

**Department of Defense**  
**Premium Class Travel Task Force**  
**Final Report**



March 16, 2004

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## **Executive Summary**

The General Accounting Office (GAO) identified problems in internal controls on use of premium class travel and a weak control environment in the Department of Defense resulting in a significant level of abuse (GAO-04-88, Premium Class Travel, October 2003). In November 2003, the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) (P&R) formed a task force to develop corrective measures to the GAO findings. The Task Force was composed of members of all organizations that manage, set policy for, or review travel. The Task Force focused on three major areas:

- Policy and Controls of Travel Authorization
- Ticket Issuance and Reporting
- Internal Control and Oversight

### **Summary of Results:**

In the area of policy control of travel authorization, the Task Force concluded that changes were required in the Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR) for uniformed travelers and the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR) for civilian travelers. The changes raise the level for approval of premium class travel and strengthen the description of the circumstances when premium class travel may be used to more clearly show it is an exceptional circumstance and not a common practice. In addition, standards were developed for documenting the approval of premium class travel and for consistent evaluation of medical reasons for use of premium class travel. Other regulations, which were inconsistent with the policies in the JFTR and JTR, have been changed or are in the process of being changed. To help decision authorities in consistently applying policies, the Task Force developed a model decision support tool.

In the area of ticket issuance and reporting, the Task force developed recommended changes to contracts for commercial travel services to prohibit the practice of issuing premium class tickets without proper authorization and to provide a financial penalty for non-compliance. Recognizing that having data on the extent of use and reasons for approval of premium class travel was critical to proper oversight and control, the Task Force developed a new reporting requirement for all premium class travel. Each approval authority responsible for premium class travel will be required to submit periodic reports on each premium class approval. The reporting requirement will continue in effect at least until

fielding of the Defense Travel System is completed during fiscal year 2006. In addition, the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics) (AT&L) is pursuing changes to the current reporting system of the commercial travel offices (CTOs) on ticket issuance. The Defense Finance and Accounting Service is also exploring the more extensive use of data from charge card records. By comparing the data from three sources: approvals from approval officials, ticket issuance from CTOs, and charge card data from actual airline bills, the Department should have the most accurate data possible.

In the area of internal control and oversight, the Deputy Secretary of Defense has recommended all Components make premium class travel a special interest item and to develop a system of internal controls before they prepare their fiscal year 2004 Statement of Assurance. The Office of the Inspector General and the Service's audit communities are also scheduling periodic reviews and audits starting in fiscal year 2005.

**Conclusion:**

The Task Force addressed the concerns GAO identified in their report and provided recommended solutions. The Task Force implemented most of the recommendations as demonstrated in the report. Implementation of the recommended solutions and stronger internal controls will provide the tools to better identify and correct problem areas. Based on trends identified by oversight reporting, the Department will determine if the recommendations made in the report are adequate. If they are not, they will be adjusted accordingly.

# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

On November 24, 2003, the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) established a Department of Defense (DoD) Premium Class Travel Task Force to examine the DoD's management of premium class travel. He directed the Task Force to develop policy and controls for premium class travel in general, identify the major deficiencies in current procedures, and develop recommendations for modifying the management of premium class travel in order to resolve the deficiencies identified. The Task Force was to include members of all organizations that manage, set policy for, or review travel.

### **Background**

Three basic functional areas are involved in the management of travel within the Department. The Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) exercises oversight of travel entitlement policy as a part of overall compensation policy. The Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics) exercises oversight of transportation policy. The Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) exercises oversight of settlement of travel claims and payment of airline bills.

The Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR) for uniformed personnel and the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR) for civilian personnel establish the policies for use of premium class travel. These policies are consistent with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the General Services Administration (GSA) guidelines for use of premium class accommodations for the Federal government. Service regulations may supplement the JFTR and JTR. While those regulations may be more restrictive than the JFTR and JTR in areas of discretion, they may not be more liberal.

AT&L establishes, through a series of DoD Directives, policies for management of the transportation function, of which contract or commercial travel offices (CTO) are a part. In accordance with DoD 4500.9-R, Defense Transportation Regulation, Part 1, Passenger Travel, SDDC is responsible for collecting and reporting passenger travel data for DoD travel to include an annual OMB required report to GSA on use of first class travel. Currently, each service separately contracts commercial travel office services within SDDC's broad contract guidelines.

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) establishes policy for computation and payment of individual travel claims and for payment of commercial airline bills.

Ineffective oversight and management of DoD's travel card program led to concerns about DoD's use of first and business class (premium class) travel. The General Accounting Office conducted an audit from November 2002 through August 2003 of premium class travel within DoD. GAO was asked to (1) identify the magnitude of premium class travel, (2) determine if DoD's key internal control activities operated effectively and provide examples of control breakdowns, and (3) assess elements of the control environment. GAO's findings, published in GAO Report 04-88, October 2003, were that breakdowns in internal controls, ineffective oversight, and a poor control environment contributed to a significant level of improper premium class usage. Further, the Department did not have accurate and complete data on the extent of premium class travel and performed little or no monitoring of this travel.

The Task Force was formed to address the findings of the GAO Report and to recommend corrective action.

### **Task Force Operations**

The Task Force included a broad membership to ensure all points of view were considered. Organizations represented on the Task Force, or contributing to its efforts, included:

- Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness)
- Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)
- Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics)
- Office of the General Counsel, DoD
- Joint Staff
- Department of the Army
- Department of the Navy
- Department of the Air Force
- Defense Finance and Accounting Service
- Director, Administration and Management

The Task Force also had an observer from the General Accounting Office and Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense.

The Premium Travel Task Force began weekly meetings starting on December 3, 2003. We held the first in-progress review (IPR) January 23, 2004. The IPR consisted of Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness)-level representation from the other staff offices of the Secretary of Defense, Joint Staff and Services. The IPR approved the Task Force progress to date and provided additional guidance on internal controls. The Task Force held their final IPR March 8, 2004, to review the report findings.

### **Report Structure**

This report is organized into separate chapters covering the broad areas of policy and controls of travel authorization, ticket issuance and reporting, and audit and management control oversight. Details of individual recommendations are contained in the appendices to the report. In addition, a brief summary of the fielding status of the Defense Travel System is at Appendix D. Further appendices contain the data elements and procedures for the new premium class reports from approving officials, a model decision support tool, and a model medical certification procedure.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Policy and Controls of Travel Authorization**

#### **Background**

The General Services Administration (GSA) establishes the general rules for the types of situations that qualify for consideration of premium class travel in the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR). Agencies have the discretionary authority to publish their own implementing regulations and may be more restrictive than the FTR. For DoD, the implementing regulations are the Joint Federal Travel Regulation for uniformed travelers and the Joint Travel Regulation for civilian travelers.

Since it is not possible to provide guidance for all travel situations in regulations, premium class travel rules have generally not been prescriptive but more general in nature. Application to individual travel situations relies on the discretion of decision makers who are to apply a “prudent person” standard in making their decisions.

The FTR does not specify at what organizational level agencies will place decision authority for use of premium class travel. That decision is left to the discretion of each agency. Within DoD, the DoD Directive 4500.9, Transportation and Traffic Management, specifies the approval levels for first class travel. The JFTR and JTR specify business class approval authorities. As part of overall travel simplification efforts in 1995 and 1996, DoD decentralized business class approval authority to the authorizing/order-issuing official level. Again, DoD relied on those authorities to apply a “prudent person” standard to prevent abuse.

While DoD regulations do require approval for the use of premium class travel, DoD left the method for documenting that approval to each Component as part of their order issuance procedures. There is no common prescribed form or procedure across all of DoD. Similarly, the guidance on which documents to include with the travel settlement voucher has been a Component matter and there is no commonality across DoD.



## **Problem Areas**

The GAO report identified major deficiencies in DoD's control of usage of premium class travel. The lack of an effective oversight program, together with lacking or inconsistent policy guidance contributed to a significant level of abuse.

The major problem areas identified by GAO include:

- DoD regulations permitted a blanket use of business class travel for senior officials for overseas travel.
- In some instances, subordinates of the traveler approved business class travel.
- Documentation of the approval of premium class travel was not available and/or the justification was insufficient.
- Use of premium class travel for medical reasons was not supported by current medical evaluations.
- Lack of control or oversight of commercial travel offices (CTOs) resulted in a significant number of premium class tickets being issued without approval or authorization.
- In some instances, blanket purchase of premium class tickets was authorized instead of an evaluation being made on a case-by-case basis.

## **Evaluation of Problem Areas**

The Task Force considered the GAO findings in the major areas of policy for approval and usage of premium class travel, actions required to make DoD regulations consistent with the JFTR and JTR, and development of common standards for documentation of approval of premium class usage. In connection with the documentation issue, the Task Force made additional recommendations regarding use of premium class travel for medical or special needs reasons.

### **Strengthen Policies That Make Premium Class Travel An Exceptional Circumstance**

The JFTR and JTR were updated during the GAO review to emphasize premium class travel should be an exception instead of the common rule. However, further changes in approval levels and the need to specifically prohibit use of premium class travel when rest stops en route or at the TDY destination

were involved, resulted in a further need to change the regulations. The JFTR and JTR were changed effective March 1, 2004 to strengthen the policy.

### **Strengthen Policies And Controls On The Approval Level For Use Of Premium Class Travel**

The Task Force considered centralization of premium class approval authority into a single office but given the size and geographic dispersion of the Department, that is not a viable approach. The decision is to decentralize approval authority; however, this authority shall be held to a high level to ensure policies are consistently applied.

The Department updated the policy on approval levels for first class travel effective November 17, 2003, as part of a revision of DoDD 4500.9.

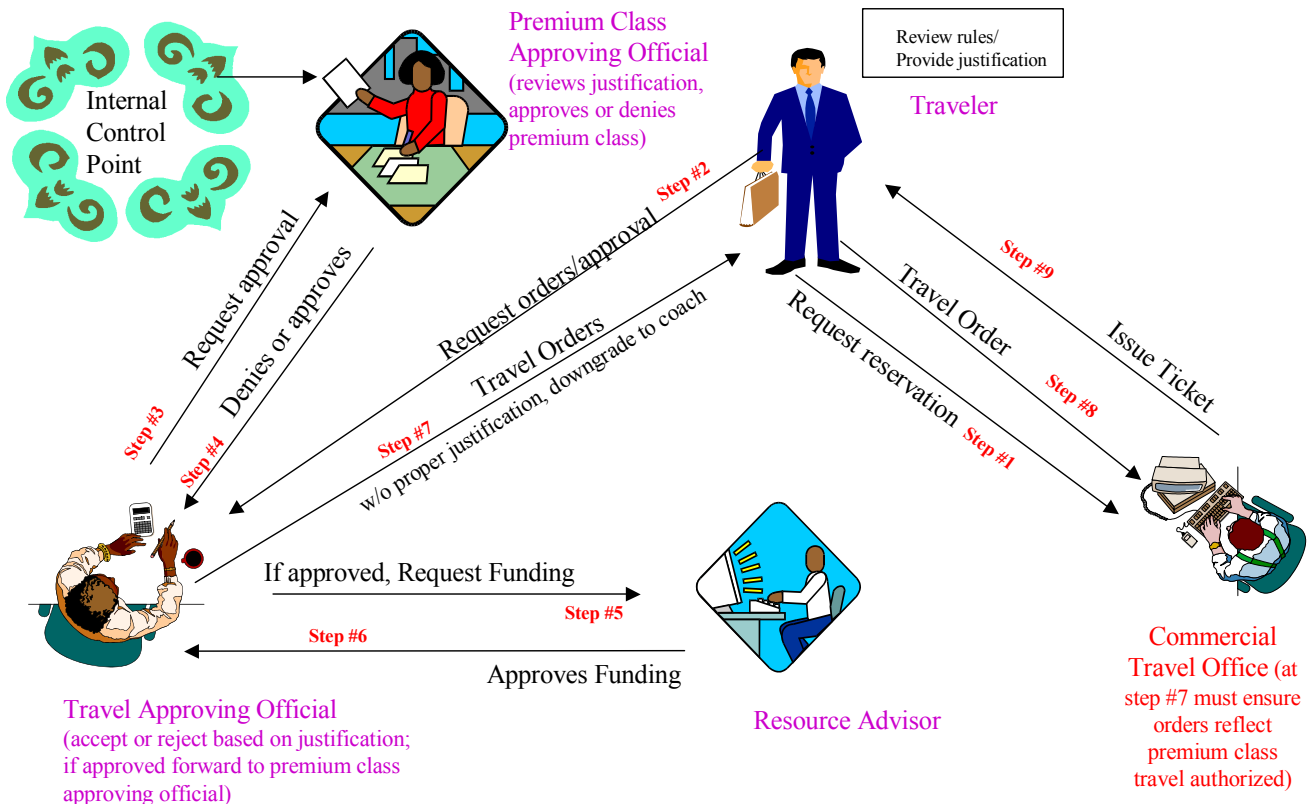
First class approval authorities are limited to:

- Office of the Secretary of Defense and Defense Agencies: Executive Secretary
- Military Departments: The Secretaries of the Military Departments with authority to delegate authority to Under Secretaries, Service Chiefs or their Vice and/or Deputy Chiefs of Staff, and four-star commanders or their three-star vice and/or deputy commanders, and no further
- Joint Staff and Combatant Commands: Director, Joint Staff or as delegated

Per the revised DoDD 4500.9, the JFTR and JTR specify business class approval authority. In developing revisions to the business class approval authorities in the JFTR and JTR, the Task Force established a basic premise that approval levels for business class travel would be at the same level as first class except the authority could be delegated to no lower than two-star or civilian equivalent level. In most cases, this will separate the function of business class approval from the function of travel orders authorization.

In addition, the JFTR and JTR prohibit approving officials from approving their own premium class travel or having the approval done by subordinates. In all cases, approving officials must have their own premium class travel approved at the next higher level. The JFTR and JTR changes were effective March 1, 2004. Details of the approved changes are discussed further at Appendix A.

A diagram of the steps required to process a travel request involving premium class travel is at Figure 1.



**Simple Guide on How to Process Premium Class Travel  
Figure 1**

**Ensure Other Regulations Or Policies Are Consistent With The JFTR And JTR**

DoDD 4500.9 was inconsistent with the FTR and JFTR/JTR in that it authorized a blanket use of business class travel for three-star flag officers or above and Presidential appointees for any overseas travel. The Department changed the directive effective November 17, 2003 to eliminate that authority.

Component regulations, which implement the JFTR and JTR, are being reviewed and updated to reflect the 1 March changes. As required by DoDD 5154.29, the Per Diem, Travel and Transportation Allowance Committee must review all such regulations to ensure they conform to the JFTR and JTR.

### **Develop A Common Standard For Documentation Of The Authorization For Premium Class Travel**

The Department added to the JFTR and JTR the basic requirement to make the approval of premium class travel, to include the reason premium class is being approved, a part of the travel order/authorization. To ensure complete and consistent information is available, the Task Force expanded the basic requirement to require additional data elements included as part of the approval. See Appendix A for further details.

Under the Defense Travel System, the approval will be electronic and a permanent part of the system data archive. As an interim step, the approval authority must make the required data a part of the paper travel authorization. Details are discussed further at Appendix A.

### **Develop Common Guidelines On Authorization Of Premium Class Travel For Medical Reasons**

The Task Force developed a recommended process for obtaining premium class accommodations for disability or special needs reasons. The process requires substantiation by competent medical authority that a condition exists, which can only be satisfied by use of premium class accommodations. To protect privacy, the approval authority will retain sensitive documents required to substantiate the condition, they will not be made part of the travel order/authorization. Details are discussed further at Appendices A and G.

### **Develop A Decision Support Tool**

The Task Force developed a step-by-step decision support tool for use by approving officials in determining if use of premium class travel is appropriate and in compliance with established policies. In addition, the support tool helps in identifying the situations in which premium class travel may be authorized, the limitations on premium class travel and ways to avoid the additional cost of premium class travel. Details are discussed further at Appendices A and F.

### **Provide Training on Policies and Procedures**

The Task Force recommends the major approving authorities, which are the Service Secretaries, the Director, Joint Staff and the Executive Secretary for the Secretary of Defense, prepare training programs tailored for their organization. The model decision support tool included in the report at Appendix F is the starting point for content but should be tailored to name specific approval officials and any further restrictions desired.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Ticket Issuance and Reporting**

#### **Background**

Within DoD, each Component currently contracts for commercial travel services. Also, in accordance with DoD 4500.9-R, Defense Transportation Regulation, Part 1, Passenger Travel, SDDC is responsible for collecting and reporting passenger travel data for DoD. The only required reporting outside DoD is an annual OMB required report to GSA on first class travel usage. There is no required external report for business class travel.

#### **Problem Areas**

As identified in the GAO report, CTOs issued a substantial number of premium class tickets without proper authorization. In part, the decentralized approval authority levels and the lack of consistent policies on documentation of approval were to blame. In such an environment, the Department relied on contractor personnel to be the decision authority for what should have been government decisions.

GAO also identified problems with the accuracy of the OMB required annual report on first class travel. The Department had no method to identify reporting errors nor instances of non-reporting by CTOs.

In addition, without some internal reporting system for all premium class travel, DoD was not able to monitor, provide oversight, or identify usage trends to ensure compliance with policy.

#### **Evaluation of Problem Areas**

The task force determined the basic relationship with the contracted CTOs should not include requiring them to be the decision authority for use of premium class travel. With the addition of standardized approval documentation requirements and restrictions on the approval level, the services can simplify the basic contract requirement to be that CTOs will not issue premium class tickets without proper approval. In addition, contracts should provide that CTOs would

be liable for any excess costs if they issue premium class tickets without proper authorization.

In the reporting area, the task force determined the Department must have a reporting system for both first and business class travel. This reporting requirement would be placed on premium class approving authorities and would be in addition to the existent reporting system from the CTOs to SDDC. Premium class travel data will also be obtained by data mining from charge card records. Comparison of data from the three sources will ensure the Department has the most accurate and complete data available.

### **Ensure The First Class Report Is Accurate And Complete**

As detailed at Appendix B, SDDC has evaluated the first class reporting system and determined the basic system is adequate. CTOs report all premium class tickets issued monthly in the Statistical Collection of Passenger Travel (STATCO), which is the DoD system for acquiring passenger travel data. The STATCO database therefore represents actual tickets issued.

The GAO report identified discrepancies between the first class report obtained from the STATCO data and the volume of first class travel identified through data mining of charge card data. Confusion over which fare codes should be reported contributed to the discrepancy. SDDC has identified all fare codes used in the various airline systems to be reported by the CTOs. Additionally, GAO identified another part of the discrepancy to be non-reporting by CTOs. The Task Force believes the addition of reporting by approval authorities and data mining of charge card data will provide supplemental information to SDDC for them to resolve data inaccuracies in the STATCO database.

### **Ensure CTOs Only Issue Premium Class Tickets When Properly Authorized**

As discussed above and in Appendix B, the contracted CTOs should not be the decision authority on premium class travel. Not all CTO contracts contained a clear prohibition on issuing premium class tickets without proper authorization, which contributed to the level of abuse noted by GAO.

The Task Force determined two levels of effort were required to resolve the issue. First, the basic prohibition on CTOs issuing premium class tickets in the absence of a proper authorization had to be made part of overall policy. Second, existing CTO contracts must be modified to add the prohibition and also a contractual penalty for noncompliance.

The broad policy that CTOs must not issue premium class tickets without proper authorization was included in the JFTR and JTR changes effective March 1, 2004. AT&L has provided recommended standard language to all DoD Components for use in modifying existing CTO contracts to prohibit them from issuing premium class tickets without proper authorization and holding them liable for any excess costs if they issue premium class tickets without proper authorization. Contract modifications will be negotiated over the next few months.

### **Develop A Reporting System For All Premium Class Travel**

The task force agreed with GAO that having a reporting system to identify the usage of all premium class travel is crucial. When fielding of the Defense Travel System is completed, see Appendix D, usage data will be available as part of the system. For the interim period, the Task Force developed a manual reporting system.

With the strengthening of policies on the situations qualifying for consideration of premium class travel and further restrictions on approval levels, the task force determined the most appropriate reporting system was a periodic report from each approving official. The data to be reported mirrors the data required for the annual first class report.

The Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) is developing detailed instructions on the data content and frequency of reporting for the manual reporting requirement. Details are discussed further at Appendix B and at Appendix E.

The Task Force recommends a web based positive control system be developed to take the place of the manual reporting system, to provide standard documentation of approvals, and to further simplify the requirement that CTOs only issue premium class tickets when properly authorized.

Conceptually, each premium class approval authority would be registered as a user of the central web application. When they approved a premium class request they would access the web application and enter required tracking data. The web application would then issue a serial numbered approval document that would be made part of the travel authorization. Management officials at service and DoD level could access the database to identify trends and problem areas for appropriate action. In addition, having a standardized approval document would greatly simplify the CTO task of identifying what constitutes proper authorization.

Approving officials would retain documents justifying premium class travel use. This basic process is also closely aligned with the premium class approval process that will be included in the Defense Travel System.

Pending approval and development of the web based positive control application, the manual reporting system will be used.



## **Chapter 4**

### **Internal Control And Oversight**

#### **Background**

In addition to policies detailing conditions for use of premium class travel and a reporting system for usage, the Department requires a system of internal management controls and recurring audit for oversight.

#### **Problem Areas**

The GAO report documented an environment where lack of oversight contributed to significant abuse of premium class travel resulting in greatly increased costs.

#### **Evaluation of Problem Areas**

The Task Force determined premium class travel should be made a special interest item for audits and inspections.

#### **Develop Stronger Internal Controls**

As detailed in Appendix C, the Deputy Secretary of Defense will recommend DoD Components, Defense Agencies, Joint Staff and all OSD staff offices make premium class travel a special interest item during audits and inspections. In addition addressees were asked to develop internal management controls to address the issues before they prepare their 2004 Statement of Assurance.

#### **Develop An Audit Plan For Regular Audits**

As detailed in Appendix C, the DoD Office of Inspector General and the Components will add premium class travel to audit plans as a special interest item. Audits should commence during fiscal year 2005.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Recommendations Regarding Policy and Controls on Travel Authorization**

**Recommendation A.1: Reiterate to DoD's personnel the policy that premium class travel be authorized and justified only on a case-by-case basis.**

**Another closely related recommendation is to prohibit the use of blanket authorization for premium travel.**

**Discussion:** The basic policy on use of premium class travel as prescribed by the JFTR and JTR did not explicitly state that premium class travel was an exception condition. This contributed to a practice of recurring use of premium class travel based on grade or on particular travel channels.

In addition given the fare structure of airlines within Europe, it is sometimes less expensive to purchase a business class fare than the standard unrestricted coach class fare. Since the JFTR and JTR did not specifically require approval of premium class travel on a case-by-case basis, transportation officials within Europe had adopted a practice of giving CTOs blanket approval to purchase business class tickets on particular channels.

**Action Required:** Change the JFTR and JTR to emphasize the exception basis for use of premium class travel. In accordance with those policy changes, blanket use of business class is no longer permissible.

**Status:** Changes to the JFTR and JTR have been completed and were effective March 1, 2004.

**Recommendation A-2: Revise DoD’s directives on travel, when necessary, to ensure they are at least consistent with, or more stringent than, GSA’s travel regulations.**

**For example, update DoD Directive 4500.9 to remove the provision authorizing certain presidential appointees and three-star and four-star general officers to fly premium class on flights when flying to or from overseas destinations.**

**Discussion:** The provision in DoDD 4500.9 providing authority for premium class travel for senior officials on overseas travel was inconsistent with the basic policies in the JFTR and JTR.

**Action Required:** Update DoDD 4500.9 to remove the senior official exception.

**Status:** Completed. DoD Directive 4500.9 was changed effective November 17, 2003 to remove the provision.

**Recommendation A-3: Require that premium class travel be approved by individuals who are at least of the same rank/grade as the travelers.**

**Another closely related recommendation was to specifically prohibit the travelers themselves or their subordinates from approving requests for premium class travel.**

**Discussion:** Although the JFTR and JTR restricted the approval level for first class travel, as part of government-wide travel simplification efforts in 1995 and 1996, the approval level for business class had been set at the travel order approving official level. Some services restricted the approval to higher levels but that limitation was voluntary. The prescribing regulations did not address the situation of subordinates being the approval authority for superiors, which could arise with decentralized travel order approval. The GAO found this practice to be flawed and not in agreement with internal control and sensitive payments guidelines.

**Action Required:** The task force, working through the Per Diem, Travel and Transportation Allowance Committee, developed a complete revision of the JFTR and JTR to address changes in approval levels and limitations of self and subordinate approval.

The revision also addresses:

The broad requirement to include documentation of premium class approval in the travel order/authorization. This item is discussed further in Recommendation A-4.

The broad requirement that approval of premium class travel for handicap or medical reasons must be certified by medical authority and that certification must address the specific need for an accommodations upgrade. This item is discussed further in Recommendation A-5.

Changes to approval levels for first class travel to agree with DoDD 4500.9 as changed on November 17, 2003.

Changes to approval levels for business class to be a default condition of the same level as first class with re-delegation to no lower than two-star general officer or civilian equivalent level.

Specific prohibition on approval of premium class travel by subordinates and that officials with approval authority must always have their premium class travel approved at a higher level.

Revision of language on approval of premium class travel for flights over 14 hours to further specify premium class is not authorized unless the traveler has to immediately begin work at the destination. Any rest stop en route or at the destination negates use of premium class travel. Premium class travel should be the exception, not the rule. The traveler should take all steps to make travel arrangements to ensure ample time for rest when flying over 14 hours. In addition, premium class for return to the permanent station is prohibited unless the traveler must immediately begin work.

Reiterate that, unless required for medical conditions, premium class travel is only authorized for temporary duty travel and not for relocation or the various types of leave travel.

Reiteration that in the case of aircraft with only two classes of accommodation, in accordance with OMB guidance the higher class is deemed to be first class regardless of how the airline describes it or the fare structure. In this case, use of the higher class is restricted to only approval at first class approval levels.

Adds “mission required” as a reason for approval of premium class travel. This category is authorized in GSA’s travel regulation but was never adopted within DoD. It is being adopted now to provide desired flexibility for travel of Presidential, Congressional, or Secretarial level Boards, Commissions, and Task Forces. The only approval authority is the Executive Secretary, Office of the Secretary of Defense without delegation.

**Status:** Completed. Changes to the JFTR and JTR were approved and effective March 1, 2004.

**Recommendation A-4: Use a standardized format or modify the format of the existing travel order to document the request and authorization of premium class travel. The standardized form or modified travel order should contain sufficient information to provide a clear audit trail that documents why the additional cost of premium class travel was a necessary expense that could not have been avoided.**

**Discussion:** The GAO found an extremely high proportion of premium class travel that did not have substantiation of the approval or the need for the added expense. Differences in service policies on content of travel orders lead to inadequate documentation. The lack of consistent documentation also leads to further improper use since it became harder for CTOs to determine if requested premium class travel was in fact authorized and justified.

**Action Required:** A new form to be used to document the approval of premium class approval was considered but not adopted. Instead, the Task Force determined what the content of the approval should be, but left the method to incorporate that content in their orders issuance methods up to each service.

The minimum data elements and language that must be made part of the premium class approval, which in turn must be part of the travel authorization are:

- The type of premium-class travel accommodations approved. (Business or First Class.)
- The regulatory reference in the JTR/JFTR that was used to justify the premium class travel.
- The cost difference between the premium class and coach class fares.
- The premium class approving authority, Name, Rank, and Office Symbol.

An example approval with the required data elements inserted in the required standard language is:

**Example:** Business class travel has been justified and approved based on JFTR, U3125 B4a, space not available in coach class. The cost difference between the business class fare and the coach class fare is \$765.00. This premium class travel was approved by Lt Gen, David Smith, HQ USAF/XXXX. Full documentation of approval for this premium-class travel is on file in the office of the approving official.

**Status:** Data elements and standard language have been determined and will be included in a future change to the JFTR and JTR.

**Recommendation A-5: Develop a policy that articulates what constitutes adequate support to substantiate medical, disability, or special need. Such policy should address the length of time a medical certification is valid.**

**Determine the feasibility of requesting that medical certification for premium class travel reviewed by an independent medical professional to verify that the medical condition justifies the additional cost of premium class travel.**

**Discussion:** The GAO audit identified the medical, disability, and special need category of premium-class travel accommodations as one of the areas across DoD where inconsistencies exist because DoD and the Services have not defined standards for authorization, justification, certification limits and approval documentation of this category of premium class travel. The inconsistency in policy language and approval processes has created confusion for travelers and officials leading to inappropriate use of premium class travel. Because travelers, nor organizations, consistently documented authorization and justification for premium travel, there were few documentation trails indicating that the appropriate official approved the travel order and there was adequate justification for the additional cost associated with a premium class ticket.

The task force developed a recommended process with standard formats for obtaining premium class accommodations on a case-by-case basis for disability or special needs reasons. The traveler initiates the request for premium class travel and provides substantiation by competent medical authority (licensed medical practitioner) that a condition exists that can only be satisfied by specific premium class accommodations for the required travel. The medical report must include a description of the employee's disability, medical condition, or special need; approximate duration of the condition or special need; and a recommendation of a suitable means of transportation based on condition or special need. The time limits of a certification to be considered valid will be established as part of a future JFTR/JTR change.

**Status:** A recommended process has been developed, see Appendix G. The specific procedure and descriptive language will be determined in a future change to the JFTR and JTR.



**Recommendation A-6: Provide a decision support tool for approval authorities that can also be used by travelers and supervisors/managers that specifically identifies the limitations on premium class travel, the limited situations in which premium class travel may be authorized, and how the additional cost of premium class travel can be avoided.**

**Discussion:** Conditions under which premium class travel may be approved are listed in the JFTR and JTR. While those regulations enumerate the reasons premium class travel may be authorized, a step-by-step decision tool, which also identifies alternative ways to arrange travel to avoid the cost of premium class travel, is needed to ensure policies are consistently applied. In addition, the decision support tool may serve as a training document for travelers and managers below premium class approval authority levels.

**Status:** A model decision support tool has been developed, see Appendix F, and will be included in a future change to the JFTR and JTR.

**Recommendation A.7: Periodically provide notices and training to travelers and supervisors/managers that specifically identify the limitations on premium class travel, the limited situations in which premium class travel may be authorized, and how the additional cost of premium class travel can be avoided.**

**Provide training to travelers and supervisors/managers that identifies DoD's premium class policies and procedures**

**Discussion:** The GAO report identified confusion on the part of DoD travelers regarding proper uses of premium class travel and recommended periodic training be provided. Since decision authority is being raised to a higher level, and since each service may have their own requirements and restrictions, the task force recommends each major approving authority prepare a training program that fits the needs of their organization. The starting point for development of training materials should be the model decision support tool included at Appendix F.

**Status:** As a first step, the Deputy Secretary of Defense will issue a memorandum to all DoD Components reiterating the guidance for use of premium class travel and highlighting the major changes to the JFTR and JTR effective March 1, 2004.

Components are developing training programs for their personnel highlighting policies for use of premium class travel and the new approval levels.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Ticket Issuance and Reporting**

**Recommendation B.1: Develop procedures to identify all first class fare codes so that DoD can prepare complete and accurate first class travel reports.**

**Discussion:** Procedures are already in place to identify all first class fare codes. DoD 4500.9, Defense Transportation Regulation (DTR), Part I, Passenger Movement, directs the Commander, Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC), to provide passenger traffic management services for the DoD. The current process for identifying airfare travel codes, and the collection of related air travel data, is embedded in the Statistical Collection of Passenger Travel (STATCO) database. STATCO is the DoD passenger travel management information system.

SDDC has access to the Sabre Passenger Reservation System, and the Official Airlines Guide (OAG). Sabre provides schedules and fares used by the traveling community, including the DoD, and contains upwards of 12 million fares in its database. The OAG provides a list of services that include scheduling, in-flight meal availability, fare classes, itineraries, etc., offered the traveling public, including those traveling on business for the Federal Government. The OAG works with the airlines, large and small, to operate the worlds most comprehensive, accurate and robust schedule database.

The codes identifying first class are F and/or P. Those for business class are C, D, A, I, J, and/or Z. The Defense Transportation Regulation, Appendix J, “STATCO Preparation Instructions”, directs that CTOs providing travel services under contract with the military Services capture, record, and provide management data on all air, rail, bus, rental vehicle, and hotel/motel arrangements provided by the contractor in support of personnel performing official and unofficial travel to SDDC, where they are maintained within STATCO. Individual travel not arranged by a CTO is reported separately by DFAS locations.

CTOs report travel data, based upon segments of the trip, to SDDC within 15 calendar days after the end of the reporting month. DFAS data is reported using information extracted from Government Transportation Requests, and based upon trip information, versus segment information.

Data Elements/Descriptions specified in the contract require the CTO to provide fare class codes and reason codes for use of first class and business class. However, because STATCO in it’s current configuration pulls only the fare class code, and not the reason codes from the submitted data, SDDC will have to reconfigure STATCO to capture all pertinent data for the annual First Class Usage reports forwarded to GSA.

As identified in the GAO report, the accuracy and completeness of the data being reported by the CTOs is inconsistent with the volume of first class travel identified from charge card records. Comparison of STATCO data with the new required reporting from premium class approval officials in the future will help identify specific reporting errors and instances of non-reporting for appropriate action.

**Status:**

- The STATCO reporting system needs to be changed to capture all data elements required for the annual first class report and to correct reporting deficiencies.
- The initial effort is a comparison of STATCO data and current charge card data provided by DFAS.

**Recommendation B.2: Require the travel offices to issue premium class tickets only if properly authorized and justified and documented accordingly**

**Discussion:** GAO concluded that, in a significant percentage of premium class travel cases, the commercial travel office issued premium class tickets without proper authorization to do so. In 64 percent of the cases sampled, for example, the travel order and supporting documentation did not specifically authorize the traveler for premium class tickets. In most cases, the insufficient documentation, lack of standardized authorization rules, and weak internal controls led to the premium class tickets being issued by the travel offices. In the defense of the travel offices, their primary role in the travel process is to issue tickets, not enforce component policies and/or procedures.

**Action Required:** The basic requirement to prohibit CTOs from issuing premium class tickets without proper approval must be established. Individual CTO contracts must be modified to add the prohibition and also to impose a financial penalty for non-compliance.

**Status:** The basic requirement to prohibit CTOs from issuing premium class tickets was included in the March 1, 2004, JFTR and JTR change. Standard contract language has been developed and will be provided to Components to be used in modifying contracts.

**Recommendation B.3: Develop procedures to identify the extent of premium class travel, including all business class travel, and monitor for trends and potential misuse.**

**Discussion:** Since DoD does not have a periodic reporting procedure for business class travel there is no visibility at senior levels of the extent of premium class usage. This contributed in part to the abuse identified by GAO.

**Action Required:** The Task Force agreed with GAO that the Department must have a reporting system for all premium class travel. The data to be reported will be, as a minimum, the same data required by GSA in the annual first class travel report.

Ultimately, when fielding of DTS is completed, the required data will be available through that system. In the interim, a manual reporting requirement is being imposed. The reporting method will be an Excel spreadsheet with the data elements shown at Appendix E.

A possible variation is development of a central web-based application that would be available for data entry by each approving official. As each request for premium class travel is approved, the approving official would enter the required data in the central web application. A standard electronic approval form, with a system generated control number, would be generated by the application for presentation to the CTO and which would become part of the travel record. The approving official would retain documents used to substantiate and approve the request. Since all required data would be resident in the central database, manual reporting would not be required.

**Status:** OUSD (P&R) will provide instructions for completion of the new reporting requirement.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Internal Control and Oversight**



**Recommendation C.1: Develop strong internal controls:**

- a) **Overarching policies; and**
- b) **Specific internal controls.**

**Discussion:** One tasking that resulted from the DoD congressional testimonies on premium class travel was to develop strong internal controls. In accordance with DoD Directive 5010.38, "Management Control Program," each DoD Component shall implement a comprehensive strategy for management control that provides reasonable assurance that:

- Programs and administrative and operating functions are efficiently and effectively carried out in accordance with applicable law and management policy.
- Address all significant operations and mission responsibilities and not limit evaluations to operations applicable to the financial management community.
- Identify systemic management control weaknesses in their functional areas.
- Identify systemic management control weaknesses for inclusion in the DoD Annual Statement of Assurance.
- Monitor implementation of the program and establish follow-up systems to ensure acceptable performance and prompt correction of all material weaknesses. The follow-up systems shall be coordinated with other management reporting systems, especially the DoD Component audit follow-up system, whenever feasible.
- Provide the Secretary of Defense, by November 15 of each year, the Statement of Assurance called for in 31 U.S.C. §3512.

**Completed:** The Deputy Secretary of Defense will issue a memorandum to all DoD assessable units recommending that premium travel be considered a special interest item and that management controls be implemented in advance of the final issuance of the 2004 Statement of Assurance.

**To be Accomplished:** The DoD Components will ensure that premium class travel is addressed in their respective 2004 Statements of Assurance.

**Recommendation C.2: Develop plan requiring regular audits of DoD's issuance of premium class travel and results reported to senior management. Audits of premium class travel should include reviews of whether commercial travel offices adhere to all government-wide and DoD regulations for issuing premium class travel.**

**Action Required:** DoD OIG and/or others within the DoD audit community will conduct periodic reviews (i.e., 2-3 years).

**Status:** The DoD Office of the Inspector General (OIG) will brief the members of the Defense Council on Integrity and Efficiency on the premium travel issue and the progress made by the Task Force to address this issue.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Defense Travel System**

The Defense Travel System (DTS) is the Department's travel system under the approved Business Enterprise Architecture.

From their desktop, travelers are able to create an electronic travel request with access to real-time availability of air, domestic rail, hotel, and rental car information subject to approved DoD business rules. Travel requests are routed electronically for approval. Expense reporting is filed electronically and routed to proper approving officials. Payments for approved travel expenses are made immediately to the government charge card company with the remainder paid by electronic funds transfer to the traveler. All financial transactions are direct to appropriate DoD systems without human intervention and all records will be electronically archived. The travel process maximizes use of web technology and is done in an electronically secure environment.

Development continues to add functionality required by the approved Operational Requirements Document. In addition, the DTS Project Management Office is working closely with the GSA eTravel Project Manager to define requirements and procurement options for a government-wide business data warehouse.

Full deployment was approved in October 2003 when DTS achieved its Milestone C in the DoD acquisition process. As DTS is fielded through the end of FY 06, existing travel processes and various software products are being replaced.

Fielding is being done in three phases. Phase I was pilot sites that ended with the Milestone C approval. Phases II and III run concurrently through the end of FY 06. The DTS Program Management Office (PMO) is funded to conduct on site fielding activities at the approximately 250 Phase II sites and activities that together with the Phase I sites and activities are responsible for over 80 percent of the DoD temporary duty travel volume. The remaining sites and activities are Phase III sites that are the responsibility of the Services and Defense Agencies to field. The DTS PMO has developed an extensive set of tools to assist these sites in fielding themselves.

The DTS Phase I & II fielding status as of March 9, 2004 is shown below:

	Operational	FY 04	FY 05	FY 06	TOTAL
USA	19	13	31	22	85
USMC	2	5	8	8	23
USN	3	14	20	22	59
USAF	18	10	24	29	81
Agencies/Other	11	9	5	0	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>273</b>

There are also 240 operational Phase III sites. Fielding projections for Phase III sites for fiscal years 2005 and 2006 are still being developed by the Services and Defense Agencies.

As a separate component of the DTS program, the PMO is in the process of consolidating management of over 80 existing travel service contracts under their office. New travel service contracts are in the process of being procured and should be implemented during FY 05.

## **APPENDIX E**

### **Reporting Data Elements and Procedures**

## Premium Class Travel Report Data Elements and Instructions

- A. **Traveler's Name** (Last, First, MI; e.g., Smith, John. Q.)
- B. **Grade** (e.g., O-7, E-6, GS-14)
- C. **Last 4 SSN** Last 4 digits of traveler's Social Security Number
- D. **Service/Agency** of traveler (e.g., U.S. Army, DIA)
- E. **Organization of traveler** (e.g., 434 ARW/FMF)
- F. **Mode** Airplane, Ship or Train

- 0 = Air*
- 1 = Ship*
- 2 = Train*

**G. Travel Purpose** NOTE: These codes are simply a means to categorize a particular trip; they do not in any way convey an entitlement to use of premium class accommodations

- 0 = Site Visit*
- 1 = Information Meeting*
- 2 = Training*
- 3 = Speech/Presentation*
- 4 = Conference*
- 5 = Relocation*
- 6 = Entitlement Travel*
- 7 = Special Mission Travel*
- 8 = Emergency Travel*
- 9 = Other*

<b>Travel Purpose Identifier</b>	<b>Definition</b>
0. Site Visit	Travel to a particular location to personally perform operational/managerial activities (e.g., to oversee program activities, grant operations, or manage activities for internal control purposes; carry out an audit, inspection, or repair activity; conduct negotiations; provide technical assistance).
1. Information Meeting	Travel to attend meeting(s) to discuss general agency operations, review status reports, or discuss topics of general interest. If a site visit was conducted as part of the same trip, consider the entire trip to be for the purpose of a site visit.
2. Training Attendance	Travel to receive training.

3. Speech or Presentation	Travel to make a speech or a presentation, deliver a paper, or otherwise take part in a formal program other than a training course.
4. Conference Attendance	Travel to attend a conference, convention, seminar, or symposium for purposes of observation or education only with no formal role in the proceedings.
5. Relocation	Travel performed in conjunction with a transfer from one PDS to another (same as a PCS move.) This includes new appointees when they are authorized relocation allowances for reporting to their first duty station.
6. Entitlement Travel	Travel entitlements for which an employee or dependent may be eligible while serving at a duty station OCONUS; e.g., tour renewal agreement travel for the purpose of taking leave between tours of duty; educational travel, etc. This type of travel is normally performed in conjunction with a travel entitlement resulting from a change of station assignment or renewal of a tour of duty at duty stations located OCONUS.
7. Special Mission Travel	Travel to carry out a special agency mission (e.g., non-combat military units); provided security to a personal or a shipment (such as diplomatic pouch); move witnesses from residence to other locations; travel by Federal beneficiaries and other non-employees.
8. Emergency Travel	Travel to return an employee from a temporary assignment location at Government expense to his or her designated post of duty or home, or other alternate location, where he or she would normally be present to take care of the emergency situation if the Government had not directed or assigned the employee to another location to perform official business.
9. Other Travel	All travel performed for reasons (purposes) that are not shown in one of the other nine categories listed above. Even though stated as "other travel," travel authorization and voucher must also detail specific purpose.

**H. Origin** Location that premium class travel segment starts (e.g., Washington, D.C.)

**I. Destination** Location that premium class travel segment ends (e.g., London, U.K.)

*Note: If there are multiple stops on a single trip*

*1) and the entire roundtrip is by premium class then list the origin and each destination on one line (e.g., Washington to Tokyo to Honolulu to Washington all performed premium class. List Washington under Origin and list "Tokyo/Honolulu/Washington" under Destination column. Only the date travel began from Washington is listed.)*

*2) if some legs are premium class and others are not, then report each leg involving premium class on a separate line with the appropriate origin/destination for*



*that leg and the date travel began for that leg (e.g., Washington to Paris to Guam to Tokyo to Honolulu to Washington. Only Washington to Paris and Tokyo to Honolulu are premium class and the other legs are coach class. List the Washington to Paris information on one line and the Tokyo to Honolulu on another line with departure dates and cost for each portion of the trip listed separately.*

**J. Date Travel Began** (YYYYMMDD;e.g., 20040313 for 13 Mar 04)

**K. Fare Paid** for premium travel (nearest dollar)

**L. Coach Fare** amount leg would cost if coach class used (nearest dollar)

**M. Ticket Issuing Location** Name and location of Commercial Travel Office (CTO)

**N. Approval Reason Code** Use the following justification codes.

<b>First Class</b>		<b>Business Class</b>	
F1	Lower Class Not Available in Time (Ref JTR, par. C2204 B3a or JFTR, par. U3125 B3a)	B1	Lower Class Not Available in Time (Ref JTR, par. C2204 B4a or JFTR, par. U3125 B4a)
F2	Medical (Ref JTR, par. C2204 B3b or JFTR, par. U3125 B3b)	B2	Medical (Ref JTR, par. C2204 B3b or JFTR, par. U3125 B3b)
F3	Security (Ref JTR, par. C2204 B3c or JFTR, par. U3125 B3c)	B3	Security (Ref JTR, par. C2204 B3c or JFTR, par. U3125 B3c)
F4	Mission (Ref JTR, par. C2204 B3d or JFTR, par. U3125 B3d)	B4	Mission (Ref JTR, par. C2204 B3d or JFTR, par. U3125 B3d)
F5	Only first class provided (Ref JTR, par. C2204 B3e or JFTR, par. U3125 B3e)	B5	Only business class provided (Ref JTR C2204, par. B3e or JFTR, par. U3125 B3e)
F6	Non-Federal source (Ref JTR, par. C2204 B3f or JFTR, par. U3125 B3f)	B6	Non-Federal source (Ref JTR, par. C2204 B3f or JFTR, par. U3125 B3f)
		B7	Foreign flag coach not adequate (Ref JTR, par. C2204 B4b or JFTR, par. U3125 B4b)
		B8	Overall savings (Ref JTR, par. C2204 B4c or JFTR, par. U3125 B4c)
		B9	Over 14 hours (Ref JTR, par. C2204 B4d or JFTR, par. U3125 B4d)

**O. Approval Authority** of Premium Class Travel (e.g., CENTCOM Commander)

## **APPENDIX F**

### **Model Decision Support Tool**

**FIRST-CLASS DECISION SUPPORT TOOL**

***Effective March 1, 2004 approval authority for premium class travel was changed to senior official level with specific delegations required for authority below that level. Consult service/agency regulations or directives for the current approval official.***

***Traveler requests first-class travel.***

***Is the reason because lower-class accommodations are not reasonably available?***

**No** - then first-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Are accommodations, other than first-class available on an airline scheduled to leave within 24 hours before the traveler's proposed departure time, or scheduled to arrive up to 24 hours before the traveler's proposed arrival time?

**Yes** - Would traveler arrive later than the ***required*** reporting time at the duty site?

**Yes** - Is the travel for PCS, COT, leave, emergency leave, R&R, FEML, or personnel evacuation?

**Yes** - then first-class travel for these types travel shall not be authorized as first-class since arrival time/reporting time in these cases is not mission critical. Go to next step.

**No** - Then first-class ***may*** be authorized for the departure portion of the trip, considering when the TDY trip was identified, when travel reservations were made, whether traveler can arrive even earlier, etc.

**No** - Would traveler be ***required*** to depart earlier than traveler is scheduled to complete duty?

**Yes** - Is the travel for PCS, COT, leave, emergency leave, R&R, FEML, or personnel evacuation?

**Yes** - then first-class travel for these types travel shall not be authorized as first class since arrival time/reporting time in these cases is not mission critical. Go to next step.

**No** - Then first-class *may* be authorized for the return portion of the trip, considering when the TDY trip was identified, when travel reservations were made, whether traveler can delay departure, etc.

**Is the reason because of medical reasons?**

**No** - then first-class travel shall not be authorized for medical reasons. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Has competent medical authority certified sufficient justification/documentation that the disability or special need exists and the impairment necessitates first-class travel?

**No** - then first-class travel shall not be authorized for medical reasons. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Can lower-cost economy accommodations (e.g., ‘bulk-head’ seating, or providing two economy seats or a business-class seat or shorter flights) meet traveler’s requirements?

**Yes** - then first-class travel for medical reasons is not authorized. Go to next step.

**No** - Then first-class *may* be authorized.

**Is the reason for first-class due to exceptional security circumstances?**

**No** - then first-class travel shall not be authorized for security reasons. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Would use of other than first-class accommodations entail danger to the traveler’s life or Government property?

**Yes** - Then first-class *may* be authorized.

**No** - Are travelers agents of protective details accompanying individuals authorized to use first-class accommodations?

**Yes** - Are travelers required while traveling to remain in the immediate area of the individuals they are protecting?

**No** - Then first-class travel shall not be authorized for security reasons. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Then first-class *may* be authorized.

**No** - Are travelers couriers or control officers accompanying controlled pouches or packages?

**No** - then first-class travel shall not be authorized for security reasons. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Can adequate security of the pouch or package be maintained in coach-or business-class?

**Yes** - then first-class travel shall not be authorized for security reasons. Go to next step.

**No** - Then first-class *may* be authorized.

**Is the reason mission required?**

**No** - then first-class travel shall not be authorized for mission reasons. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Is travel in connection with Presidential, Congressional or Secretarial designated Boards, Commission, or Task Forces?

**No** - then first-class travel shall not be authorized for mission reasons. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Is the traveler a high-level invited guest?

**No** - then first-class travel shall not be authorized for mission reasons. Go to next step.

**Yes** - then first-class travel *may* be authorized. For DoD, the only approval authority is the Executive Secretary, Office of the Secretary of Defense.

**Is the reason that the regularly scheduled flights between the authorized origin and destination (including connection points) provide only first-class accommodations?**

**No** - then first-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Has the transportation officer/agent documented that there are no other scheduled coach or business-class flights?

**No** - then first-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Then first-class *may* be authorized.

**Is the reason that a non-Federal source is paying for the travel?**

**No** - then first-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason.

**Yes** - Does the non-Federal source want the traveler to use first-class accommodations?

**No** - then first-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason.

**Yes** - Have the transportation services been paid in advance by a non-federal source?

**No** - then first-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason.

**Yes** - Then first-class *may* be authorized.

**BUSINESS-CLASS DECISION SUPPORT TOOL**

*Effective March 1, 2004 approval authority for premium class travel was changed to senior official level with specific delegations required for authority below that level. Consult service/agency regulations or directives for the current approval official.*

*Traveler requests business class travel.*

**Is the reason because there are no coach-class accommodations on any scheduled flight in time to accomplish the official (TDY) travel purpose/mission?**

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Is the mission so urgent that it cannot be postponed?

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Is the travel for PCS, COT, leave, emergency leave, R&R, FEMLE, or personnel evacuation?

**Yes** - then business-class travel for these types travel shall not be authorized as business-class since arrival time/reporting time in these cases is not mission-critical. Go to next step.

**No** - Then business-class *may* be authorized for the departure portion of the trip, considering when the TDY trip was identified, when travel reservations were made, whether traveler can arrive even earlier, etc. Coach accommodations should be used for the return flight if the return flight is not critical and the traveler can rest before reporting back to work.

**Is the reason because of medical reasons?**

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for medical reasons. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Has competent medical authority certified sufficient justification/documentation that the disability or special need exists and the

impairment necessitates business-class travel?

**No**- then business-class travel for medical reasons is not authorized. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Can lower-cost economy accommodations (e.g., 'bulk-head' seating, or providing two economy seats or shorter flights) meet traveler's requirements?

**Yes** - then business-class travel for medical reasons is not authorized. Go to next step.

**No** - Then business-class *may* be authorized.

**Is the reason for business-class due to exceptional security circumstances?**

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for security reasons. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Would use of other than business-class accommodations entail danger to the traveler's life or Government property?

**Yes** - Then business-class *may* be authorized.

**No** - Are travelers agents of protective details accompanying individuals authorized to use business-class accommodations?

**Yes** - Are travelers required while traveling to remain in the immediate area of the individuals they are protecting?

**No** - Then business-class travel shall not be authorized for security reasons. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Then business-class *may* be authorized.

**No** - Are travelers couriers or control officers accompanying controlled pouches or packages?

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for security reasons. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Can adequate security of the pouch or package be maintained in coach-class?



**Yes** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for security reasons. Go to next step.

**No** - Then business-class *may* be authorized. .

**Is the reason mission required?**

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for mission reasons. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Is travel in connection with Presidential, Congressional or Secretarial designated Boards, Commission, or Task Forces?

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for mission reasons. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Is the traveler a high-level invited guest?

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for mission reasons. Go to next step.

**Yes** - then business-class travel *may* be authorized. For DoD, the only approval authority is the Executive Secretary, Office of the Secretary of Defense.

**Is the reason that the regularly scheduled flights between the authorized origin and destination (including connection points) provide only business-class accommodations?**

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Has the transportation officer/agent documented that there are no other scheduled coach-class flights?

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Then business-class *may* be authorized.

**Is the reason that a non-Federal source is paying for the travel?**

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Does the non-Federal source want the traveler to use business-class accommodations?

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Have the transportation services been paid in advance by a non-federal source?

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Then business-class *may* be authorized.

**Is the reason that coach-class accommodations on foreign carriers do not provide adequate sanitation or meet health standards?**

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Has foreign flag service use been authorized/approved in accordance with the Fly America Act?

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Does the aircraft have more than two cabins?

**No** - then the first cabin is considered first-class regardless of what class the airline calls it. Business-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Then business-class *may* be authorized.

**Is the reason that business-class accommodations would result in an overall savings to the Government?**

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason. Go to next step.

**Yes** - is this based on economic considerations (e.g., the avoidance of additional subsistence costs, overtime, or lost productive time) that would be incurred while awaiting coach-class accommodations?

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Is there an actual cost-comparison showing the details of the overall savings?

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Does the aircraft have more than two cabins?

**No** - then the first cabin is considered first-class regardless of what class the airline calls it. Business-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason. Go to next step.

**Yes** - Then business-class *may* be authorized.

**Is the reason that the scheduled flight time is in excess of 14 hours?**

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized.

**Yes** - is the time between the scheduled aircraft departure from the airport serving the PDS/TDY point and the scheduled aircraft arrival at the airport serving the TDY point/PDS including scheduled non-overnight time spent at airports during plane changes more than 14 hours?

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized.

**Yes** - does the traveler have to begin work immediately after arrival?

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason.

**Yes** - can a rest period be scheduled en route or at the TDY site before starting work?

**Yes** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason.

**No** - Is the TDY purpose/mission so urgent that it cannot be delayed or postponed?

**No** - then business-class travel shall not be authorized for this reason.

**Yes** - Is the travel for PCS, COT, leave, emergency leave, R&R, FEML, or personnel evacuation or any transportation other than TDY?

**Yes** - then business-class travel for these types travel shall not be authorized for this reason.

**No** - Then business-class *may* be authorized for the departure portion of the trip, considering when the TDY trip was identified, when travel reservations were made, etc. Coach accommodations are to be used for the return flight if the return flight is not critical and the traveler can rest before reporting back to work.

## **APPENDIX G**

### **Model Disability or Special Needs Certification Procedure**

**The following is a draft procedure for certification of the need for premium class travel for disability or special needs reasons. The specific steps and language to be used in the final procedure will be determined in the formal JFTR and JTR change process.**

**STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN A DOD TRAVELER REQUESTS PREMIUM-CLASS FLIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS DUE TO A DISABILITY OR OTHER SPECIAL NEED**

STEP 1 – The traveler completes Part I, Traveler’s Statement of Disability or Other Special Need and submits it to the authorizing/order-issuing official (AO).

STEP 2 - The AO reviews Part I, considering the cost and the requirement to accomplish the mission. Notifies the traveler if the traveler’s premium-class travel is to be pursued. The traveler is instructed to have Part II of the premium-class travel package completed by competent medical authority (licensed medical practitioner).

STEP 3 – The traveler’s physician completes Part II to provide acceptable medical evidence to support or refute the premium-class claim and returns Part II to the traveler.

STEP 4 – The traveler forwards the completed forms, Parts I and II, to the AO. Part II should be sealed.

STEP 5 – Review by an independent medical consultant is a Service/Agency option. If required the AO forwards Parts I, II, and III to the independent medical consultant. The consultant completes Part III, providing a recommendation regarding the request for premium-class accommodations and returns the Package to the AO. Part II should be sealed.

STEP 6 – The AO forwards Parts I through III to the appropriate premium-class approval authority for signature/approval.

STEP 7 - The premium-class approval authority completes Part IV, approving or denying use of premium-class travel. A copy of the complete package Parts I, II, III and IV will be retained in the office of the premium-class approving official for audit purposes and a copy of Part IV forwarded to the AO.

STEP 8 - If premium-class travel accommodations are approved the AO must ensure the travel order/authorization is annotated to show: Business- or First-Class (as appropriate) travel was approved for disability or special needs reasons, the name and rank of approving official, the cost difference between coach-class and the approved premium class accommodations. The traveler is informed accordingly.

STEP 9 - With a copy of the approved premium travel order/authorization the traveler can make travel arrangements through the CTO.

NOTE: Medical information about the traveler must be kept confidential. Medical information is not to be kept in regular personnel files. Rather, keep medical information in a separate medical file that is accessible only to designated officials personnel. Medical information stored electronically must be similarly protected (e.g., by storing it on a separate database).

**PART I - TRAVELER'S STATEMENT OF DISABILITY OR OTHER  
SPECIAL NEED**

(Read Privacy Act Statement on back before completing form)

1. Traveler's Name (last/first/middle): \_\_\_\_\_
2. Travelers Rank: \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Last 4 SSN: \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Service/Agency: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Organization: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Work Phone Commercial and DSN: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Mode of Travel (Air, Ship, Train): \_\_\_\_\_
9. Travel Purpose (See Premium Class Travel Reporting Instructions, Item G) \_\_\_\_\_
10. Location where Premium Class Travel Segments Start and End (enter all segments)  
Origin: \_\_\_\_\_ Destination: \_\_\_\_\_  
Origin: \_\_\_\_\_ Destination: \_\_\_\_\_  
Origin: \_\_\_\_\_ Destination: \_\_\_\_\_
11. Date Travel to Begin: \_\_\_\_\_
12. Fare for Premium Travel: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Fare for Coach Class: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
14. Ticket Issuing Location (Name and Location of Commercial Travel Office (CTO)): \_\_\_\_\_
15. Reason for Requesting Premium Class Travel, Reference JTR/JFTR, par.: \_\_\_\_\_
16. Describe your disability or special need and how it interferes with traveling in coach-class. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

17. Give the approximate date (month/year) your condition began to affect your ability to travel without special travel accommodations. \_\_\_\_\_
18. What is the expected duration of your condition? \_\_\_\_\_
19. What reasonable accommodation (e.g., bulkhead seating, two coach seats, seat cushion, aisle seat, etc.) could be made so that you would be able to travel in coach class? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**CERTIFICATION AND CONSENT BY TRAVELER**

*I hereby certify that all statements made above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief. I hereby give my permission for the release of information about my service and condition(s) (i.e., disease and injury) to authorized agency officials and medical consultants.*

SIGNATURE (Do not print)                      Date

**PART II – PHYSICIAN’S STATEMENT**  
**INSTRUCTIONS**

The individual identified on the next page is requesting medical documentation that will be evaluated, along with other information, in connection with his or her request for an upgrade in air travel to premium class (business-class/first-class) as a reasonable accommodation. Please specify in your report the physical and environmental requirements connecting the identified disability or other special need and the requested accommodation.

The applicant is responsible for any cost incurred in connection with providing this documentation.

Please provide the medical documentation requested under ‘MEDICAL DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS FORM’. It is important that you respond to every item. If there is not sufficient space for your response, please provide a continuation sheet that indicates the corresponding item number for the information you are responding to. If an item is not applicable to the applicant’s condition, enter “Not Applicable.” After completing the form please provide your medical stamp on the form along with your signature.

Enclose your report and any attachments in a sealed envelope marked “MEDICAL DOCUMENTATION – PRIVILEGED – PRIVATE.” Please give it directly to the applicant.



**PART II - MEDICAL DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS FORMAT**

The following information is provided on (full name of traveler): \_\_\_\_\_

1. Diagnosis of Disability or Special Need Associated with Premium Class Accommodations:

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2. Clinical findings that relate to the reason for travel upgrade from the most recent medical evaluation including any of the following which have been obtained: findings of physical examination, results of laboratory tests, X-rays, EKGs and other special evaluations or diagnostic procedures and, in the case of psychiatric diseases, the findings of mental status examinations and the results of psychological tests.

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3. Assessment of current clinical status, relevant medications prescribed and plans for future treatment:

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4. What is the expected duration of the disability or special need? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. What is the probability that the individual will suffer injury or harm if he or she is not accommodated? Explain the medical basis for your conclusion.

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6. Explain the relationship between the traveler's request for premium-class travel and the traveler's condition(s). Can the condition(s) be accommodated by any means other than travel in premium class? If the answer to any of the following questions is no, please fully explain the reasons for your response and the relation to the traveler's condition.

- a. Can the traveler's condition(s) be accommodated by travel in bulkhead seating? Yes or No.
- b. Can the traveler's condition(s) be accommodated by travel in aisle seating? Yes or No.
- c. Is the traveler able to tolerate seating in coach class for any period of time? Yes or No.

If the answer to this question is yes, please state the maximum duration. \_\_\_\_\_

d. Can seating in coach class with periodic movement around the cabin accommodate the traveler's condition(s)? Yes or No

e. Can the traveler's condition(s) be accommodated by periodic in-flight exercises designed to minimize the physical impacts of the flight? Yes or No

f. Can the traveler's condition(s) be accommodated by purchase of two adjoining coach seats? Yes or No

7. Does the traveler require an attendant for medical services during travel, and if so, is it necessary for the attendant to be constantly with the traveler while en route? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, explain the duties of the attendant during the time of travel.

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8. Physician's stamp:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail Address

**PART III – MEDICAL CONSULTANT RECOMMENDATION**

Full Name of Individual Requesting Travel Upgrade: \_\_\_\_\_

Office of Requesting Individual:

Travel Upgrade:

**Recommendation:**

Recommend Approval, with modifications as noted below.

Recommend Denial based on reasons below

Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address

**PART IV PREMIUM-CLASS TRAVEL APPROVAL AUTHORITY**  
**DETERMINATION**

The request for First-Class/Business-Class travel for (enter full Name of traveler) \_\_\_\_\_ is approved/disapproved.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Type Full Name, Rank and Office symbol of  
Premium Class Approving Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Premium Class Approving Signature

### **Privacy Act Statement**

In compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974, the following information is provided: Basic authority for requiring the requested information is contained in 5 USC §§5701-5733, particularly §§5721-5733, 30 USC §905 and Executive Order 9397. Disclosure of the data by you is voluntary. The principal purpose for the collecting the data is to determine the amount to reimburse a traveler for expenses incurred in connection with temporary duty travel. Information may be transferred to appropriate Federal, State local or foreign agencies when relevant to civil, criminal or regulatory investigations or prosecutions. There is no personal liability to you if you do not furnish the requested information; however, we shall not be able to reimburse you for your expenses.