Department of Defense

INSTRUCTION

NUMBER 4515.16

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ASD(RA)

SUBJECT: Use of General Services Administration (GSA) Contracts for Air Passenger Transportation Services (GSA City Pair Program) for Attendance at Inactive Duty Training (IDT) Assemblies

References: (a) Section 12603 of title 10, United States Code
(b) DoD Directive 5125.1, "Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs (ASD(RA))," March 2, 1994
(c) DoD Financial Management Regulation, Volume 9, Chapter 3
(d) Joint Federal Travel Regulations, Volume 1
(e) U.S. Department of Transportation, U.S. Coast Guard Commandant Instruction 4600.14A

1. PURPOSE

This Instruction establishes the requirements, conditions and restrictions for travel in accordance with the authority provided in references (a) and (b), to include policies and procedures for preventing abuses of that travel authority.

2. APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

This Instruction applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and the Military Departments (including the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a Military Service in the Department of the Navy by agreement with the Department of Transportation), the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Defense Agencies, and the DoD Field Activities (hereafter referred to as "the DoD Components"). The term "Military Departments," as used herein, refers to the Departments of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force and the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a Service in the Department of the Navy.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1. GSA Travel Card. A Government-sponsored, contractor-issued travel card for use by DoD personnel to pay for costs incident to official business travel.

3.2. Inactive Duty Training (IDT). Authorized training performed by members of a Reserve component (RC) not on active duty, and performed in connection with the prescribed activities of the RC of which they are a member. It consists of regularly scheduled unit training periods, additional training periods and equivalent training. The primary purpose of IDT is to provide individual or unit readiness training, but IDT may support active component missions and requirements.

3.3. Selected Reserve. Those units and individuals within the Ready Reserve designated by their respective Services and approved by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense or Transportation, as appropriate, as so essential to initial wartime requirements that they have priority over all other Reserve elements. They are required to participate in inactive duty training periods and annual training.

3.4. Travel Cardholders. Personnel to whom the Individually Billed Account GSA Travel Card has been issued to assist in performing official travel in accordance with the procedures set forth in the DoD Financial Management Regulation, reference (c).

3.5. GSA Contract City Pair Program. GSA's Federal Supply Service contracts for discounted commercial airfares at Federal supply schedule rates for Federal Government Agencies under the GSA Contract City Pair Program. The GSA Contract City Pair Program provides for unrestricted airfares allowing Government travelers flexibility in official travel by not requiring advance purchase, placing no limits on length of stay at any location, allowing a full refund for unused tickets, imposing no charge for cancellations or changes, permitting last seat availability, and prohibiting blackout periods.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, under the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and in accordance with the authority delegated by reference (b), shall monitor compliance with this Instruction.

4.2. The Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Commandant of the Coast Guard shall ensure procedures contained in this Instruction are fully implemented so as to allow travel as authorized in reference (a) and to prevent misuse or abuse of the GSA Contract City Pair Program in conjunction with the Government Travel Card Program as outlined and directed in references (b), (c), (d) and (e).

5. PROCEDURES

5.1. Commanders shall designate in writing those Reserve component members in their unit or command who are considered outside reasonable commuting distance from their IDT location and who may be authorized to use GSA Contract City Pair Program fares.

5.1.1. Designated members of the National Guard and Reserve who are authorized to use GSA Contract City Pair Program fares to travel to or from IDT must be issued a Government travel card for use in authorized, official travel for which no Government reimbursement is provided.

5.1.2. Travel to or from the location of IDT when a Government-approved travel card is used may be considered "official travel on a nonreimbursable basis."

5.1.3. The Reserve component member's commander or appropriate supervisor must issue an item authorization in writing, including the dates and location of the IDT for which travel is being arranged, and state that the Government travel card is authorized for "official travel--nonreimbursable."

5.2. Reserve component members must use a Government-approved travel card for travel to and from the location of IDT in order to travel under the GSA Contract City Pair Program as authorized in reference (b).

5.2.1. The services of a contracted Commercial Ticket Office (CTO) must be used, if available, and all travel must be performed in accordance with the rules contained in reference (d).

5.2.2. Reserve component members who are Government travel cardholders are responsible for full and timely payment of their travel card expenses upon receipt of the monthly billing statement.

5.2.3. Reserve component members traveling to IDT must use the GSA Travel Card for costs incident to official business travel, in accordance with reference (c). Any charges made during IDT are not reimbursable by the Government except as provided for in references (c) and (d).

5.2.4. The GSA Travel Card will be used for official Government travel only and any unauthorized use may result in disciplinary or adverse personnel action in accordance with reference (c).

5.3. Management controls for monitoring Government travel card use and expenses, to include contractor-produced reports, system access and electronic reviews, in accordance with reference (c), shall be made available at all levels of command by Component Program Managers (CPMs) and Agency Program Coordinators (APCs). CPMs are responsible for establishing and maintaining a Government travel card program in accordance with Volume 9, Chapter 3 of the DoD Financial Management Regulation (reference (c)). APCs are responsible to their respective CPM for program execution and management at hierarchy levels determined by the CPM. APCs will review travel card usage reports and reconcile them with the official travel orders/travel log published for the corresponding month. The APC will notify the travel cardholder's commander/supervisor if it appears that a travel cardholder has misused the travel card. The commander/supervisor will take disciplinary action, as appropriate. A copy of the APC's notification, the contractor usage report reflecting misuse, and any applicable correspondence or notes will be retained in official records for future reference.

5.4. Commanders are responsible, in conjunction with their APCs, for monitoring the use and for establishing appropriate local controls (see paragraphs 6.1. and 6.3. above) for proper use of this travel authority. Commanders shall take appropriate action in response to any unauthorized use of the travel authority as stated in references (a) through (e) or in this Instruction. Reservists who use the Government-issued credit card for unauthorized purchases <u>are</u> subject to a wide range of administrative or disciplinary actions and may include counseling, revocation of credit card privileges, adverse personnel action, or the initiation of nonjudicial punishment or court-martial actions.

5.5. Administrative and/or disciplinary action may be waived by the commander in extraordinary or unusual circumstances where use of the card was not authorized but deemed in the best interest of the Government. When a waiver is granted, the rationale for granting the waiver, including how the Government benefited, and the

circumstances involved must be included with the waiver and the waiver must be retained in official records.

5.6. Policies and procedures for the proper use of this travel authority will be incorporated in the DoD Financial Management Regulations.

6. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Instruction is effective immediately. The use of the GSA City Pair Program is effective beginning October 1, 1999, as specified under the terms of the FY00 City Pair Contract.

Charles L. Cragin
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