

Post Payment Review Findings for 3Q, FY03

During the third quarter (3Q) of FY03 DFAS Post Payment Review (PPR) reviewed 5,355 DTS trip records for travel claim errors. The majority of the travel claim errors found can be avoided by increased traveler/Approving Official (AO) attention and through training.

The latest release of DTS, the “Enhanced” Jefferson version, was released at the end of the 3Q. PMO-DTS and Northrop Grumman have found programmatic ways to address several travel claim errors that were identified in both the second and third quarters of FY03. The most notable of these include discrepancies between actual airfare costs and the amount claimed by the traveler and inaccurate Defense Table of Distance (DTOD) mileage figures. Listed below are several categories found during this time period that still need attention along with some helpful hints to avoid the errors.

1. ATM Fees Paid Incorrectly

ATM fees continue to be the most prevalent travel claim error by a wide margin. Travelers can claim reimbursement for ATM fees and Bank of America ATM fees when using their Government Charge Card. Through Bank of America, PPR is able to see that the traveler incurred a surcharge or service fee. If the traveler does not claim reimbursement, it is identified as an underpayment to that traveler. AOs should remind travelers that these fees are reimbursable.

Other common ATM fee errors include:

- Traveler lists fees for ATM cash withdrawals in excess of the authorized total “advance” amount
- Traveler fails to lists all authorized ATM fees
- Traveler enters the entire cash amount vice the fee alone

2. Miscellaneous fees (registration fees, rental car, taxis) paid incorrectly

These errors are found if the traveler inputs incorrect information, such as the transportation amount, lodging amount, registration fees, etc. Travelers and AOs should verify receipts to help ensure that the correct amounts are claimed.

3. Incorrect reimbursement for lodging

Travelers should remember to claim all applicable taxes. Often times the hotel tax is omitted from the travel claim and but has been charged to the Government Charge Card.

4. Conversion Rate Errors

When traveling overseas, there is the possibility of a change in the conversion rate between the time of purchase and the time that the transaction posts to the charge card account. The result will be either an underpayment or an overpayment to the traveler depending on the rate. The easiest way to avoid this is to verify the actual amount charged to Government Charge card. This can be accomplished by contacting the charge card vendor, Bank of America.