NEWS TRAVELS

ARC Travel Services' News and Views

Volume 1, Winter 2006

The Director's Corner

By Diana Bonnell

Happy New Year and welcome to the first edition of *News Travels*, a quarterly newsletter provided to customers of the Administrative Resource Center. As we continue to service an increasing number of organizations, providing relevant information can always be a challenge. Although we plan to continue communicating via e-mail and our website, we hope this newsletter offers an additional avenue of providing information to our customers and their travelers.

Fiscal year 2005 was a successful yet challenging year, and I want to extend our gratitude to all of you who helped facilitate the migration of travelers to E-Gov Travel well before the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) deadline of September 30, 2006. Now that the migration portion of E-Gov Travel is complete, we will be focusing our resources on working with the vendor on enhancements that will improve the system to the benefit of all federal travelers. Additional functionality planned includes optional display of round-trip penalty fares, accounting line editor and better descriptions of audit failures. *News Travels* will include articles on system enhancements, tips, travel industry trends and other travel-related information. We hope you enjoy your first issue, and we are looking forward to providing these newsletters to you in the future.

ARC Travel Services would like to welcome aboard the United States Mint

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Split Disbursement Becomes Mandatory

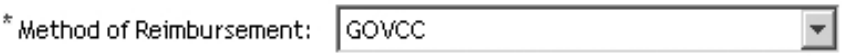
By Cindy Hannan

As of October 1, 2005, split disbursement payments became mandatory for government agencies. Split disbursement offers travelers a higher level of convenience by sending their credit card payment directly to the credit card company. This eliminates the hassle of writing a personal check, the cost of a stamp, and the worry of getting the payment in by the due date. Travelers will still receive a monthly statement itemizing the monthly transactions.

Expenses on the voucher that will be paid to the individual's government credit card account when using split disbursement are as follows:

- All airfare, lodging, and rental car reservations.
- Non-mileage expenses include:
  - ATM fee
  - Authorized call home
  - Business call/internet
  - Departure tax/conversion
  - Excess baggage
  - Hotel fee-energy/facility
  - Laundry-domestic only
  - Rental car-no reservations
  - Special-comment required
  - Taxes: lodging-domestic
  - TMC fee (GOVCC-I)

Optional: If travelers would like to change the method of reimbursement for any of their non-mileage expenses, they just click on the drop-down box entitled "Method of Reimbursement". Travelers may choose either GOVCC (your individual credit card) or TRAVELER. To change the method of reimbursement for reservation expenses (airfare, lodging, rental car), please contact the ARC Travel Services help desk at 304-480-8000, option 1.



Any additional amount to be paid to the credit card must be entered in the Add'l Gov't Charge Card Amount field on the Payment Totals screen. For example: If a traveler charges meals to their credit card, they will want to allocate that amount in the Add'l Gov't Charge Card Payment field.

To review the total amount that will be paid to the credit card account for each trip, click on Additional Options, then Payment Totals.

Payment Distribution	
Pay to Gov't Charge Card:	$ 996.36
Pay to Traveler:	$ 254.50
Total Payment:	$ 254.50

In the example above, the amount of $996.36 will be paid to the traveler's government credit card and $254.50 will be reimbursed to the traveler.

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Travelers are no longer required to file form PD F5449E.

If you have any questions, please contact the ARC Travel Services help desk at 304-480-8000, option 1.

GSA has determined credit card delinquencies are higher this time of year. Please make sure your credit card balance is current.

Relocation Services Branch Migrates To moveLINQ "The Best Move You Can Make"

By Beth Wright

The Relocation Services Branch (RSB) is in the process of migrating their customers to moveLINQ, an automated relocation processing system. Presently, RSB has successfully implemented 5 of their 27 customers to this leading-edge web application. While RSB is anxious to convert all of its customers to moveLINQ, this phased-in approach allows our relocation specialists to continue their high quality customer service with minimal disruption. RSB is continually increasing its customer base. Migrating to moveLINQ positions us to meet proposed reporting requirements and to efficiently serve our customers as we grow.

GovTrip Schedule of Fees

How much is the American Express transaction fee (TMC fee)?

Travelers should be aware that self-booking in GovTrip is the most cost effective way to make reservations. This service has a Travel Management Center (TMC) fee of only $5.25. Agent-assisted reservations have a TMC fee of $28.50. When using GSA City Pair tickets, the TMC fee is not charged until the tickets are issued which is three business days prior to travel. If another ticket type is selected, it will depend on whether the ticket is fully refundable or non-refundable. If the ticket is fully refundable, the TMC fee will be charged three business days prior to travel when the tickets are issued and charged. If the ticket is non-refundable, the TMC fee will be charged immediately because the tickets are issued and charged immediately. Other fees could apply as shown in the table below:

What is the TAV fee?

In addition to the transaction fee, there is also a travel authorization and voucher (TAV) fee. This user fee is paid to Northrop Grumman Mission Systems and GSA for each trip in GovTrip. This is the cost of using the system and is not paid to American Express. The TAV fee is $16.25 per authorization/voucher and is not billed to your individually-billed government charge card until your voucher is approved. Local vouchers have a TAV fee of $12.50 per voucher.

E-Gov Travel Transaction Fees

Self-booked air	$ 5.25
Self-booked hotel/car	4.00
Agent-assisted domestic air/rail	28.50
Agent-assisted intl. air/rail	35.50
Agent-assisted car/hotel	17.00

Top Ten GovTrip Tips

1. Ninety-Day Password Change Requirement

GovTrip passwords expire every 90 days. You will receive a 'Login Error' or 'Invalid Credentials' message. If you receive either of these messages, go to the eTravel Login screen and enter your User Name only, then click on "Please click here to change your password." This will allow you to change your password even if the old one has expired.

2. Importance of the Document Signing Process

It is extremely important that the signing process for authorizations and vouchers is completed in order to start the routing process and to avoid the following issues.

- Reservations will not be made and the traveler will not receive an itinerary until the authorization has been signed. **NOTE:** Travelers need to review their itinerary and verify all reservations that they requested are on the itinerary, especially if they have made changes to their reservations.
- A voucher cannot be created from an authorization until the authorization has been approved and is in "AUTH 24 HOUR PASSED" status.

Document preparers should notify their travelers when their vouchers are ready for signature.

3. Common GovTrip Internet Suggestions

If user cannot get to the login page and system keeps looping back to the GovTrip portal page, remove the pop-up blocker by following these steps:

- Tools
- Turn off or Disable pop-up blocker

  OR
- Tools
- Internet Options
- Privacy Tab
- Uncheck block pop-ups

If user's expenses or per diem entitlements are doubling, remove auto-refresh or auto update by following these steps:

- Tools
- Internet Options
- General Tab
- Settings
- Every visit to the page should be checked

If user cannot get past message that states "You are about to view pages that contain both secure and non-secure items, do you want to continue?", try the following steps:

- Tools
- Internet Options
- Security Tab
- Internet icon
- Custom Level
- Make sure first five items are all checked enabled
- Repeat steps for Local Internet & Trusted Sites

NOTE: If this does not work, please contact your IT group. May be a firewall issue.

4. Updating Profiles in GovTrip

Travelers need to update their profile any time changes are made to their credit card information including new expiration dates. The traveler will need to contact ARC Travel Services help desk with the current information. They can call 304-480-8000, option 1 or send an e-mail to Travel@bpd.treas.gov. If they have a current authorization in the system at the time changes

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Effective 11/01/2005 eTravel has a new name -- E-Gov Travel

are made, they will need to call ARC Travel Services help desk to update the profile for that authorization.

5. American Express Ticketing Timeline

It has been clarified with American Express (AMEX) that for **approved** authorizations, tickets are issued two full business days before the trip. However, because of timing of the business process, this actually means two to three business days depending on when AMEX works the reservation. Authorizations containing air travel reservations will be stamped "CTO Ticketed" and the traveler will then be charged the appropriate TMC fee. Authorizations containing only hotel and/or car rental reservations will be charged a TMC fee of $4.00 but will not be stamped "CTO Ticketed." The traveler will not be charged the TMC fee if the trip is cancelled before the two to three business day period prior to the departure date. If the authorization is cancelled within the two to three business day period, after AMEX invoices, then the traveler will incur the TMC fee that can either be claimed on a local voucher or added to the next voucher as long as the accounting codes are the same. If the authorization has **not been** approved, AMEX will issue tickets 24 hours before the departure date.

6. Circumstances When Travelers Should Call American Express

Travelers should call AMEX for the following reasons:

- When reservations are cancelled through the GovTrip system, travelers should place a follow-up call to AMEX to verify their reservations were cancelled. This will **NOT** result in a touched transaction fee.
- Travelers should call AMEX to make new reservations if trip departure is within 24 business hours to ensure reservations are ticketed before trip departure. This will result in a touched transaction fee.
- Travelers should call AMEX to change reservations if they have already been ticketed (see below for details). Changes to reservations after they have been ticketed will result in a touched transaction fee.
  - -- If a change must be made to your airline reservations, check to see if the reservations have been ticketed first. If they have been ticketed, you must call AMEX to make your changes. You will be charged the touched transaction fee of $28.50 because a new ticket must be issued. If they have not been ticketed, you can create an amendment to your authorization and make your changes. If you are on travel and you need to change your ticket and it will be an even exchange, you may exchange your ticket at the airline counter so as to not incur a touched transaction fee. Remember this is only if it is an even exchange. If you do this, you must add a comment on your voucher to document the change in flight information. Anything other than an even exchange must go through your TMC.

7. TAV Fee Invoicing

When reviewing your Citibank statement while creating your voucher, please remember that you will not see the charge for the TAV fee. The TAV fee is not charged to your Citibank account until the voucher is approved. Because of split disbursement, the TAV fee will be paid to your government charge card automatically.

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8. Printing and Formatting Travel Documents

You can change how your document prints out or what sections print out with your document by clicking on Traveler Setup, Form Preferences from your Welcome screen. The "Govt+Form" is what most agencies use, however, a few agencies choose the "Default" form. For authorizations, you can check the box for itinerary listing in which the itinerary information for reservations will print. For vouchers, you can click the box for receipt checklist in which a page prints listing the receipts to be attached to a voucher. (Note: If the TAV fee and TMC fee show up on this receipt checklist, just disregard. We have asked for these to be removed from the list.) You can also choose to have additional attachments printed with your document such as the document history, the accounting detail, and the privacy act statement.

9. Using SATO Travel for International Reservations

SATO Travel is available for international reservations. SATO will replace American Express for international reservations only. Note that any reservations made with SATO cannot be made in GovTrip. Travelers must contact Sato Travel directly to make an international reservation. Domestic reservations should still be made on-line in GovTrip and will be ticketed by American Express.

GovTrip Authorizations Using SATO:
SATO will not be able to reflect phoned-in reservations in GovTrip at this time. A GovTrip travel authorization is still needed and must show the estimated amount of airfare for SATO reservations under the "**Travel**" tab in the "**Other Transportation**" section of GovTrip.

GovTrip Vouchers Using SATO:
Include airfare costs under the "**Travel**" tab in the "**Other Transportation**" section of GovTrip when submitting a travel voucher. The SATO airfare receipt should be scanned in the "**Receipt**" section (under "**Expenses**") of the GovTrip voucher.

Transaction Fee for SATO International Reservations:
The E-Gov Travel transaction fee for SATO international reservations will remain the same as the current American Express transaction fee for international reservations: $ 35.50.

American Express Travel Assistance

M - F 8:00 – 8:00 EST	(800) 423-7458
After Hours	(800) 847-0242
International Collect	(313) 271-7887
Access Code	S8M5A
ARC Travel Services	(304) 480-8000, option 1
Travel email	travel@bpd.treas.gov

SATO

M – F 8:30 – 5:30 EST	(800) 816-1870
After Hours	(800) 827-7777
International Collect Calls	(210) 824-8455

Relocation

Relocation Services	(304) 480-8469

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10. Need A Copy of Your Airline Invoice?

We have a way to supply travelers with a copy of their airline invoice if they happen to lose the original. The invoice will be available for viewing/printing for 30 days after invoicing takes place.

- Go to the website called www.virtuallythere.com.
- Get the confirmation code (six letter code found in air reservation section) from the GovTrip document and enter it in as the reservation code.
- Then enter the passenger's last name and click "view itinerary."
- Next you will have to enter the traveler's e-mail address and click submit.
- Click on eticket receipt on left side to view the invoice.

NOTE: If the reservations are made through **AirTran, Independence Air*, Jet Blue or Spirit Airlines,** you will not be able to pull a duplicate copy of the invoice. Reservations with these airlines will result in a touched transaction and are made manually by American Express.

*Independence Air ceased scheduled service operations January 5, 2006. Go to www.flyi.com for more information.

GovTrip Travel Updates

By Crystal Helder
Northrop Grumman Mission Systems

Many questions have been raised by Treasury Travelers in regards to the use of the GovTrip Application. We have provided some answers to these hot topics as well as providing some additional information to assist you when utilizing GovTrip for travel reservations.

Selecting Contract City Pair Fares for Pricing in GovTrip:

Q. Why is the city pair fare that I selected either not being displayed or pricing at a higher rate once I select my flights?

R. Under the 2006 Government City Pair program there are a number of carriers that operate in conjunction with a contract carrier, providing service to a specific market. These carriers, commonly referred to as code share carriers, are not required to honor the negotiated government contract fare.

When you are making flight selections from the initial Air travel screen in GovTrip, you are encouraged to review the carrier details. In cases where a code share carrier is operating in that market, you will see a remark stating **Operated By, along with the two letter carrier code**. If you select one of these flights for pricing, it is possible that it will not return a city pair fare if the code share carrier does not honor this fare.

Enhancements are being made to the GovTrip Application in order to eliminate these flights from the air travel screen as city pair fares, but traveler awareness is important until this correction can be made in the system.

Receiving an Unconfirmed Travel Segment Email from American Express:

Q. There are no flights in my document when I know I selected them in creating my document in GovTrip?

R. You may have received this email following a reservation that you made in GovTrip:

You have received this email to

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alert you that one or more of your travel segments are not confirmed. Please review your itinerary at www.aeairweb.com and either utilize GovTrip to make an alternate selection or contact your designated travel agency for full service assistance. The following is a list of possible reasons that could have caused an unconfirmed travel segment:

- *A delay in signing your document may result in lack of availability as your reservation is not confirmed until your document is signed.*
- *You have an incorrect credit card number or expiration date in your traveler profile (verify the credit card number in your profile and contact your travel administrator to update your profile if necessary prior to making any additional hotel reservations).*
- *Hotel availability limitations that may require your travel agency to contact the hotel directly in order to obtain the requested room or rate.*
- *Space limitations on flight selections that inhibit the ability to confirm the selected fare or routing (in some cases your travel agency may still be able to obtain the same flight for you).*

Please do not respond to this email as the inbox is not monitored.

This generic email is to alert the traveler that they need to review the itinerary they have received from American Express and determine what portion of their travel did not confirm. Once this has been identified they can either go back in GovTrip and make another selection or contact American Express for assistance. As stated in the email, by contacting American Express it is possible that you will be able to obtain your original request. Due to space limitations some manual work by the travel office with the requested vendor may be necessary in order to obtain that flight, hotel, or car segment.

Service Fees:

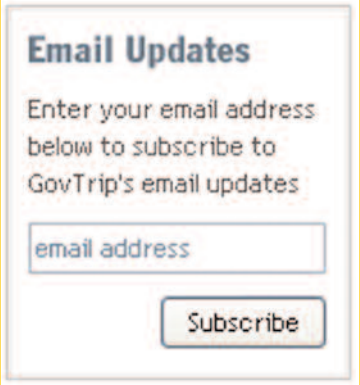
Q. Why am I getting charged a full service fee when booking in GovTrip?

R. There are a number of carriers that require manual intervention by our travel office in order to complete the reservation. These carriers will result in a full service fee and are listed below:

- Amtrak
- Air Tran
- Great Lakes
- Independence Airlines
- Cape Air
- Aero California
- Spirit Airlines
- Frontier Airlines (when in conjunction with another carrier)

GovTrip Email Updates

If you would like to receive email updates from Northrop Grumman (NG) such as when the system will be down, you can do so by signing up for this on the GovTrip portal page at www.govtrip.com.



An airline pilot wrote that on this particular flight he had hammered his ship into the runway really hard. The airline had a policy that required the first officer to stand at the door while the passengers exited, give a smile, and a "Thank you for flying XYZ airline". He said that in light of his bad landing, he had a hard time looking the passengers in the eye, thinking that someone would have a smart comment. Finally everyone had gotten off except for this little old lady walking with a cane. She said, "sonny, mind if I ask you a question?" "Why no Ma'am," said the pilot, "What is it?" The little old lady said, "Did we land or were we shot down?"

Airfare in GovTrip

By Carole Byrd

Recent enhancements to the GovTrip reservation module have given travelers more flight options to choose from. The search engine now searches a 12-hour window for available contract fares and an 8-hour window for available non-contract fares. The system will display up to 50 available fares that meet the search criteria, and the traveler has the option of pricing up to 10 flights at a time. There are 3 different types of fares displayed in GovTrip and those are:

1. **Contract Carrier Fares** (YCA fares that show up in green highlight in GovTrip) – Unrestricted coach fares with no penalty for rebooking, re-ticketing, or cancellation. These fares should be used unless you meet one of the FTR exceptions, or a cheaper government fare is available (see number 2 below).
2. **Contract Carrier Capacity-Controlled Fares** (CA fares that show up in yellow highlight in GovTrip) – Capacity-controlled government fares at a discounted price if booked in advance. Otherwise, this is the same as a government fare. These fares are limited in supply and may not be available in every market.
3. **Non-Contract Fares** (All other fares that show up in GovTrip not highlighted)
   (a) "**Me Too Fares**" (Non-contract government fares) – Occurs when an airline did not win the contract route, but matches the contract fare. The seat is guaranteed, but fare may or may not have a penalty for rebooking, re-ticketing, or cancellation. The price is subject to change. These fares may not be fully refundable. Travelers can check the fare rules to see any restrictions for non-contract fares.
   (b) **Commercial Fares**
   - Refundable with penalty
   - Refundable without penalty
   - Non-refundable (no refunds)

Travelers should also be aware that there are some air carriers that will always result in an agent-assisted fee due to ticketing restrictions imposed by the airline. Here are some of those carriers that have been identified as always resulting in an agent-assisted or full-service fee:

- Jet Blue
- Air Tran
- Great Lakes
- Cape Air
- Frontier (When used for one leg of a trip. This is because Frontier does not have a code-share agreement with other airlines that allow the Travel Management Center to issue one ticket for both legs.)

With the additional fares pulling into the system, travelers may see more code-share fares. Most airlines participate in some type of commercial code-share agreement. These agreements allow carriers to expand their service offerings without additional resources. Contract carriers with these business agreements cannot obligate their code-share partner's inventories for YCA contract fares. This means travelers may see a fare listed as a GSA City Pair until it is priced, then the fare becomes a standard commercial fare. Only those fares highlighted as a GSA City Pair when selected are the actual contract fares. Travelers should check the fare rules for all other flights to identify any flight restrictions.

On-Line Booking Year to Date 73%