel voucher properly routed and has the DATALINK status, will the Finance Office approve the invoice for payment in the CFS without the hard copy documentation?

A4. No. The Finance Office requires original signed travel vouchers and supporting receipts in hard copy. However, efforts are underway to reevaluate this process as part of the Paper Reduction Initiative.

Q5. Will the traveler have the ability to adjust the voucher claim once the Group Administrator completes it?

A5. Yes. As a user of the system, the Traveler has privileges to make changes. However, any changes that need to be done should be made by the creator of the document. This way the creator can make sure the hard copy is the correct one routed to the Reviewing/Approving Officials.

Q6. Can a document be "Canceled" in Travel Manager after it has been "APPROVED?"

A6. Travel Authorizations can be canceled after approval. However, the document must be in a status of DATALINK prior to amending it for cancellation purposes. The person cancelling the document should verify no expenses were incurred against the travel authorization PRIOR to doing the cancellation in the system.

ITM Dispatch #2 addresses Amendments, Adjustments and Cancellations and can be found at:

http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~cbs/travel.htm

Q7. Can you delete an unused authorization?

A7. Yes. However, this only applies to an authorization that has not been approved and data linked in the system. The system will not allow an individual to delete an authorization with the DATALINK status. Those documents must follow the Cancel process.

ITM Dispatch #2 addresses amendments, adjustments and cancellations and can be found at:

http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~cbs/travel.htm

Q8. Will Travel Manager Forms display the Traveler's Vendor Number?

A8. The forms only display the last four digits of the Traveler's Vendor Number.

Q9. What is a local voucher?

A9. A local voucher is a claim for reimbursement of travel expenses incurred within the vicinity of the Traveler's duty station.

Q10. Is there a need for special software in order to access Travel Manager from an employee's workstation or when teleworking?

A10. The Travel Manager 9.0 application does not require any specialized software. It is a Web-based application. If the employee has access to the internet at their work station and/or telework site, they will be able to access Travel Manager 9.0.

NOTE: The NOAA OCIO/NOAA IT Security Policy may require specialized software for employees who telework but this is not a Travel Manager

requirement. (e.g. users may be required to have a VPN connection when not working/connecting from known NOAA network IP locations – 2 factor authentication software is required by OMB and DOC OCIO for remote users)

VI. Funding Authorizations and Vouchers

Q1. When an authorization is canceled what happens to the obligated funding?

A1. If fees were assessed, those expenses must be paid. All other expenses will be de-obligated in the Core Financial System (CFS). If no fees were assessed, all expenses will be de-obligated in CFS.

Q2. What happens to the obligated money if a voucher claim is submitted for less than what was obligated?

A2. It depends on the trip duration.

***Trip duration = Less than 30 days** – the Core Financial System (CFS) will automatically de-obligate any remaining balances. These trips are set up in the system as "Quantity Based." This means CFS only expects one voucher to be filed against the obligation.*

***Trip duration = 30 days or more** – the obligation will remain open in the Core Financial System (CFS) as long as there is an open balance. These trips are set up in CFS as "Dollar Based." This means CFS expects more than one voucher to be filed against the obligation. If there is still money left over even after all of the vouchers have been filed/processed, the Line Office will need to amend the travel authorization to reduce costs down to the amount vouchered. As a result de-obligate the remaining balance.*

Q3. What is the process for resolving funds availability errors for authorizations?

A3. Funds availability errors received during the electronic stamping process generally occur due to a problem with the set up of the accounting (ACCS) or because there are insufficient funds to cover the trip. Upon receiving this type of error the user should contact their budget office for resolution.

NOTE: The budget office will need to verify the accounting (ACCS) cited on the authorization was set up correctly or provide the user with a properly funded ACCS.

Q4. What is the process for resolving funds availability errors for vouchers?

A4. Funds availability errors received when approving travel vouchers occurs when the amount of the voucher exceeds the amount of the authorization beyond the pre-defined tolerance which is applied at the Line Item, ACCS level with an overall "not to exceed" amount for the entire voucher.

Currently the tolerance level for Temporary Duty (TDY) travel is 50% up to a $1350.00 maximum. In CFS, tolerance is applied per Multiple Distribution Line (MDL), which equates in Travel Manager terms to each unique ACCS (Project/Task, Organization Code and Object Class) allowed to exceed the obligated amount by 50% not to exceed $1350.00.

If a user receives a funding error during the electronic stamping process, they should contact their budget office to verify there are no changes to the ACCS. Then amend the authorization to increase the obligation to match the amount of the voucher.

Q5. How will funds availability checking be handled during Continuing Resolution (CR) periods?

A5. During a continuing resolution, funding for the new fiscal year is established in the Core Financial System (CFS) based on the previous year's budgets, so normal operations can continue. When the funds availability check is invoked, the system will check those balances to see if there is enough funding to cover the obligation.

VII. Subject to Availability of Funds (SAF)

Q1. What is Subject to Availability of Funds (SAF) processing?

A1. It is a process allowing preparers of travel documents to create authorizations in the current Fiscal Year for trips where the dates/expenses are spanning Fiscal Years or are only in the new Fiscal Year. The SAF processing allows preparers to create one authorization for their trip encompassing all dates, expenses, and accounting codes. The current Fiscal Year expenses will obligate and the new Fiscal Year expenses will be held until October 1st.

Q2. What happens if we are under a Continuing Resolution (CR) at the start of the new Fiscal Year?

A2. SAF expenses are treated the same as any other expenses incurred under a CR. The normal rules still apply when operating under a CR, such as travel limitations, reduced budgets, etc. However, none of these are SAF specific.

Q3. Will the Travel Authorization numbers increase to 10 digits with FY10 to avoid duplication within Travel Manager?

A3. No. The NOAA Travel Regulations determine the Travel Authorization numbering. NTR 301-2.1(p) indicates:

What is the format for assigning a travel authorization number?
Travel authorization numbers are always nine characters (either numeric or alpha) without dashes (-), spaces, or any special characters. All travel authorization numbers must be unique and will always start with the last digit of the fiscal year, followed by a three character organization code, followed by a one character travel type code, and will end with a four character sequential number.

For FY10, the authorization numbers will begin with 0.

Q4. Do we still need Finance to do accruals to record year end expenses for ticket costs?

A4. No. Now that we are obligating based off the travel authorization (TA) this eliminates the need to do year end accruals.

Q5. GSA lodging/M&IE per diem expenses often change on October 1st. Will the SAF process pick up the changes automatically?

A5. No. The preparer will have to make the change one of the following ways:

TAs not yet approved:
The preparer will need to go to Document Information screen/Trip Information tab where they will check the "Replace all Lodging and M&IE" checkbox and then save that change. The system should then replace all initial costs with the current rates.

TAs that have been approved:
***Create the TV** – The preparer can make the rate changes on the voucher after the trip has occurred. As long as the change was not substantial and did no exceed the tolerance, an amendment would not be necessary.*

***Create an amendment on TA** – The preparer can amend the authorization by replacing all lodging and M&IE costs. To do this the preparer will need to go to Document Information screen/Trip Information tab where they will check the "Replace all Lodging and M&IE" checkbox and then save that change. Once the amendment is approved a voucher can be created.*

Q6. Why does the Pre-Audit screen allow a person to continue when you have unresolved warnings?

A6. Warnings do not prevent users from moving forward, saving, stamping, or routing their documents. Warnings are simply a "heads-up" from the system advising the user they may want to take a look at or be aware of something on the document. Only failures prevent users from moving forward.

Q7. We can add accounting codes to Travel Manager. Why are we unable to delete them from our lists?

A7. There is no function in Travel Manager that allows users to delete ACCS codes from the master lists. This is done by the Financial Systems Division Travel Team on an annual basis.

Q8. I typically do not receive my new Fiscal Year ACCS codes until the last week of September or first week of October. Should I make up a dummy ACCS to use for my new Fiscal Year expenses until I know my codes?

A8. No. Users should not make up dummy ACCS codes. The next Fiscal Years accounting codes are entered in August and are rolled over to Travel Manager at that time. Users should have their new projects well in advance of October 1st. Users should work with their budget and/or finance staff to determine which codes to use for new Fiscal Year expenses.

If a user still can not get the proper codes, users can reference the Pre-SAF guidance to process travel documents that cross into the new year. This guidance was emailed out to all users on June 25, 2009. This guidance will be updated in early November 2009.

Q9. Where does my document pull the default accounting from?

A9. The document pulls this information from the Account Info tab on the Traveler Information screen.

Q10. Are preparers required to establish default accounting for each Traveler?

A10. No. The default accounting feature is there solely as a convenience to the preparer. Its intent is to eliminate the need for a preparer to find or recreate accounting codes for every document when a traveler uses the same ACCS repeatedly. It is not mandatory and does not need to be set up if it does not fit a particular traveler's needs.

Q11. How do I handle airfare for documents that span fiscal years?

A11. The preparer determines the accounting based solely on when the cost for the airfare will actually be incurred by their organization. The preparer will need to consider the start date of the trip and the type of ticket they are purchasing. Typically, non-refundable tickets are booked immediately to reserve the current price of the ticket while refundable Government tickets are purchased 3 days prior to the start of the trip, unless otherwise requested. It is up to the preparer to determine when their organization will incur the cost for the airfare based on these factors and to then use appropriate fiscal year funding to pay for the airfare and transaction fee. Those expenses should not be split against different fiscal year accounting codes. Those expenses should also not be backdated to reflect the purchase date.

Users can ONLY use multi-year or no-year funds to purchase new Fiscal Year airfare in the current Fiscal Year. If unsure of the type of funding you are utilizing, please contact your budget person.

*If using these multi-year/no-year funds, preparers must include a separate statement in the comments section of the document stating the following, "**Approved to purchase ticket for New FY (i.e. FY11) with current FY (i.e. FY10) funds due to multi-year/no-year funding**". Failure to include this statement will cause the Travel Management Center to reject the document.*

If using multi-year/no-year funds, but the airfare and transaction fee expenses are being incurred in the new Fiscal Year, the Travel Management Center will still accept those documents as long as the SAF system generated statement is on the document.

If using single-year funding, the preparers must wait until after the start of the new Fiscal Year in order to create documents.

Q12. For trips starting in the current Fiscal Year but ending in the new Fiscal Year, should I backdate the airfare to the date the charge was incurred if I'm using FY10 funds to pay for it?

A12. No. Users should not backdate any expenses. The system will see that as a document error. You should always use your trip dates. The system will know how to pay those expenses based on your accounting and allocation.

Q13. For trips starting in the current Fiscal year but ending in the new Fiscal Year, should I split the airfare and use current Fiscal Year accounting to pay for the departure and new Fiscal Year accounting to pay for the return flight?

A13. No. Users should not split accounting for airfares like that. The entire airfare amount should be paid with the funding from the year in which the cost was actually incurred.

Q14. For trips starting in the new Fiscal Year, but the airfare expense is actually incurred in the current Fiscal Year, can I use the new Fiscal year funds to pay for the airfare and transaction fee if I choose?

A14. No. The entire expense should be paid from the funding of the Fiscal Year in which the charge was incurred. If you have questions or concerns regarding this guidance, please contact your budget staff or Finance Office.

VIII. Interface of Travel Authorization Data to Travel Management Center (TMC)

Q1. How will non-refundable airfares be ticketed when the authorization data is automatically interfaced? Some airfares need to be issued the same day we make the reservation with the TMC.

A1. The frequency of the e-file process to the TMC has not been determined. However, situations such as this will be considered when determining the frequency of sending the authorization data.

IX. Post As Approved

Q1. How do I submit my travel voucher to finance for payment?

A1. **Excepted employees and invitational travelers (non-routing)** will process their travel vouchers in ITM, but will not electronically route and approve them in ITM. Once the voucher has been created in ITM, a photocopy of the approved travel voucher with ink signatures, along with copies of receipts and any other necessary documentation, i.e., a "complete travel voucher package" must be submitted to finance for payment. Please note that a hard copy submission of the travel voucher is always required for excepted and invitational travelers, regardless of whether the voucher is selected for audit or not.

All other employees (routing) must use ITM to electronically route and approve travel vouchers to finance for payment and will no longer submit any hard copy travel voucher documentation to finance unless selected for audit. **Please note, that travel vouchers properly approved and submitted to finance in ITM will generate a "Document History" page, stamped "signed" and "approved", which completely replaces the ink signature requirement on hard copy travel vouchers.** ***Reference NTR 301-52.33***

Q2. What is a "complete travel voucher package"?

A2. A "complete travel voucher package" consists of the approved travel voucher, receipts, and any other necessary documents to support the claim. ***Reference NTR 301-52.32***

Q3. What documentation is submitted to Finance whenever a travel voucher is selected for audit prior to payment?

A3. Whenever a travel voucher is selected for audit prior to payment, a **photocopy** version of the "complete travel voucher package" must be submitted to finance within 3 business days of approval in ITM. The Document Retention Official must retain the original version of the "complete travel voucher package" in accordance with record retention guidelines established by the office funding the travel. ***Reference NTR 301-52.34***

Q4. Who is responsible for retaining the original travel records?

A4. The traveler, travel document preparer, and the Approving Official are designated as the "Document Retention Officials" for travel documents, unless otherwise authorized by NOAA's Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Document Retention Officials will be responsible for ensuring that the travel documents they prepare

or approve are retained in accordance with the federal record retention requirements, NOAA retention requirements, as well as the requirements under NTR Chapter 301. ***Reference NTR 301-52.35***

Q5. What are the responsibilities of Document Retention Officials?

A5. Document Retention Officials will serve as Finance Office points of contact and will be required to submit photocopies of "complete travel packages" to Finance on an "as needed" basis for purposes to include but not limited to:

- Random audit sampling related to annual DOC Financial Statement (FS) audits;
- Congressional, Departmental and/or Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, Office of the Inspector General (OIG) audits; and
- Record retention compliance.

Requests for photocopied versions of "complete travel voucher packages" must be submitted within 5 business days of the request or within a reasonable timeframe if the records were transferred to the Federal Records Center (FRC). In addition, the Document Retention Officials must also retain the original version of the "complete travel voucher package" in accordance with record retention guidelines established by the office funding the travel. ***Reference NTR 301-52.36***

Q6. How many years do Document Retention Officials have to retain the original "complete travel voucher packages"?

A6. NOAA, Record Management Schedule 403-15 requires that travel files be maintained for 6 years and 3 months after the period covering the account. Upon expiration of the record retention date, files must be shredded to safeguard against unauthorized disclosure of personally identifiable information (PII) contained in the records. However, if these records are subject to an on-going investigation or pending litigation, then they cannot be destroyed until the litigation hold is lifted by General Counsel even if the retention period for these records has expired. See NOAA, Record Management Schedule 403-15: http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/audit/records_management/schedules/chapter_400_finance.pdf. ***Reference NTR 301-52.37***

Q7. Am I required to retain the hard copy originals or can the "complete travel package" be electronically scanned?

A7. You can either retain a hardcopy version of the original receipts with the "complete travel voucher package" or you can electronically scan the original receipts as long as they:

- Are easily accessible for audits;
- Can be easily matched to the traveler and their travel voucher and submitted as a "complete travel voucher package" when required by finance;
- Have a file back-up process in place that safeguards records and ensures that NOAA policies regarding Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and sensitive data are followed; and
- Are retained within the retention requirements in 301-52.37.

Reference NTR 301-52.39

Q8. Who can I contact to obtain more information on NOAA record retention policies and/or record storage?

A8. You may contact NOAA's Records Officer via email at Andre.Sivels@noaa.gov or via telephone at (301) 713-3540, ext -213

For more information on records management please visit the NOAA Records Management webpage at http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/audit/records_management/.

Q9. Since the travel records are required to be retained by the Document Retention Officials for 6 years and 3 months, does this mean the electronic version of the travel voucher will be accessible in Travel Manager for the duration of the retention period?

A9. Yes, at a minimum travel vouchers will remain accessible to users throughout the record retention time period. Once travel vouchers are archived out of Travel Manager they will only be made accessible through the NOAA Financial Systems Division (FSD).

Note: Since FSD will not necessarily be aware of documents involved in litigation the potential for archiving these documents prematurely may occur; however as indicated above FSD will retain archived documents offline.

Q10. What process/policies will apply to travel vouchers with a data link date occurring prior to PAA implementation [October 24, 2011]?

A10. Documents data linking on or before Friday, October 21, 2011 are required to follow the old processing procedures and all supporting documentation must be submitted to your servicing Finance Office for payment accordingly.
Note: Your servicing Finance Office will be responsible for the Travel Record Retention of Travel Vouchers data linking prior to the implementation of PAA.

Q11. Does ITM have the ability to attach scanned receipts to the travel voucher?

A11. No, NOAA has not implemented resources that would allow users to attach scanned receipts to the travel voucher. In addition, because receipts may contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII) it is recommended that scanned receipts be mailed or faxed into the servicing finance office when requested.

Q12. How will I know if I am required to submit hard copy documentation to Finance in order to receive reimbursement?

A12. At the time of voucher approval in ITM, an e-mail (indicating a complete travel package must be sent to the FO before payment approval) will be sent for unapproved vouchers during the data link process to CFS.

Note: The e-mail is sent to the Preparer with a copy to the Traveler and Approving Official by design. This provides a means of all parties being properly informed; however, your servicing Finance Office should only receive one (1) copy of the complete travel package. It is recommended the Preparer submit the required documentation to Finance.

In addition, users can also view the Document History of the travel voucher. Upon electronic approval the system will generate a status in the Document History of INK SIGNATURE REQD and/or SELECTED FOR AUDIT. If either one of these status stamps appears in the travel voucher's Document History then hard copy documentation will need to be submitted in order to receive reimbursement.

Reference pages 5-8 of the ITM 9.0 Countdown to Post As Approved (Sept 2011) documentation posted on the NOAA FSD ITM webpage for more detailed information.

Q13. If a travel voucher data links into the Core Financial System (CFS) and an error is identified can the travel voucher be reset for corrections?

A13. Upon implementation of Post As Approved (PAA), the Finance Office policy for resetting documents in Integrated Travel Manager (ITM) will change as follows:

Data Linked Travel Vouchers will **not** be reset for the Line Offices or Finance Offices:

The following procedures will apply depending on the scenario:

1. **Vouchers Approved in ITM but not yet Data Linked and posted to the Core Financial System (CFS):**

   - Corrections to the voucher should be made in ITM

2. **Vouchers NOT requiring submission of a complete travel package to Finance (Routing Vouchers Not Selected for Audit):** Once your document is Data Linked in ITM and Posts As Approved in CFS, corrections must be completed as shown below:

   - If an **overpayment** occurred, the traveler must submit a check payable to the Department of Commerce for any overpayment on a voucher. To ensure your servicing Finance Office credits the correct account, attach the check to a copy of the first page of the voucher and submit to your servicing Finance Office for processing.

   - If an **underpayment** occurred, to claim additional travel expenses not previously claimed on a voucher, a Reclaim Voucher must be processed in ITM.

3. **Vouchers REQUIRING submission of a complete travel package to Finance (Routing/Non-Routing Selected for Audit, and Non-Routing Not Selected for Audit):** Once your document is Data Linked in ITM and Posts As Unapproved in CFS, your servicing Finance Office will audit/review the vouchers.

   - If the Traveler/Preparer identifies an error that would result in **overpayment** *after* the voucher data linked and *before* submission to Finance, notate the corrections in pen and ink on the original and send a photo-copy including the changes to your servicing Finance Office.
   - If your servicing Finance Office finds a claim that would result in an **overpayment**, they will make pen/ink changes to the hard copy, adjust the Net to Traveler amount in CFS and approve the voucher for payment accordingly. Your servicing Finance Office will notify the Traveler/Preparer and Approving Official of any findings/downward adjustments.
   - If your servicing Finance Office finds a claim that would result in an underpayment, they will pay the claim as submitted and notify the Traveler/Preparer and Approving Official a Reclaim Voucher may be submitted to claim additional travel expenses not previously claimed on the voucher.

Q14. Will the Travel Voucher automatically approve like the Travel Authorization with the implementation of PAA?

A14. PAA will post most Travel Vouchers (TVs) to the Core Financial System (CFS) as "Approved" for payment and paper submissions to your servicing Finance Office (FO) will not be required. Exceptions to this rule are:

1. TVs Selected for Audit
2. Non-Routing TVs for:
   a. Excepted Employees (certain bargaining unit employees)
   b. Invitational Travelers

TVs meeting one of the exceptions above will continue to post to CFS as "Unapproved" and require hard copy submission to your servicing Finance Office for payment.

Q15. Who gets the message that a voucher is being audited?

A15. Two (2) forms of messaging are generated whenever a voucher is Selected for Audit:

- **On Screen Messaging:** Approving Officials will receive an on screen message upon stamping vouchers approved indicating the voucher has been selected for audit.

- **Email Messaging:** The Preparer, Traveler and Approving Official will receive an email message during the voucher data link process to CFS indicating the voucher has been selected for audit.

Reference pages 5-8 of the ITM 9.0 Countdown to Post As Approved (Sept 2011) documentation posted on the NOAA FSD ITM webpage for more detailed information.

Q15. What is an Adhoc Expense?

A15. An ad-hoc expense is an Expense entry that the user manually types into the Expense Description field.

Q16. What are the acceptable methods for submitting travel documents to Finance when required?

A16, Currently, Finance will **only** accept travel document submission through the following methods:

- Inter Office Mail (i.e., holey Joe)
- Mail (i.e., Postal, UPS, FedEx)
- Facsimile (fax).

Note: Due to concerns surrounding safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information (PII), documents submitted to Finance via email will be deleted immediately upon receipt and require re-submission by one of the acceptable methods indicated above.

Q17. Is the Document History page required to be submitted as part of the "Complete Travel Voucher package"?

A17. Yes, the Document History page is a component of the Travel Manager Travel Voucher default form and therefore should be submitted accordingly.

Note: For Routing users, the record of electronic signature and approval appearing on the Document History page replace the Ink Signature requirement.

Q18. Are original Ink Signatures required on travel documents that are required to be submitted to Finance?

A18. No, **all Original** travel vouchers, receipts and any other necessary documents supporting the traveler's claim are to be maintained at the Line Office based upon the Travel Record Retention guidelines established by the office funding the travel.

When travel vouchers are required to be submitted to Finance due to being Selected for Audit and/or Ink Signature Required the Line Office should only submit a photocopy of the approved travel voucher along with copies of receipts and any other necessary documentation. This guidance applies to ALL travelers (i.e., Employees, Excepted Employees and Invitational travelers).

Note: Original documents submitted to Finance will be returned upon receipt.

Q19. If travel arrangements for common carrier transportation involve multiple class codes due to various flight reservations, am I required to enter all of the class codes into the Class field even though a single cost has been provided by the Travel Management Center?

A19. No.

- If all of flight reservations reference the same quality of accommodation (i.e. Economy – Coach) the preparer may enter any one of the referenced Class codes.

- If the flight reservations reference various qualities of accommodation (i.e., Economy – Coach, Business, Premium Class) the preparer must enter the higher level of accommodation (i.e., Business, Premium Class) in the Class code field.