

OFFICIAL



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**



# TRAVEL POLICY

June 2022

## INTENTION

1. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Travel Policy (this Policy) applies to all A-based employees, both SES and non-SES, when undertaking any officially funded travel. Other related policies, procedures and definitions relating to conditions of overseas service are available in [s 47E\(d\)](#).
2. This Policy, conditions and procedures also apply to contractors engaged by DFAT within Australia unless relevant contracts specify otherwise. For the purposes of this Policy, where the term "employee" is stated, it can be taken to mean the same as "contractor".
3. This Policy does not cover Locally Engaged Staff (LES) at posts, except in the case of sponsored travel (see [Chapter 21](#)). [s 47E\(d\)](#) provides guidance on travel conditions for all LES.
4. This Policy in its entirety or parts thereof cannot be distributed outside of DFAT without the permission of [s 47E\(d\)](#).
5. Where possible, underlined words will provide a hyperlink to a definition or further policy.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## General Principles

1. Under the Whole of Australian Government (WoAG) Travel Arrangements administered by the Department of Finance (DOF), the Department must purchase all domestic and international travel originating in Australia, and domestic hotel accommodation and domestic car hire through the WoAG-nominated Travel Management Companies (TMC).
2. The WoAG travel arrangements only apply to travel within and from Australia. Travel undertaken from and/or funded by posts is not currently within the scope of the WoAG travel arrangements (see paragraph 13).
3. The Department of Finance has negotiated a range of competitive airfares on domestic and international routes and discounted rates for car hire and domestic accommodation in Australia. The WoAG rates can only be accessed through the TMCs.
4. All travel services sourced by the Department must comply with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules (CPRs).
5. Airfares should be purchased using the Lowest Practical Fare (LPF) for official domestic travel and International Best Fare (IBF) for official international travel. All international travel must comply with the approved routes requirements, unless there are exceptional reasons for alternative routes to be considered (see Chapter 6).
6. It is government policy that officially funded travel at Commonwealth expense must not result in a monetary or other like or in-kind benefit to the traveller, nor be seen to subsidise personal travel at any time. The Department's Travel Policy is required to meet with community expectations and be publicly defensible.
7. The DFAT Enterprise Agreement (satin.lo) sets out some travel policies that are incorporated into this Policy.
8. This Policy applies equally to employees engaged under individual arrangements. Specific provisions relating to travel which only apply to HOM/HOPs and other non-HOM/HOP SES employees on posting are contained in s 47E(d) or the s 47E(d). Otherwise, all conditions in this Policy are applicable.
9. Situations may arise where this Policy is silent. The s 47E(d) in the s 47E(d) and the s 47E(d) or s 47E(d) will be able to provide advice and approval (unless stipulated otherwise) where required.



### Cost of Official Travel

10. All travel must be approved in line with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules and costs must be approved in accordance with the *PGPA Act 2013* and in advance of travel. When an employee undertakes travel on official duty, they are provided with transport, accommodation, car hire (where required) and travel allowance (where applicable).
11. Travel allowance will only be paid where an employee travels and is required to sleep overnight away from their home location. Travel allowance is not payable where an employee travels from their normal location of work and returns to that location within the same day.
12. Any costing for travel must be based on total door-to-door costs, taking into consideration the airfare or similar, plus any ancillary travel or costs such as taxis or overnight parking. Total costs and travel time by air including ground transport costs must be compared to the equivalent cost and time taken to travel by other alternatives such as by train, where available. Consideration should also be given to the benefit of travel to attend a face-to-face meeting compared with the availability of teleconferencing or videoconferencing facilities that might be available at the point of origin and at the point of destination.

### Travel funded by Posts

13. As described in paragraph 1, travel originating from and funded by posts falls outside the WoAG Travel Arrangements. Posts are free to make local or regional arrangements for travel service providers, provided the requirements of the Commonwealth Procurement Rules, the rules surrounding approved routes for travel outlined in **Chapter 6** and the parameters surrounding approval for group travel outlined in **Chapter 3** are adhered to.
14. This includes domestic travel, domestic accommodation and domestic car hire services within Australia funded by posts. Posts should arrange to source required travel services through a local or regional supplier or direct with airlines, hotels or car hire companies. Travel must not be booked through the TMCs.

s 47E(d)

### Fringe Benefits Tax

18. Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) may apply to some categories of officially funded travel. Information can be obtained on the [Fringe Benefit Tax Policy \(satin.io\)](#) on the Intranet.
19. Where a request for a variation to officially funded travel has incurred a FBT liability and the Department does not agree to meet that cost, it will be passed on to the employee.

### Responsibilities of Delegates, Travellers and Travel Coordinators

20. A PGPA Act s23 delegate must not approve travel unless they are satisfied that it is proper use of resources (that is, the efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of relevant money). Travellers should consider the following factors before seeking a delegate's approval to undertake travel:
  - a. Whether the Government is committed to attend a particular event;
  - b. Whether attendance at a meeting is vital to Australian and/or departmental interests;
  - c. Whether suitably qualified employee(s) stationed elsewhere or already travelling on business can attend; or
  - d. The size of the delegation required – the composition should be determined by the objectives of the visit and not by considerations of the size of other delegations.
21. It is the responsibility of individual employees to ensure they maintain a valid passport and obtain necessary visas for the duration of any international travel, including when on long-term posting.

s 47E(d)

### Travel Notification

23. It is appropriate that any international travel is notified to the post(s) concerned by cable. Employees travelling to locations outside of capital cities or countries where there is no resident mission, should notify the nearest/supervising post(s) of their travel.
24. The s 47E(d) will advise posts by cable of travel details for employees and their dependants proceeding on long term posting.

### Locally Engaged Staff (LES)

25. This Policy does not apply to LES, except in the case of **sponsored travel**.
26. The s 47E(d) provides guidance on travel conditions for all LES.

### DFAT Contractors

27. Contractors engaged by DFAT within Australia are subject to this Policy and to the same conditions, Standard of travel, and procedures as non-SES employees unless relevant contracts specify otherwise. Wherever the term "employee" is used in this Policy, it can be substituted for "contractor" as required.

### Guest Travel, including SVPs and IMVs

28. Where the Department is funding guest travel, for example the travel of a participant in a Special Visit Program (SVP) or an International Media Visit (IMV), travel will need to be sourced and arranged through the TMC.

29. Where a post is funding the travel for a visitor or group of visitors, the post will be responsible for sourcing travel and accommodation either through their local/regional travel provider or with airlines and hotels direct. Posts must not book any flights or accommodation through the TMC.
30. Further details on **Managing SVP travel** and **Travel Arrangements** can be found on the Intranet.

#### Flex Time/TOIL and Official Travel

31. Wherever possible and whenever practical, travel should be undertaken within the working hours' bandwidth. This does not mean however that an employee proceeding on a STM to commence work on a Monday can travel on a Thursday or Friday thereby gaining a personal advantage of an extended rest period over a weekend. In such instances, it is expected that the employee's trip would meet with the normal rest period/rest and travel day policy outlined in **Chapter 15**.
32. Any flex/TOIL accrued during a STM must be either taken during the STM or used after the return from the STM. While there is provision to take annual leave accrued on official travel (see **Chapter 16**) this does not extend to include adding any flex/TOIL accrued during the STM.
33. Where travel is undertaken **within** the working hours' bandwidth, employees are entitled to accrue flex/TOIL in accordance with Clause 65 of the Enterprise Agreement as outlined in **s 47E(d)**.
34. Where travel is undertaken outside the working hours' bandwidth, on a weekend or public holiday, flex/TOIL will be available for a maximum of one hour travelling time each way. Where an employee travels on a commercial flight, travelling time will commence one hour prior to the scheduled departure time.

#### Separations, Long-term Leave and Temporary Transfers

35. As required in the [Separation Checklist & Exit Survey \(satin.lo\)](#) provided by the People Operations Branch, all employees who separate from the Department (resign, retire or permanently transfer to another agency) are required to seek clearance from the **s 47E(d)** regarding any outstanding travel acquittals.
36. Similarly, employees proceeding on long-term leave of more than three months' duration (such as leave without pay, long service leave, maternity leave, or extended PCL), or those who are temporarily transferring to another agency (commonly referred to as a "s26 transfer"), are also required to notify the **s 47E(d)** of their plans to ensure that there are no outstanding travel acquittals.
37. In both instances, any outstanding acquittals will need to be processed and any debts incurred as a result will need to be paid in full before clearance will be provided.

## 2. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### Travel Management Company (TMC).

1. A Travel Management Company (TMC) is the term used in the WoAG Travel Arrangements to refer to the company/companies contracted by the Department of Finance to provide travel services (flights, accommodation and car hire services) exclusively to Commonwealth Government departments/agencies.
2. QBT is the sole TMC for the provision of domestic and international air travel services to the Commonwealth Government.
3. AOT is the sole TMC for the provision of domestic accommodation services to the Commonwealth Government.
4. Hertz (Australia) Pty Ltd is the sole TMC for the provision of domestic car hire services to the Commonwealth Government.

### Online Booking Tool (OBT).

5. QBT and AOT use an on-line booking tool (OBT) for all domestic flights, domestic accommodation and domestic car hire bookings. Employees seeking quotes for fares and/or accommodation are required to use the OBT. A fee is charged by QBT and AOT for these services and this must be included in the overall cost of travel. The OBT should be used for all new bookings and any subsequent changes to an existing booking in preference to calling QBT or AOT. Calls to the TMC attract a higher booking fee and may delay bookings at peak times when call waiting times can be high.

### Domestic Travel

6. For the purposes of this Policy, the term "Domestic Travel" will mean all travel by an employee ordinarily located in Australia, within Australia. For posted employees, the intention of the term "domestic travel" will mean travel by a posted employee within the country of posting.

### International Travel

7. For the purposes of this Policy, the term "International travel" will mean all travel by an employee outside the country in which the employee ordinarily performs his/her duties. For employees' ordinarily located Australia, this means travel outside Australia. For posted employees, this means travel outside the country of posting.

#### Short Term Mission (STM)

8. Short Term Mission (STM) defines a period of assignment to a location (international or domestic) of less than 180 consecutive calendar days in duration.

#### Short Term Assignment (STA)

9. Short Term Assignment (STA) defines a period of assignment to allocation (international or domestic) of greater than six months to less than one year in duration.

#### Lowest Practical Fare for Official Domestic Travel (LPF)

10. Lowest Practical Fare (LPF) for official domestic travel is defined as the lowest fare available on the day at the time travel is booked, on a regular scheduled service (i.e. not a chartered flight), which suits the *practical business needs* of the traveller, within a 45 minute window of requested departure time.

#### International Best Fare for Official International Travel (IBF)

11. International Best Fare (IBF) is the lowest fare available on the day the travel is booked on a regular scheduled service on an approved route (i.e. not a chartered flight) that suits the *practical business needs* of the traveller and maximises overall value for money for the total cost of the trip, within a 24 hour window of requested departure time.

#### Travel and Expense Management System (TEMS)

12. The Travel and Expense Management System (TEMS) is an entry point into SAP for DFAT employees located in divisions and State and Territory Offices (STOs) in Australia to record domestic and international travel requests, approvals, acquittals and credit card processing in relation to travel. TEMS is not available to posts other than to acquit corporate credit card expenditure.

#### The Travel Unit

13. The unit within the [s 47E\(d\)](#) that administers the application of this Policy. Refer to the [s 47E\(d\)](#) page.

#### Whole of Australian Government (WoAG) Travel Arrangements

14. Whole of Australian Government (WoAG) Travel Arrangements refers to the policies, procedures and conditions relating to officially funded travel for all Commonwealth Government departments/agencies, its employees and contractors (unless otherwise specified). WoAG policies are administered by the Department of Finance and compliance with all WoAG travel-related policies is mandatory. Posts are currently exempt from the WoAG Travel Arrangements.

### 3. TRAVEL APPROVAL

#### General Principles

1. All travel must be properly considered in accordance with the requirement of *the PGPA Act 2013* that Commonwealth resources are used in an efficient, effective, ethical and economic manner and approved in accordance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules.
2. Official business travel must be approved in accordance with the below tables. This list is not exhaustive. Where a scenario is not listed, approvals revert to existing delegation instruments or guidance in policy. Divisions and posts must maintain records of all travel requests and approvals. Where the travel approval and the financial approver are the same, both approvals can be recorded through SAP.

Travel in or from Australia	
Scenario/Traveller	Approver
Domestic trips – Secretary only	Chief Operating Officer
Domestic trips (interstate)	Minimum Director (EL2) level and must be the line-manager.
International trips – Secretary or A/g Secretary	Minister
International trips – SES Band 3	Secretary
International trips – SES Band 2	Deputy Secretary
International trips – SES Band 1 and below	Division Head
International Delegations – 4 or more travellers	Deputy Secretary
Trips with sensitivities on size/composition of a group/delegation <i>Officers are to exercise professional judgement in determining sensitivities</i>	Secretary
Crisis Response Team (CRT) deployment	Secretary
Posting-related travel	Refer s 47E(d)

Travel at Post – non-HOM/HOP	
Scenario/Traveller	Approver
Domestic trips (interstate, province or similar)	Minimum A-based EL2 and must be the line-manager. Where the line manager is not an EL2, then minimum SAO/DHOM/DHOP
International trips	HOM/HOP
International Delegations – 4 or more travellers	HOM/HOP
Trips with sensitivities on size/composition of a group/delegation <i>Officers are to exercise professional judgement in determining sensitivities</i>	Secretary
Crisis Response Team (CRT) officer deployment (if deploying from overseas)	Secretary

HOM/HOP Travel*	
Scenario/Traveller	Approver
Domestic travel at Post or International travel at Post to countries of accreditation.	Financial approval to be provided by SAO or DHOM or DHOP for the purposes of arranging travel only. Cable notification must be provided to Canberra. Email to supervisor must be sent prior to travel; and must include details of travel, purpose and acting arrangements.
High risk / high value / non-routine Domestic trips at Post (interstate, province or similar), including those not pre-agreed with supervisor.	Supervisor in Australia or in-country. Cable notification must be provided to Canberra.
High risk / high value / non-routine International Travel at Post or to Australia, including to non-accredited countries.	Minimum SES Level 2, and must be the direct line manager. Where the HOM/HOP is SES Level 3, Secretary. Cable notification must be provided to Canberra.
Domestic trips in Australia	Minimum Director (EL2) level and must be the line-manager. Cable notification must be provided to Canberra.

\*DHOM must be present at Post when HOM/HOP is travelling.

3. Postings-related travel (STM, STA, LTP, leave fares, reunions, compassionate travel, and medical

evacuations) have specific delegates and do not require Division Head or HOM/HOP approval (unless otherwise specified against the relevant condition of service). Delegation arrangements are addressed in [s 47E\(d\)](#). Additionally, there is no requirement to seek approval for non-DFAT employees' travel as part of a DFAT-led delegation. Each Commonwealth agency is responsible for seeking approval for and funding its own employees' travel.

4. Travel approvers and delegates must ensure that all travel is justifiable in terms of meeting business needs, that the most cost-effective flight and accommodation options are chosen, and that the length of trips and the number of employees travelling are kept to an efficient minimum. Travel should only be undertaken where other communication tools, such as teleconferencing or videoconferencing are an ineffective option.
5. If four or more DFAT employees are travelling internationally to the same destination at the same time for similar work reasons, including as a delegation to a meeting or conference, this travel needs to be approved by the relevant Deputy Secretary. "Bulk" approvals are allowed – for example, where such travel is scheduled on a regular basis. At posts, such travel within the country/countries of accreditation can be approved by the HOM/HOP without approval by a Deputy Secretary (except where the HOM/HOP is also travelling as part of that delegation).
6. Where there are particular sensitivities about the size of composition of a group or delegation, the travel will be drawn to the attention of the Secretary. Officers are to exercise professional judgement in determining sensitivities.
7. Requests for SES Band 3 domestic travel must be submitted for approval by the Secretary via [s 47E\(d\)](#). Requests for SES Band 3 international travel must be submitted for approval by the Secretary via minute. For urgent travel where timeliness does not permit, domestic or international trips can be requested by email from the SES Band 3 to the Secretary. Email and minute requests must include a request for PGPA Act s23 delegation approval, including the total cost of the trip broken down by component (for example – flights, accommodation and Travel Allowance).
8. All travel must be approved in line with the requirements of the Commonwealth Procurement Rules and planned and acquitted in accordance with this Policy. All employees must select the LPF/IBF unless there are exceptional reasons otherwise. Where the LPF/IBF is not used, travel approvers need to be satisfied there is a legitimate reason and ensure the reason is recorded. A **reason code** from the approved list on the OBT must be provided. Non-compliance with the IBF is reported by the TMC to the Department of Finance and to the Departmental Executive through the CFO.
9. Consistent with the DFAT Enterprise Agreement, international travel must be booked at business class or lower where business class is not available (see [Chapter 5](#)). Employees are not permitted to accept offers of complimentary upgrades to first class from an airline, unless that upgrade is due to the operational requirements of the airline (such as an overbooked cabin or last-minute change of aircraft type) and employees are not permitted to purchase upgrades to first class. Employees are not permitted to downgrade an official airfare to economy class to either reduce an employee contribution towards the cost of travel, to extend the routing for a similar cost, or to receive any sort of benefit, financial or otherwise, real or perceived by doing so.
10. Alternatives to air travel should be considered when planning travel. For example, travel within a country/continent may be better value for money using fast train services in some locations.

#### Security and Travel

11. DFAT employees travelling privately or officially are required to observe the requirements of the [e s 47E\(d\)](#).
12. Employees travelling to locations where there is no resident mission, should consult closely with post(s) responsible for the location(s) concerned regarding appropriate accommodation and security



arrangements.

### Briefings

13. Employees travelling on a STM/STA should consider arranging briefings with relevant areas based on the purpose and destination(s) of the travel. The **s 47E(d)** and/or **s 47E(d)** at posts can provide guidance, but further information should also be sought from:
- Geographic desk;
  - s 47E(d)** and/or
  - Relevant multilateral/international organisation areas.

### Travel Advisories – Official or Private Travel

14. The Department produces travel advice on the [Smartraveller](#) Website to inform Australians of the risks they may face when travelling overseas. While intended for general public use, the advice applies equally to departmental employees travelling officially or privately.
15. When preparing for any official international travel, employees should carefully consider the information provided in the relevant travel advice and continue to monitor it using the website's subscription service in the period leading up to, and during the journey.
16. When official travel is proposed to a destination where the advice is to **reconsider your need to travel**, travel approvers must be satisfied that the visit is essential. Where operational requirements involve official in-country travel to localities covered by a travel advice to reconsider your need to travel, the essential test should also be met.
17. The decision as to whether a STM is essential should take into account its objective(s), the balance of departmental interests involved and whether its purpose can be accomplished by other means, such as teleconferencing, videoconferencing or representations by the accredited/resident mission. Any particular risks outlined in the travel advice (for example the vulnerability of particular types of locations) and the steps taken to mitigate the risks involved/identified (such as additional security measures), should also be taken into consideration.
18. Employees must provide particularly strong justification for travel to a destination where the advisory recommends **do not travel**. Supervisors are required to provide the **s 47E(d)** a brief written justification outlining the essentiality of the proposed official travel by any employee to destinations covered by this category of travel advice. Supervisors must inform the relevant post(s) when any official travel is proposed to destinations covered by this category of travel advice.

### Officially Funded Discretionary Travel

19. Officially funded discretionary travel includes stopovers and transits to and from long-term postings, rest days, all categories of leave fares, reunion (including reverse reunion) and compassionate travel. The factors for consideration outlined in the paragraphs above also apply to officially funded, discretionary travel to locations where the recommendation is reconsideration of the need to travel. The travel approver must be satisfied that the journey is essential and there are no alternative destinations or other arrangements which would achieve the same purpose.
20. The restrictions on officially funded discretionary travel are equally applicable to employees posted to locations where a travel advice is reconsideration of the need to travel. Officially funded discretionary travel will not be approved to destinations where the official recommendation is not to travel.

### Employee Funded Travel

21. Employees make their own decisions about private travel destinations. However, all employees are reminded of the importance of consulting and taking serious account of the Department's travel advice

when planning leave and holiday activities. It is expected employees will think carefully about the impact of their actions on the credibility of the Department's travel advice should they make the decision to travel privately to a destination where the recommendation is to *reconsider the need to travel* or *do not travel* and that appropriate travel insurance is purchased.

22. In the specific case of private travel during the course of a posting to a destination in a region or country where official recommendation is not to travel, it must be undertaken on a private passport. Furthermore, overseas allowances will cease for the duration of the travel to the destination(s) as will coverage by the Overseas Health Provisions (private travel insurance at the employee's cost will need to be purchased). In these instances, employees must email the details of their private travel to **s 47E(d)** to enable adjustment of allowances.
23. Employees travelling privately are also required to observe the requirements of the **s 47E(d)**

#### Responsibilities of Delegates, Travellers and Travel Coordinators

24. PGPA Act delegates must act within the conditions and limitations of the delegations.
25. Employees must seek approval from the appropriate PGPA Act s23 delegate **prior** to booking travel and follow correct procedures for obtaining quotes to ensure that the LPF/IBF is purchased at all times. Where an employee chooses a fare other than the LPF/IBF then:
  - a. The employee will meet all additional travel costs in excess of the LPF/IBF;
  - b. The funded rest period and travel allowance (where applicable) will be based on the lesser of the LPF/IBF route and actual route travelled; and
  - c. The employee will be responsible for all additional costs such as additional quotes, non-air travel, non-official visas, extra travel insurance and non-official travel-related accommodation booking costs.
26. Employees will be required to pay in full any of these additional costs before e-tickets will be released to the traveller.
27. Employees **must not** approve their own travel.
28. Employees will **not** be reimbursed for purchasing their own tickets for official travel or for any travel that has not been booked using the mandatory WoAG travel arrangements (such as on a Corporate Credit Card).
29. PGPA Act delegates must ensure that travel is as efficient as possible in that it must strike a balance between cost, operational efficiency, and business requirements and that these decisions are defensible and documented.
30. Where possible, all travel should be undertaken within the working hours' bandwidth (see **Chapter 1**). Wherever possible, arrivals for travel to post should occur during normal business hours and not on weekends or public holidays.

#### Work Health and Safety (WHS) Considerations and Requirements for Overseas Travel

31. In order to ensure safe international travel, employees travelling and approvers need to identify, assess and mitigate all risks associated with travel, prior to departure. The level of planning required will depend on the destination(s) and the assessed risk. At a minimum, the following elements should be considered:
  - a. Environment – ensure the employee(s) travelling has an awareness of the environment at the destination(s) and an understanding of the information provided in the relevant Travel Advice for all the international destinations on the itinerary.
  - b. Health – consideration is given to medical advice and specific medical requirements en route and at the destination(s).

- c. Safety – consideration is given to personal safety and security. The requirements of the **s 47E(d)** are observed and where appropriate, briefings from Post Security Officer/Regional Security Advisor are obtained.
- d. Transportation – assessment is made of the modes of transport being undertaken to ensure, as much as practicable, that they are reliable and safe.
- e. Communication – consider the employee’s access to reliable communication systems at the destination(s).
- f. When assessing risks it is important to consider the Department’s five step guide ‘CARED’, which is designed to assist with WHS operational decision making:
- g. Consider work health and safety
- h. Assess the risks
- i. Reduce, eliminate or mitigate the risks
- j. Establish a plan of action
- k. Document the decision.

32. Chapter 27 of this Policy provides further information on travel insurance for employees. The **s 47E(d)** can also be contacted regarding any WHS concerns regarding travel.



## 5. CLASS OF TRAVEL

### General Principles

1. For non-SES employees, Clause 64 of the Enterprise Agreement refers.
2. Under the WoAG Travel Arrangements, employees are not permitted to purchase an upgrade to first class when travelling on official business, nor accept a complimentary offer from an airline to upgrade to first class, except where that upgrade is due to the operational requirements of the airline (for example, an overbooked cabin or a last minute change of aircraft type). This applies equally to all employees whether based in Australia or at post. Post managers are required to advise local airlines and/or travel service providers accordingly.
3. All employees are not permitted to downgrade any officially funded business class fare to a lower class either to reduce the amount of any employee contribution towards the cost of travel, to extend the routing for a similar cost, or to receive any personal benefit, financial or otherwise, real or perceived by doing so.

### Domestic Travel: SES Employees

4. In Australia and when overseas, the class of domestic travel for SES employees is business class except for travel between Canberra and Sydney or Canberra and Melbourne, which will generally be limited to economy class.
5. If business class is not available, all employees should travel in the next class below business class. Where an employee travels at a lower class than the class allowed, no credit is given in cash or kind, and no credit is given as an offset against any other expenditure in relation to that travel.
6. Flexi-discounted economy fares represent the best value for money for short-distance domestic travel. They offer conditions suitable for official travel as they allow changes to be made without penalty and permit credit refunds for cancellations at a minimal flat rate fee.

### Domestic Travel: non-SES Employees

7. In Australia and when overseas, the class of domestic travel for non-SES employees is economy class.
8. Where the flight time for any one sector is in excess of three hours, the standard of travel will be business class.
9. If business class is not available, all employees should travel in the next class below business class. Where an employee travels at a lower class than the class allowed, no credit is given in cash or kind, and no credit is given as an offset against any other expenditure in relation to that travel.
10. Flexi-discounted economy fares represent the best value for money for short-distance domestic travel. They offer conditions suitable for official travel as they allow changes to be made without penalty and permit credit refunds for cancellations at a minimal flat rate fee.

11. In exceptional circumstances, the delegate may authorise travel in a higher class (to business class or equivalent but not first class). A copy of the approval must be retained on file for audit purposes. Such an upgrade should only be approved where it provides a benefit to the Department or ensures the employee's health and security and must not simply be for status reasons. Valid examples are:
- a. Advising a Minister, the Secretary, a VIP or a delegation on work-related issues during the flight;
  - b. The status and class of air travel entitlement of a person whom the employee is required to accompany during the flight;
  - c. The nature of the duties (if any) that are undertaken in the course of travel;
  - d. Health concerns;
  - e. The duration of the travel;
  - f. The extent to which the employee may, in the course of travel, be subjected to discrimination within the meaning of the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*; and/or
  - g. Any other factor(s) relevant to the employee's travel.

#### International Travel: SES Employees

12. All SES employees travel business class for international flights. Any domestic travel that is contiguous with an international journey will be of the same standard as the international component wherever possible.
13. If business class is not available, all employees should travel in the next class below business class. Where an employee travels at a lower class than the class allowed, no credit is given in cash or kind, and no credit is given as an offset against any other expenditure in relation to that travel.

#### International Travel: non-SES Employees

14. All non-SES employees travel business class for all international flights of two hours or more duration (not including check-in time). In the case of a single sector trip of less than two hours' duration (not including check-in time), non-SES employees travel economy class. Any domestic travel that is contiguous with an international journey will be of the same standard as the international component wherever possible.
15. If business class is not available, all employees should travel in the next class below business class. Where an employee travels at a lower class than the class allowed, no credit is given in cash or kind, and no credit is given as an offset against any other expenditure in relation to that travel.

#### International Definitions of Business Class

16. On some sectors in the USA, China and within Africa, some airlines maintain aircraft with only two classes, nominally described as "first class" and "economy class". In these circumstances, where the class of travel is the equivalent of business class, such travel is allowable on the basis this is name-only and not reflective of service levels or ticketing cost.

#### Leave Fares and Officially Funded Discretionary Travel

17. All employees travel economy class on all categories of approved leave fares, reunion fares (including reverse reunions) and other forms of officially funded discretionary travel such as compassionate travel, irrespective of the duration of the flight(s) – see **Chapter 17**. Where travel is economy class, employees should consider discounted economy class airfares which represent best value for money, offering conditions that allow changes to be made without penalty.
18. Employees are permitted to purchase an upgrade to business class at a personal cost for any category of leave fare. Upgrades to first class are not permitted. Employees are required to pay the employee

contribution in full prior to travel and before e-tickets will be released. Payment of any employee contribution in such instances by instalments will not be permitted under any circumstances.

19. In exceptional circumstances, the delegate as contained in Schedule 6 of the Overseas Conditions of Service Delegations may approve the booking of business class fares where economy fares are unavailable.

#### SES Employees: Mid-term Leave and Consultations Programs

20. All SES employees proceeding on approved mid-term leave and consultations programs from posts are entitled to travel business class, except for travel between Canberra and Sydney and/or Canberra and Melbourne, where the standard of travel is economy class, unless that sector is contiguous with the international sector when the entitlement will be business class (if available). Where travel is economy class, employees should consider discounted economy class airfares which represent best value for money, offering conditions that allow changes without penalty.

## 6. APPROVED ROUTES – INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

### General Principles

1. The travel conditions set out in this Chapter provide clear parameters, by region, of what is an approved, direct route to and from Australia. It limits stopovers to a maximum of one international and one domestic stopover only. All officially funded international travel is required to adhere to the approved routes policy.
2. Unless there are exceptional circumstances regarding the reason for travel or any urgency for travel (such as crisis-related travel), it is expected that all STM/STA travel will follow the approved routes policy. The WOAG Travel Arrangements include the requirement to use the most direct route when quoting any airfare and the TMC will always quote the most direct route for any travel, regard less of its purpose. Employees are reminded that a reason is required when choosing a non-IBF fare for any international travel.
3. Employees should familiarise themselves with **Chapter 16** which outlines the Department's policy for taking annual leave in conjunction with official travel.
4. Officially funded travel cannot be seen to be subsidising personal travel in any way.
5. Notional fares will be costed using the IBF principle from Canberra to Post and from post to Canberra. Notional amounts approved for travel to post cover the cost of official airfares and cannot be used to offset any costs associated with any holiday package such as accommodation, train/land/sea travel, visas, taxis, car hire and/or any other non-flight costs.
6. Where utilising stopovers in addition to any rest period that may be applicable, any additional costs incurred such as the difference between airfare types, extra visas and/or extra travel insurance are the responsibility of the employee.
7. Authority to approve travel on any approved route for STM/STA travel rests with **s 47E(d)** Authority to approve travel to post for LTP on any approved route rests with the **s 47E(d)** and Authority to approve travel on any approved route for RTA rests with the **s 47E(d)** at post.
8. Employees will not be reimbursed for any costs of travel purchased privately for official travel.

### Approved Routes

9. When planning any official travel, the following must be taking into consideration:
  - a. Stopover limitations below refer to *international* stopovers. A *single* domestic stopover at point of arrival in or departure from Australia is also permitted.
  - b. A single travel leg may include multiple flights with airport-only transit(s).



- c. For RTA travel, the IBF is determined by the <sup>s 47E(d)</sup> as informed by the post's local/regional travel provider with permissible routes as set out below.
- d. For travel to post, the IBF is provided by the TMC and any applicable stopovers are assigned with permissible routes asset out below (the reverse of the routes shown).

#### *Europe*

Single leg to any recognised major regional business hub in Asia or the Middle East.  
International stopover only permitted at hub. No European stopovers.  
Single leg from Asia/Middle East hub to any capital city in Australia.

#### *Middle East*

Direct flight to any capital city in Australia.  
Single leg to any recognised major regional business hub in Asia or the Middle East (if cheaper).  
International stopover only permitted at hub.  
Single leg from hub to any capital city in Australia.

#### *Asia*

Direct flight to any capital city in Australia  
Single leg to any recognised major regional business hub (if cheaper).  
International stopover only in major regional business hub. No stopovers permitted in other locations (such as Bali, Phuket etc.).  
Single leg from hub to any capital city in Australia.

#### *Pacific*

Direct flight to east coast Australia only or via Pacific hub as required.  
International stopover only permitted at hub.

#### *Africa*

Single leg to any recognised major regional business hub in Asia or the Middle East. Can fly via Johannesburg if cheaper.  
International stopover only permitted at hub.  
Single leg from hub to any capital city in Australia.

#### *South/Latin America*

South America – direct to east coast Australia or via Santiago de Chile/Auckland.  
Lima, Bogota, Port of Spain – via Los Angeles/San Francisco/Dallas-Fort Worth if IBF.  
Mexico City – via Los Angeles/San Francisco/Dallas-Fort Worth only.  
One international stopover at hubs only.

#### *North America*

*(Washington, New York, Chicago, Houston, Ottawa)*

Westbound – single leg to North America business hub (Los Angeles, San Francisco, Dallas-Fort Worth, Vancouver, not Honolulu) for direct flights to Australia.

- International stopover at hub.
- Single leg from hub to east coast Australia.

Eastbound – only permitted if IBF and direct flight is via a Middle East hub.

- International stopover only permitted at hub. No European stopovers.
- Single leg from Middle East hub to any capital city in Australia.

(Honolulu, Los Angeles)

Direct flights to east coast Australia only. No international stopovers permitted.

#### Relocation Travel

10. The purpose of officially funded business class relocation travel to and from post is to ensure the prompt commencement of official duties at post and the safe and efficient travel of employees and their dependants to and from Australia.
11. Other than for the limited exceptions outlined below, there is no scope for alternative routes outside the parameters set out in this Chapter, even if other less direct routes are cheaper or where an employee has family or personal reasons for travelling on another route.
  - a. Exceptions:
    - i. Where excessive travel times/stopovers on the longest itineraries raise health/welfare concerns for employee and/or accompanying dependants (for example pre-existing health conditions, disabilities or when travelling with very young children). In these circumstances, this would only permit an extra short stop-over en route that specially addresses the issue and facilitates employee/family welfare.
    - ii. Security concerns about particular routes.
12. For travel to post, the TMC will provide quotes that determine the IBF based on a fare from Canberra to post. For RTA travel, the <sup>s 47E(d)</sup> will determine the IBF based on the same principles, using fares provided by the post's local/regional travel provider, based on a fare from post to Canberra. Approved routes apply equally to both travel to and from post.
13. Employees can travel to post using an alternative fare to the IBF and/or alternative hub only if it is still within the approved regional parameters. In this instance, the employee will be required to pay any difference in fares. For example, if travelling to New York:
  - a. Approved route: Canberra-Sydney-Dallas/Fort Worth-New York
  - b. Alternative route permitted: Canberra-Sydney-San Francisco-New York
  - c. Alternative route not permitted: Canberra-Singapore-London-New York.
14. The same principle applies in reverse with RTA travel.
15. See **Chapter 7** for entitlements relating to spouse and family travel.

#### Cost of Official Travel

16. The Department meets the cost of a business class fare for the approved route for travel:
  - a. For a STM or STA;
  - b. At the commencement and completion of a LTP;
  - c. On termination of an employee's posting by the Secretary; or
  - d. Where the Secretary is satisfied it is reasonable for the Department to meet the RTA travel costs of an employee.
17. Employees will not be reimbursed for any airline tickets purchased privately for any official travel.

## 7. SPOUSE AND DEPENDANT TRAVEL

### Relocation Travel

1. Employees are entitled to be accompanied by their **recognised spouse and/or dependants** when proceeding on long term posting and when returning to Australia at the end of a posting.
2. When travelling on the same flight as the posted employee, a recognised spouse and/or dependants will be provided the same class of travel.
3. Entitlements for dependants travelling to and from post separately from the employee are outlined in **s 47E(d)** All travel must comply with the approved routes outlined in Chapter 6:
4. Baby bassinets will usually be provided by airlines on request. Airlines have differing policies on the use and availability of bassinets, which generally depend on the age and weight of the infant and advice can be sought from the TMC. Airlines generally require children over the age of two to have his/her own seat. Requests should be discussed with the **s 47E(d)**
5. For all other travel, to be accompanied by a recognised spouse at official expense, is subject to approval by the appropriate delegate and availability of funds. Eligibility to be accompanied by a recognised spouse must be established prior to the trip for which an application is made.

### Mid Term Leave and Consultation Programs

6. Applications for a recognised spouse and dependants to accompany a posted SES employee on a mid-term leave and consultation program and questions regarding travel must be forwarded to the **s 47E(d)** for consideration. Details can be found in **s 47E(d)**

### Domestic Travel and Short-Term Missions

7. Within Australia, the entitlement for spouse accompanied travel for SES employees has been cashed out as part of annual salary. However, with prior approval from the delegate, travel may be approved for a spouse to accompany a SES employee for official representational purposes.
8. For Non-SES employees there is no entitlement for spouse accompanied travel within Australia except where the delegate has approved a spouse to accompany an employee on an international STM subject to the "40 week rule". Eligibility for spouse accompanied travel under this provision is primarily established on the basis of an employee having undertaken an aggregate of 40 weeks of unaccompanied overseas travel on STMs.
9. For an acting HOM/HOP, the delegate may give prior approval for a spouse to accompany the acting HOM/HOP on official travel under the same terms and conditions as those applied to the spouse of the HOM/HOP. Further details on travel under this category can be found in the **s 47E(d)**

10. All requests for spouse accompanied travel, excluding for long-term postings, must be approved by the **s 47E(d)** Submissions must be made in writing and along with details of the employee making the application, must include:
- a. the purpose and period of overseas travel on duty unaccompanied by the employee's spouse;
  - b. the period since the employee was last accompanied by their spouse at official expense (excluding postings);
  - c. the duration of the proposed travel and the localities to be visited; and
  - d. any official duties that will be undertaken during the travel, including any representational responsibilities.

## 8. STANDARD OF ACCOMMODATION

### General Principles

1. Under the WoAG Travel Arrangements, it is mandatory for all domestic accommodation in Australia funded by divisions or STOs to be made through the contracted TMC. These services must be procured using a DFAT virtual Diner's Club credit card as the form of payment via the Domestic Accommodation [Online Booking Tool \(OBT\)](#). Booking accommodation direct with hotels and paying for rooms using the DFAT Corporate Credit Card is not permitted regardless of the circumstances.
2. Posts booking and funding accommodation in Australia for official travel are exempt from the WoAG Travel Arrangements and are free to book accommodation directly with hotels. Accommodation must not be booked using the OBT. Similarly, posts booking travel in other international destinations can book accommodation directly with hotels.
3. For overseas travel, posts are responsible for assessing the relative star rating and appropriateness of local hotels/motels. Because of security concerns, Airbnb is not considered an appropriate standard of accommodation for any official international travel and TMCs will not book Airbnb.
4. The Australian standard star rating system is to be used to determine accommodation entitlements. Employees should select accommodation at an appropriate standard taking into account the guidance on entitlements below, the requirements to demonstrate value for money and therefore, select the most cost-effective accommodation available (a room rather than a suite).
5. Employees must obtain written approval from a delegate to upgrade accommodation or book a standard of accommodation above their entitlement before bookings are made.
6. Within entitlements, employees must always strive for the best value for money when booking accommodation, either domestically or internationally. Employees must also ensure that their costs do not exceed the totals approved by their delegate. When selecting accommodation, the cost comparison must include all taxes and any compulsory service charges.

### Accommodation Standards in Australia and at Posts

7. SES employees travelling on official business within their country of residence (either in Australia or when on posting) are entitled to between four and five star international chain accommodation.
8. Non-SES employees travelling on official business within their country of residence (either in Australia or when on posting) are entitled to between three and four star international chain accommodation.
9. All employees are entitled to a standard room. Complimentary upgrades to suites, deluxe or club rooms are to be declined.

### International STM Accommodation Standards

10. All employees on a STM to a country outside their country of residence are entitled to a standard room in four star international chain hotel accommodation. This should generally be comparable to four star accommodation in Australia. If a post assess a higher standard of accommodation is necessary to reach the equivalent of the Australian standard, a case must be made to the delegate to upgrade the accommodation to an appropriate level. Employees proceeding on a STM where the duration exceeds three weeks, should be accommodated in a serviced apartment. The standard of a serviced apartment should equate to that typically available in Australia, where adequate kitchen facilities and utensils are provided to allow the preparation of basic meals. Access to adequate laundry facilities, provided either within an apartment or a common facility within the same building should also be available. Posts should ensure that access to a serviced apartment facility is available within a reasonable distance from the Chancery, taking into consideration local transport options, safety and security.

### Booking International STM Accommodation

11. It is preferable that all short-term international STM accommodation requirements are booked through the TMC rather than direct with posts. While posts can provide advice on a range of hotels closest to the mission, bookings for the suggested hotel should be made through the TMC and not by posts, unless there are specific reasons for doing so. Payment for international hotels is made using the DFAT corporate credit card.
12. Where a trip is cancelled or dates of travel are changed, the TMC will automatically make changes to both airline and hotel bookings, thereby avoiding any no-show charges by the hotel if changes to/cancellation of a booking made separately is inadvertently missed or forgotten.

### Conference and Group Bookings

13. Where the Commonwealth is responsible for any of the direct or indirect costs associated with a conference or group accommodation, this must be booked through the TMC. Conference bookings must be made directly with the TMC rather than through the OB. Contact details for the TMC can be found on the [s 47E\(d\)](#)

### Costs of Official Accommodation in Australia

14. All accommodation booked in Australia through the TMC will be paid for with a DFAT virtual Diner's Club credit card. Employees will not be reimbursed for any accommodation charges paid for by any other means. Domestic TA accommodation rates published on the Intranet are a guide to the costs at each location only and do not equate to an upper limit for domestic hotels. The star rating will be the arbiter for all accommodation and the TMC is aware of this requirement.
15. Employees must settle any ancillary charges and/or charges covered by travel allowance separately on check-out. These amounts are not to be charged to the virtual Diner's Club credit card. However there may be instances where a domestic hotel will not permit a bill to be split and will charge all costs to the virtual Diner's Club credit card. Where these costs are incidental to the official accommodation costs, they can be paid for using the virtual Diner's Club credit card, but must be acquitted as a "personal expense" in TEMS and the cost repaid to the Department.
16. When **acquitting travel**, a **Statutory Declaration** is not acceptable if accommodation receipts have been lost. Employees must contact the hotel(s) and request copies.

#### Costs of Official Accommodation outside Australia

17. Employees are required to pay for international accommodation using their corporate credit card and to acquit the cost of their accommodation providing receipts showing the actual expenditure incurred.
18. Employees must settle any ancillary charges and/or charges covered by travel allowance separately at check out. These amounts are not to be charged to a corporate credit card. However there may be instances where an international hotel will not permit a bill to be split and will charge all costs to the corporate credit card. Where these costs are incidental to the official accommodation costs, they can be paid for using a corporate credit card, but must be acquitted as a "personal expense" in TEMS and the cost repaid to the Department.
19. When acquitting travel, a Statutory Declaration is not acceptable if accommodation receipts have been lost. Employees must contact the hotel(s) and request copies.

## 9. TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

### General Principles

1. Travel Allowance (TA) for meals and incidentals is intended to cover the reasonable costs incurred when employees are required to be away from home overnight on official business.
2. The application of TA is consistent for all forms of travel (domestic or international). TA will be calculated from the time of arrival at the first locality where a rest period is being taken or where official business is to be conducted, and will cease on departure from that same locality. Travel time to and from airports is not included.
3. TA is not payable during periods of travel (i.e. during a flight or surface travel) unless that travel meets the definition outlined in **Chapter 12**.
4. TA is not paid in certain circumstances. Refer to **Chapter 11** for details.
5. If an amount for a meal or meals or incidentals is not specified in the **international TA rates** for the location, the delegate may authorise:
  - a. Reimbursement of reasonable actual costs for meals taken (excluding the cost of alcohol), based on receipts provided; and
  - b. Incidentals as the appropriate regional rate specified in the "localities not listed above" on the list of international TA rates.
6. If there is a capital city TA rate for the country, that rate should be used.

### Determination of Entitlement

7. The Secretary will determine the rates of TA payable to employees. **s 47E(d)**  
DFAT will use its subscription services to adjust these rates from time to time.
8. Employees are entitled to be paid an amount for TA when absent from their usual place of work on official duty overnight, calculated according to the approved itinerary and according to the table below. Where employees are performing duties temporarily away from their usual place of work, and are not entitled to receive TA, they may apply for reimbursement of reasonable travel costs. Reasonable travel costs are considered to be taxi fees and/or parking/toll fees. Meals do not constitute reasonable travel costs.
9. Where employees undertake frequent travel, part-day travel allowance is payable for subsequent trips without the need to meet the requirement of an overnight stay. Frequent travel is defined as the number of domestic trips totalling more than 28 working days within the preceding three calendar months.



10. If an employee is travelling on official duty away from their usual place of work, takes sick leave and is unable to return home, they are still entitled to be paid TA.
11. An employee may be recalled to duty while they are on leave overseas. In this case, TA will be paid for the period of recall to duty. The delegate may consider the additional fares incurred as an official expense.

#### Meal Allowance

12. Meal allowance is to be calculated as per the following table for all travel:

Time of Arrival or Departure	Rate for Meals for Day of Arrival	Rate for Meals for Day of Departure
Up to 7:00am	Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner	Nil
7:01am to 1:00pm	Lunch and Dinner	Breakfast
1:01pm to 6:59pm	Dinner	Breakfast and Lunch
After 7:00pm	Nil	Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

13. The formulae used to calculate per diem meals is:

Breakfast:	The average cost of a four star hotel breakfast at the location
Lunch:	The average cost of a two-course lunch including coffee/tea/soft drink at a cafeteria or snack bar at the location.
Dinner:	The average cost of a two-course dinner with a glass of wine/beer/soft drink and coffee/tea at a medium priced restaurant at the location

#### Incidentals Allowance

14. In accordance with the General Principles section above, incidentals allowance, like meal allowance, is payable from the time of arrival at the destination until the time of departure.
15. The following is a list of expenses covered by the incidentals component of TA. There is no requirement to acquit this allowance, hence receipts are not required.
  - a. Laundry of two items of personal clothing per day at a four star hotel; and
  - b. Two litres of bottled water per day.

#### Repayment of Overpaid TA

16. The Department currently advances TA to all travelling employees. This advance will be calculated and paid up to a maximum of five working days in advance of the travel when the trip is approved by the delegate and the trip has been finalised in SAP.
17. It is an employee's responsibility to ensure their **Travel Profile** remains up to date with the correct bank account details and mobile telephone number.
18. When acquitting a trip, there may be circumstances where an employee will be required to repay an overpaid amount of TA:

- a. Where there is a last-minute change to the approved and finalised itinerary (either before the commencement of or during a trip) and the length of the trip has been reduced or altered, or destinations have changed (regardless of the circumstances);
  - b. Where a meal has been supplied by another entity (see **Chapter 11**);
  - c. Where the value of the Australian dollar appreciates against the daily rate of a foreign currency used to calculate any TA advance in the time between calculating and paying that advance and the actual date(s) of travel (a depreciation in the Australian dollar value will result in a payment to the employee);
  - d. Where the Secretary has authorised the change to the rates of TA; or
  - e. Any other circumstance(s) that would give rise to a change to the approved itinerary that would impact on the amount of TA the employee would otherwise be entitled to.
19. Where a customer invoice has been issued to an employee for an overpaid amount of TA, the employee will be required to repay the amount owed within the required timeframe.

## 10. OTHER COSTS IN EXCESS OF TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

### STM/STA Reimbursable Expenses

1. The following expenses may be reimbursed in addition to the meals and incidentals allowance, if approved by the relevant delegate as relating to official travel:
  - a. Departure and transit taxes where this amount has not been included in the overall cost of a ticket. If there is any deviation from the official route, the employee is responsible for any costs;
  - b. Taxi, train, bus or other public transport costs associate with the official trip;
  - c. Parking at airports or hotels;
  - d. Purchases related to DFAT assets (e.g. cables for a laptop, charger for a mobile phone – any such item must be returned with the DFAT asset);
  - e. Fees and commissions on exchange of foreign currency;
  - f. Bank charges on credit cards for foreign exchange charges or on personal accounts for withdrawal of funds from overseas ATM locations, relating to official expenditure;
  - g. Where a DFAT phone is not provided or where WiFi/data is not available to use smartphone apps , employees may claim up to 30 minutes of phone calls per week (five days) away or pro-rata for trips of less than one week (e.g. if the STM is for three days, the employee would be entitled to 18 minutes of personal calls); and
  - h. Business centre costs such as official phone calls, official internet use and/or printing/copy charges for official documents.
2. All claims must be substantiated with receipts. A Statutory Declaration for costs in excess of AUD82.50 or its foreign currency equivalent, may be used but only where a delegate is satisfied that a receipt is not available. Delegates may seek additional documentation or explanation before approving an expenditure claim where the claim amount or circumstances surrounding the claim warrant further investigation or explanation.

### Excess Costs for Official Travel

3. If a delegate is satisfied the TA is insufficient to meet the costs necessarily incurred for meals and incidentals, the employee may be reimbursed the difference between the costs and the TA payable. The factors that will be considered by the delegate include:
  - a. The nature and amount of costs incurred for meals and incidentals;
  - b. The period of the travel;
  - c. The nature of the duties undertaken;
  - d. The cost of meals and relevant services at the location(s) visited; and
  - e. Any other factor(s) relevant to the cost(s) incurred.
4. Generally, a delegate will only exercise this discretion when the employee can justify that excess expenses were incurred in relation to the whole of a trip, rather than a single location where multiple localities are visited during the same trip. Such claims must be substantiated with receipts (a Statutory Declaration will not be accepted in this instance). It should not be assumed that approval will be granted.
5. Employees will not be reimbursed for tickets purchased privately for any official travel. This will include any changes to an approved itinerary that have not been conveyed in advance to the TMC and for which s23 approval has not been granted in advance.

## 11. REDUCTION IN PAYMENT OF TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

### General Principles

1. The standard daily rate of Travel Allowance (TA) will apply to trips up to and including 21 days duration.
2. There may be circumstances where TA is paid at a lesser rate or does not apply.

### Reviewed Travel Allowance

3. Wherever possible, accommodation with adequate kitchen and laundry facilities (i.e. a serviced apartment) should be arranged for STMs in excess of three weeks' duration. See Chapter 8.11 for further details.
4. The daily rate of the meals and incidentals component of TA will reduce by 50 per cent from the 22<sup>nd</sup> day, unless the local circumstances are such that:
  - a. there is no alternative to taking meals and services at a hotel (such as local security concerns that prohibit movement outside a hotel); or
  - b. that cheaper alternatives for eating within a *reasonable* walking distance of a hotel or workplace are not available; or
  - c. that serviced accommodation as defined in Chapter 8.11 is not available in the location of the workplace.
5. In such situations, the daily rate of meals and incidentals may continue to be paid at 100 per cent. A business case outlining the circumstances detailing the local situation and requesting approval to continue to pay TA in full must be sent to the **s 47E(d)** Consideration will be made on a case-by-case basis.
6. Where a second or subsequent STM is undertaken from the first STM location at which the reviewed TA rate has already commenced, and the employee returns to the first STM location at the conclusion of the second or subsequent STM, the 50 per cent reduction to meals and incidentals will still be applied at the location of the first STM.
  - a. For example:
    - i. Employee travels to London on a three month STM. The employee will be paid 100 per cent of the meals and incidentals component of TA for the first 21 days. From day 22, that amount will reduce by 50 per cent.
    - ii. After six weeks in London, employee travels to Berlin for a one week STM. TA for London will cease and employee will be paid daily rate meals and incidentals for Berlin from time of arrival at that location.
    - iii. On return to London at the end of the STM in Berlin, the London daily rate for meals and incidentals reduced by 50 per cent will recommence.

### Instances where Travel Allowance is not Payable

7. Additionally, TA is not paid for:
  - a. Official travel of less than 24 hours, unless an overnight stay is involved ([transit allowance](#) may apply);
  - b. During periods of recreation leave;
  - c. During periods of leave without pay;
  - d. During periods of long service leave;
  - e. Weekends or public holidays contiguous with the forms of leave described above; or
  - f. A rest period at a destination if the employee is already domiciled in that location.

### Meals Paid for or Provided By Another Entity

8. Employees acting in their official capacity will not be entitled to the meal(s) component of TA where meals are provided by, or paid for by another entity, including the Australian Government. The provision of meals by another entity must be declared on the travel acquittal.
9. Accommodation and/or meals could be provided by or paid for by any entity (including all governments or private companies) in a number of ways, such as accommodation and/or meals while acting in an official capacity:
  - a. Included as part of accommodation costs such as breakfasts included in a hotel tariff;
  - b. Paid directly as part of a residential training course, a conference/seminar registration fee, or an industry briefing;
  - c. As part of a sponsored forum;
  - d. Provided for by a local, state or foreign government, or foreign mission;
  - e. Provided by an airline due to flight delays, cancellations or variations (a meal voucher);
  - f. As part of a function hosted by the post or post employees (e.g. HOM/HOP) while visiting on a STM;
  - g. As part of a representation function where payment is made from representational funds; or
  - h. Where an employee is hospitalised during official travel.

### Refusal of a Provided Meal

10. Where a meal is provided (e.g. breakfast as part of the accommodation tariff) but an employee incurs an additional cost for meals due to medical or dietary requirements, receipts must be provided for costs in excess of \$82.50 along with a statement outlining the reasons for refusal of the provided meal.

## 12. TRANSIT ALLOWANCE

### General Principles

1. A transit allowance is payable to cover the following situations:
  - a. When the approved mode of transport is not an aircraft (such as a car, ferry, bus or train) and sustenance is not provided by the carrier and actual travel time exceeds two hours;
  - b. When sustenance is not provided by the airline (budget airline) and point to point travel (including minimum check-in) exceeded two hours; or
  - c. When an employee is travelling for more than 24 hours but is not entitled to any payment of TA for that trip (e.g. when in transit on a flight or in airports for the entire duration of the trip with no access to an airport lounge).

### Applicable Rate

2. Transit allowance is payable once daily at the rate of 50 per cent of the incidental rate applying to the transit location.
3. Transit allowance is only applicable on transportation that takes longer than two hours from the time of departure of the time of arrival (including minimum check-in time).

## 13. EQUIPMENT AND SPECIAL CLOTHING ALLOWANCES

### General Principles

1. Employees proceeding on a STM and who seek payment of either a special clothing or extreme cold weather clothing allowance must submit their request through TEMS. This can be done by choosing the appropriate check box when creating an international trip request.
2. Allowances in this category are subject to certain parameters and eligibility criteria. Employees should verify their eligibility for payment of this category of allowance before submitting a request. Details on eligibility criteria and payment rates can be found in [s 47E\(d\)](#). Any questions regarding eligibility should be referred to the [s 47E\(d\)](#).
3. The allowance rates are usually adjusted annually. Current rates can be found in [s 47E\(d\)](#).
4. Allowances paid in this category do not need to be acquitted.

## 14. TRAVEL ACQUITTAL

### General Principles

1. All travel must be acquitted within 30 days after the return date of travel. This is in line with the Department's **Advances Policy**. This applies equally to employees in Australia or at post.
2. When processing a travel acquittal, employees are required to update their trip in TEMS to reflect the actual itinerary, match credit card receipts to their trip and claim any additional costs as outlined in this Policy. Any additional costs will require appropriate PGPA Act s23 delegate approval.
3. Instructions on how to process a travel acquittal can be found on the **Travel Page** of the intranet.
4. A travel acquittal must be completed in terms of the APS Code of Conduct and the *PGPA Act 2013*. Failure to acquit travel advances in the required time may be referred to the Employee Conduct and Ethics Section for investigation. Further payment(s) of travel allowance for any subsequent trip(s) may be withheld until an outstanding acquittal is approved.
5. It remains the travelling employee's responsibility to ensure that a travel acquittal submitted to a delegate for review/approval is completed by that delegate in the required timeframe.

### Acquittal of LTP travel to and from Posts

6. Employees travelling to post to commence a LTP will not be able to acquit travel in TEMS as this is not available at posts. Travel to post will be acquitted by the **s 47E(d)**

\_\_\_\_\_ will acquit travel for all SES employees. Any questions in relation to acquitting travel to post should be directed to the **s 47E(d)** \_\_\_\_\_ or the **s 47E(d)** \_\_\_\_\_ as appropriate.

7. Employees returning to Australia from long term posting should refer any questions regarding acquitting travel to the **s 47E(d)** \_\_\_\_\_ or the **s 47E(d)** \_\_\_\_\_

### Acquitting travel at posts

8. Employees on posting do not have access to TEMS to acquit travel. Posts will have local/regional/hubbed processes in place to acquit travel expenditure.



## 15. REST PERIODS

### General Principles

1. The rest period policy reflects the underlying WHS obligation that rest periods are provided to allow a break on a long journey and to recuperate at the end of a journey. DFAT employees are provided with Business Class travel in order to arrive at their destination refreshed and able to commence work without the need for extended rest breaks.
2. Employees are considered to be on duty and therefore receive their salary where the rest period is within normal working hours. Where a rest period falls outside normal working hours, employees are not entitled to claim remuneration or time off in lieu for the rest or travel period.

### Long Term Posting

3. Rest period entitlements for employees and families travelling on a long term posting have been cashed out as part of Transfer Allowance. [s 47E\(d\)](#) categorises posts by the number of rest period(s) and travel day(s).
4. For posts categorised as requiring four rest and travel days, employees receive an additional amount in their transfer allowance payment to cover the cost of the second rest period. This also includes cross posting where applicable. The amount may also be issued to cover the cost of any enforced stopover where the airline does not meet the stopover costs.
5. The amount cashed-out is based on average costs for one night's accommodation in Dubai, Singapore and Los Angeles. The resulting rates are listed as an add-on transfer allowance, with unaccompanied, accompanied and per child rates applied as appropriate. These figures are reviewed at least annually to ensure that the Australian dollar amount, when converted, still represents the average costs incurred at a rest period transit point.

### Short Term Mission/Short Term Assignment

6. Employees on STM/STA travel are entitled to rest periods calculated by the most direct route of travel.
7. A rest period is between 12 and 24 hours, depending on the length of travel undertaken. The same eligibility applies to the journey, whether it is by a direct or indirect route.
8. If an employee has an unavoidable stopover of at least 12 hours, it will be considered as one rest period.
9. Rest periods do not accrue and must be taken immediately on arrival at the destination or en route at a stopover point where two rest periods are permitted. No journey can have more than two rest periods.

### Determination of Entitlement

Actual Flight Time on Direct Route (including reasonable connection time)	Rest Period Allowed
8 hours up to 18 hours	One*
18 hours and above.	Two **

\* one rest period: only to be taken at final destination

\*\* two rest periods: one rest period may be taken en route and one at final destination, or two at final destination. Two rest periods cannot be taken en route.

#### Examples:

##### Canberra – Singapore:

Total flying time including reasonable domestic connection: 11.25 hours

Canberra to Sydney: 1 hour flight time.

Reasonable domestic/international connection: 2 hours

Sydney to Singapore: 8.25 hours flight time.

One rest period taken at final destination.

##### Canberra – Paris:

Total flying time including reasonable domestic/international connections: 27.5 hours

Canberra to Sydney: 1 hour flight time.

Reasonable domestic/international connection: 2 hours

Sydney to Abu Dhabi: 14.75 hours flight time

Reasonable international connection: 2 hours

Abu Dhabi to Paris: 7.75 hours flight time.

Two rest periods can be taken at final destination or one rest day can be taken en route in Abu Dhabi provided the IBF permits a stopover with no penalty.

#### Impact on TA Payment

10. Travel Allowance is paid as follows:
  - a. Employees on STM/STA are entitled to TA when a rest period is taken en route.
  - b. Employees will be entitled to TA if they are forced to stay in overnight accommodation because of flight restrictions, and the airline does not meet the costs involved.
  - c. After completion of the STM/STA, TA is payable for a rest period at a location in Australia if taken at a location other than in the employee's headquarters.
11. No allowance is paid for a rest period at the final destination, if the employee is already domiciled in that location.

#### Additional Rest Period

12. Recognising the Department's commitment to facilitating an appropriate work/life balance for all employees, where an employee undertakes prolonged or frequent STM travel, consideration may be given to an additional rest period, to be taken upon arriving home.

## 16. ANNUAL LEAVE WHILST ON OFFICIAL TRAVEL

### General Principles

1. The purpose of officially funded business class travel is official business. Officially funded travel must not be seen to facilitate or subsidise private travel in any way. Any private elements to travel must remain incidental only to the official reasons for travel. This helps to ensure the Department's travel policies remain publicly defensible and aligned with community expectations.
2. The availability and timing of annual leave is subject to operational requirements and must always be agreed between employees, supervisors and, where necessary, with s 47E(d) (e.g. for annual leave taken at the end of a STM or on return from a LTP).
3. Employees and supervisors must exercise judgement in their decisions to ensure, particularly in the case of short trips, that annual leave remains clearly incidental to the official itinerary.
4. In exceptional or compassionate circumstances the s 47E(d) retains the discretion to approve the taking of additional annual leave.

### Relocation Travel

5. The purpose of officially funded business class airfares for relocation travel to and from post is to ensure the prompt official commencement of duties at post and the safe and efficient return of employees and their dependants to Australia.
6. Chapter 6 of this Policy provides clear parameters, by region, for what is a direct route to and from Australia and limits stopovers to a maximum of one international and one domestic. Other routes will generally not be permitted, even if other less direct routes are cheaper or where an employee has family reasons for travelling another route. Alternative routes or additional stopovers will only be considered where excessive travel times or stopovers raise health or welfare concerns for employees or dependants (for example an employee with a health condition, a disability or when travelling with young children).
7. Other than the notional rest and travel days prescribed in s 47E(d) no other leave is permitted en route to post.
8. Travel on RTA should be completed within a reasonable time frame. This is deemed to be the annual recreation leave, including any hardship leave, accrued in one year of service. If an employee wishes to extend their leave on RTA past that which would accrue in one year of service, permission must be sought from the s 47E(d). Any airfare difference between the notional and actual fares travelled will be a personal cost to the employee.

STM Travel to an International Destination (originating from Australia or overseas)

9. Employees can only take annual leave in line with the amount that accrues during their STM. This includes additional hardship leave accrual on trips of more than 28 days in line with **s 47E(d)** .
10. **s 47E(d)**

#### STM Travel inbound to Australia

11. Employees can take annual leave at the rate of 20 per cent of the trip up to a maximum of two weeks leave (“the 20% rule”). Employees can take annual leave at any stage during the STM or official travel subject to the normal leave approval process.

#### Travel Allowances

12. Employees are not entitled to TA or accommodation costs for any annual leave period approved during an official trip, nor for any extension of travel by annual leave after the official part of a trip. Employees are required to fully declare any such days in their travel acquittal and ensure that TA and accommodation are not paid for these periods.

## 17. LEAVE FARES

### Home Leave Fare

1. Details on the eligibility and application of Home Leave Fares can be found in [s 47E\(d\)](#) -

### Assisted Leave Fare to Australia

2. Details on the eligibility and application of Assisted Leave Fares to Australia can be found in [s 47E\(d\)](#)

### Regional Leave Fare

3. Details on the eligibility and application of Regional Leave Fares can be found [s 47E\(d\)](#) -

### Reunion Travel

Details on the eligibility and application of Reunion Travel can be found in [s 47E\(d\)](#)

### Chapter 4.8 Compassionate Travel.

4. Details on the eligibility and application of Compassionate Travel can be found in [s 47E\(d\)](#)

## 18. VISA APPLICATION AND PROCESSING

### General Principles

1. The Department's Visa Desk within the **s 47E(d)** will assist employees and their dependants travelling overseas on official business or for long-term posting with visa applications for the countries being visited.
2. The Department has contracted the services of [Visalink](#) to provide visa services to employees requiring visas when travelling officially. The Visalink website provides an online visa application service and includes detailed information on visa requirements for each country (including where a Third Person Note (TPN) is required), application forms, details on any costs involved and processing times. **s 47(1)(b)**  
Employees travelling on Long Term Posting should discuss the cost of visa processing with the **s 47E(d)**
3. Employees planning official travel must check documentation requirements and minimum timeframes for their visa needs well in advance of the date(s) of intended travel. Early completion of required documentation will ensure that sufficient time is available for the Visa Desk to lodge applications for processing with Visalink. As processing times at foreign missions will differ substantially between missions, it is important to check lead times on the Visalink website before submitting documentation. If only a short time is given for processing, it may result in the foreign mission being unable to process a visa application in time, resulting in delayed, deferred or cancelled travel. Neither the Visa Desk nor Visalink can influence the processing times for visa applications.
4. It is the responsibility of travelling employees to ensure that they are aware of the visa requirements of the country/countries to which they are travelling. It is important to ensure that the details provided on the Visalink website are read and understood clearly before any application is submitted.
5. Private travel visa applications will not be processed through the Visa Desk. Any requirement for visas for approved private travel in conjunction with official travel will be the responsibility of the travelling employee.

## 19. OFFICIAL & DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS

### General Principles

1. For Australian citizens travelling overseas, most countries require a passport with a minimum of six months' validity after the return date of travel. Employees travelling or likely to travel on official business are responsible for ensuring their official or diplomatic passport is valid or an application for a new or renewal passports is processed well in advance of the proposed departure date.
2. For policy guidance and information on applying for diplomatic and official passports, refer to the [s 47E\(d\)](#) of the Australian Passports Office Online Passport information or contact the [s 47E\(d\)](#) of APO by email.



## 20. BAGGAGE LIMITS AND SECURITY PROCEDURES

1. Employees should discuss specific airline baggage limits (both checked-in and carry-on) and any destination-specific security procedures for travel with the TMC when booking flights. Airline websites will also provide information on baggage limits and security procedures as each will differ depending on the aircraft used, the class of travel and the location of any destination or stopover(s) en route.
2. Particular care must be taken to note any restrictions on the size and weight of individual bags versus the overall baggage allowance for the class of travel and any restrictions or bans on items that can be carried in checked-in or carry-on luggage.

### STM/STA Travel

3. Employees travelling on STM/STA should discuss excess baggage requirements (if any) with **s 47E(d)** prior to travel. Depending on the length of the STM/STA, there *may* be provision to cover the cost of excess baggage. The TMC or airline websites should be consulted and monitored for both checked-in and carry-on baggage limits and any excess baggage costs.

### Relocation Travel

4. Employees and their families traveling to or from post should refer **s 47E(d)** regarding excess baggage.

## 21. SPONSORED TRAVEL

1. The guidelines governing sponsored travel apply equally to all employees of the Department, including contractors and LES. Detailed guidance can be found in the [s 47E\(d\)](#) page.

## 22. HIRE OR CHARTER AIRCRAFT

### General Principles

1. The procurement of the hire of a charter flight is to be on a value for money basis and include a focus on efficiency in deployment of resources and a balance of equity.
2. For a business case to exist for a charter flight, at least one of the following circumstances must exist, in combination with the last point:
  - a. Approved travel is to a location where there are no commercial flights; or
  - b. There is no available flight that will arrive in time for the primary purpose of the travel; or
  - c. Other attendees to the meeting are unable to organise travel; or
  - d. A charter flight can be justified on the basis of comparable costs; and
  - e. There is no valid alternative to a face-to-face meeting.

### Responsibilities of Delegates, Travellers and Travel Coordinators

3. Prior to booking a hire or charter flight, a proposal must be submitted to the appropriate delegate. The proposal must include:
  - a. The purpose of the travel, names, details and usual office location of employee(s) travelling;
  - b. The price of the charter, the proposed itinerary including dates and times; and
  - c. The business case outlining the reason(s) for booking a charter flight including an appropriate risk assessment.
4. Contact the **s 47E(d)** for guidance before submitting a proposal to the delegate to hire or charter an aircraft. **s 47E(d)** will vet the proposal to guarantee it meets the Commonwealth Procurement Rules.

## 23. PRIVATE MOTOR VEHICLES

### General Principles

1. Where transport via a private motor vehicle (PMV) is better value for money on a door-to-door basis than other transport options (including commercial car hire at corporate rates), and there is a clear business reason for doing so, the delegate may authorise the use of a PMV.
2. Where the use of a PMV is approved, a rate per kilometre as outlined in **s 47E(d)** will be paid. The rate paid compensates for the cost of fuel and wear and tear on the vehicle. Costs incurred for tolls, ferries and/or parking fees can be claimed if the delegate is satisfied that the costs are reasonable.
3. The total cost of motor vehicle allowance cannot exceed the lesser of either the notional airfare cost or cost of commercial car hire.
4. Where a delegate has approved the use of a PMV, prior to the commencement of the journey, the employee will be required to provide the **s 47E(d)** with a copy of:
  - a. Current motor vehicle registration;
  - b. Current comprehensive insurance cover policy (vehicles with CTP insurance only will generally not be approved);
  - c. Current driver's licence;
  - d. The approved itinerary to be loaded in the TEMS to ensure the correct payment of any TA entitlement.

### Using Private Motor Vehicles at Posts

5. Posts should carefully consider any request to use a PMV for official purposes at posts, taking into account any local insurance, security and infrastructure conditions/limitations.
6. Posts should use official fleet vehicles or local hire car companies in preference to approving a PMV request.

## 24. CAR HIRE

### General Principles

1. In accordance with the WoAG Travel Arrangements, a sole supplier of hire cars has been appointed by the Department of Finance. All bookings must be made through the TMC using the appointed supplier.
2. Where a post has a need to hire a vehicle internationally, posts are free to select any car hire provider based on the usual value for money considerations. This includes car hire in Australia funded by posts. Bookings must not be made through the TMC and should be sourced direct with the hire company.
3. Where the delegate has approved the need for a car as transport to and/or at the locality the decision must be based on the value for money principle.
4. All components of the cost of car hire must be considered in the value for money assessment and included in the estimated travel costs submitted for approval. These may include additional booking fees payable, optional extras such as GPS devices (where not already installed in the vehicle), insurance options, tolls and fuel charges. These are all important factors in determining the overall final cost for car hire, particularly where a value for money assessment is being made between several surface travel options.

### Entitlement

5. Under the WoAG Travel Arrangements, there is no longer a vehicle size entitlement based on the level of the employee. Vehicle type is determined by the requirement. Employees should discuss the type of vehicle required with the TMC and the cost of the hire must be included in the overall cost of travel.

### Sourcing Car Hire in Australia.

6. Divisions and STOs funding car hire for travellers in Australia must book through the TMC. Payment will be made to the employee's virtual Diner's Card. Direct bookings with the supplier will not be accepted.
7. Post-funded travel in Australia is exempt from this requirement as international car hire is outside the scope of the WoAG Travel Arrangements. Posts are free to select any car hire provider based on the usual value for money considerations.

### Sourcing Car Hire outside Australia

8. Travellers based in Australia who need to hire a car internationally can arrange hire through the TMC. Payment must be made using the traveller's Corporate Credit Card including for fuel costs and any surcharges applied (such as airport fees, one-way hire surcharge etc.). Car hire for use overseas is to be acquitted on return from travel. Where car hire is approved as part of a mixed air/surface itinerary, the total cost of air and surface travel must not exceed the notional airfare entitlement, except where a clear business reason for car hire exists.

## 25. PUBLIC TRANSPORT

### General Principles

1. Public transport includes buses, trains, ferries, taxis and similar, and should be utilised for short journeys within CBD and inner city areas, where adequate public transport is available.

### Costs of Official Travel

2. Travellers using public transport should use their Corporate Credit Card to pay wherever possible. Where a Corporate Credit Card cannot be used, a receipt for payment must be obtained and submitted as part of the travel acquittal process for reimbursement.

### International and STM/STA Travel

3. The TMC can provide train schedules for the USA, Canada, Europe, the UK and Japan. The TMC can also purchase tickets on behalf of a traveller, but employees travelling should check prices with posts as they may be cheaper purchased in the country of travel.

## 26. RIDE SOURCING SERVICES

### General Principles

1. The Australian Taxation Office has defined ride sourcing services as an ongoing arrangement where a driver makes a vehicle available for public hire, a passenger uses a third-party digital platform such as a website or smartphone app to request a ride from a third party source and the driver uses the vehicle to transport a passenger for payment with a view to profit.
2. Ride sourcing is a generic name for a range of services that can also be known as ride sharing, ride-share, ride booking, point-to-point, taxi or ride-hailing. Examples of ride sourcing services include Uber (in all its forms such as UberX, UberXL, Uber Black and Uber Select), Lime, Ola, Lyft, Grab, Shebah and Oscar. This list is not exhaustive and there may be others in various locations around the world.
3. In Australia and many locations around the world, ride sourcing services are regulated by government authorities and complaints regarding their services are dealt with by the regulator. In some overseas locations however, there is no regulation of ride-sourcing services. Employees travelling overseas should research any ride-sourcing services in their destination location to ensure they are regulated and secure. In such situations, it may be better to secure the services of a regulated taxi service or hotel transport to and from the airport.
4. Posts should ensure that any ride sourcing services in their country or location(s) of accreditation are operating within local laws and are regulated. Posts must be satisfied that the local regulations as well as the practices of individual ride sourcing services will operate so as to meet the Department's duty of care towards its employees (for example, requirements for drivers, vehicle types used and their maintenance and insurances are suitable and enforced).

### Using Ride Sourcing Services

5. DFAT employees can use ride sourcing services for official purposes where it is legal and regulated in the country or location, and pay for these services using their DFAT corporate credit card.
6. It is important that employees ensure that when paying for a ride sourcing service using a corporate credit card that a separate business account is set up so that any private use of the ride-sourcing service is not charged to a DFAT corporate credit card. Details for setting up an Uber business account can be found on the Credit Card page of the Intranet.
7. The selection of a ride sourcing service is subject to the normal value for money considerations and it should not be assumed that they are automatically cheaper than taxis or similar services. Some ride sourcing services automatically increase their prices as demand increases and may be more expensive than other alternatives during peak periods or public holidays. Some automatically add as much as a 20 percent tip automatically depending on the service used.

## 27. TRAVEL INSURANCE

### General Principles

1. The Department has a duty of care to its employees travelling on official business and provides insurance depending on the category of travel undertaken.
2. The Travel Insurance Matrix [Short Term Mission Travellers \(satin.io\)](#) provides a list of the types of coverage provided.
3. The following information is a summary of the types of coverage provided with links to the relevant intranet pages that will provide more comprehensive details.
4. Employees travelling privately must ensure appropriate travel insurance cover is purchased at their own expense.

### Comcare

5. Comcare provides workers' compensation strictly for work-related injuries, illness or death while at work, whether at the normal place of work or working elsewhere temporarily, or when travelling on an approved itinerary. Comcare covers all A-based employees based in Australia and overseas (and LES at some posts where there is no local workers' compensation insurance scheme).

### Comcover

6. Comcover provides cover for any traveller on a DFAT-funded and approved STM of up to 180 consecutive days' duration for non-work related illness, injury or accidental death and for items lost or stolen such as baggage (exclusions and an excess may apply).
7. Cover also extends to outside of work hours (exclusions may apply). This includes when on approved annual leave as part of the STM within the country of destination. The Department has a subscription to International SOS through its annual policy with Comcover to provide medical assistance and payment facilitation for A-based employees on a STM who may find themselves in need of medical assistance.<sup>647</sup>  
**s 47E(d)**
8. A-based employees and their accompanying dependants travelling to and from post on LTP are also covered by Comcover for the standard rest and travel days only. Any personal travel outside these days while en route to and from post will need to be covered by personal travel insurance at the employee's own expense.

### Overseas Health Provisions

9. The Department's Overseas Health Provisions (OHP) provides coverage for the treatment of day-to-day health matters, illnesses or injuries that arise during, or as a result of, an employee's LTP or STA.



Employees and their accompanying dependants must have received a medical and dental clearance prior to departing Australia for coverage to apply.

#### World-Wide Multiple Risk Cover

10. **World-wide Multiple Risk Cover (WWMRC)** usually covers household and personal effects, personal liability, personal accident and emergency travel for A-based employees on LTP or, where provided, on STA (exclusions and an excess may apply). This insurance is a personal responsibility of the employee and must be organised prior to proceeding on LTP or STA.

## 28. HEALTH AND VACCINATIONS

### General Principles

1. The Department is committed to ensure the health and welfare of employees and their dependants when engaged in either short or long term travel.
2. The Department needs to ensure that all travellers are fit and healthy enough to travel and work internationally, that travel related health risks have been considered and mitigated wherever possible, and in the setting of a long-term posting, that employees and their dependants are not placed at increased health risks at the destination.
3. To promote and ensure the health of employees and their dependants serving overseas, s 47E(d) and staffed by experience medical practitioners will provide advice and guidance on all travel health related matters.
4. The Department uses the services of the Travel Doctor TMVC to conduct pre-posting medical assessments, to provide vaccinations and general travel health preparation. The Travel Doctor TMVC has travel medical clinics in most major centres.

### Relocation and STM/STA Travel.

5. A range of health issues may be relevant to travelling employees and their families, and advice may be sought from the s 47E(d). This includes discussing general health and vaccination advice for overseas travel.
6. Employees and their families proceeding on LTP will be required to undergo a medical clearance prior to departure.

## 29. FREQUENT FLYER SCHEMES

### General Principles

1. As part of the WoAG Travel Arrangements, appointed domestic and international airlines have turned-off all frequent flyer point schemes and other loyalty schemes for all officially funded travel. Travellers are no longer permitted to accrue frequent flyer points when they undertake any official travel on these airlines. However, appointed airlines will continue to issue status credits.
2. Airlines are unable to suppress the accumulations of frequent flyer points on affiliated, partner or alliance airline members (such as One World, Star Alliance or SkyTeam). Employees are required to contact airlines and ask that any frequent flyer points accrued during official travel are removed. Status credits are permitted to accrue under the WoAG Travel Arrangements.
3. Travel booked by Posts is also subject to the same conditions and employees are not permitted to accrue frequent flyer points for any officially funded air travel whilst on LTP, STA or STM. Employees booking travel at posts must ensure that travel providers/airlines used are aware that frequent flyer points cannot be accrued for any officially funded travel. Status credits are permitted to accrue under the WoAG Travel Arrangements.

## 30. AIRLINE CLUB/LOUNGE MEMBERSHIPS

### General Principles

1. Employees travelling business class will generally be invited by the host airline to use lounge facilities whilst travelling.
2. SES employees are able to purchase one airline club lounge membership (such as the Qantas Club or Virgin Australia Lounge) at official expense using their corporate credit card.
3. Non-SES employees are not eligible to claim the cost of an airline lounge membership as an official expense. Non-SES employees may at their own cost, purchase an airline lounge membership at the corporate rate provided to the Department by Qantas and Virgin Australia. Corporate membership details can be found on the [Airline Suppliers \(satin.lo\)](#) section of the Intranet Travel Page.

# Private and official travel security policy



s 47E(d)

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Scope	
1.	This policy provides a process to identify and mitigate, as far as possible, risks to the security of Australian Government workers that could arise from private or official overseas travel. Threats include politically motivated violence/terrorism, crime, civil disorder and hostile foreign intelligence service activities.
2.	This policy <b>does not</b> include broader workplace health and safety (WHS) risks that may be associated with overseas travel, such as those arising from natural disasters, pathogens, illness, traffic accidents or other risks to health and safety. Prior to undertaking official travel, travellers and travel approvers must consider all relevant WHS issues and identify strategies for eliminating or reducing risks. Guidance on travel-related WHS risks can be found via <a href="#">Smartraveller</a> , s 47E(d)
Application of this policy	
3.	This policy applies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. DFAT workers<sup>[1]</sup>: includes individuals employed by DFAT, including ongoing or non-ongoing APS staff, contractors, secondees to DFAT from other agencies, staff of partner agencies<sup>[2]</sup> and locally engaged staff at DFAT-managed overseas posts. This also includes those undertaking a short-term mission (STM), short-term assignment (STA) or official travel overseas.</li> </ul>
4.	This policy does <b>not</b> apply to the following staff categories. These staff are not required to consult DFAT on their travel, but they must meet their own agency's/employer's protective security and WH&S requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. non-DFAT Australian Government agency staff who are <b>not</b> partner to a DFAT-managed post, or who during a non-DFAT STM/STA overseas are <b>not</b> working at a DFAT-managed post.</li> <li>b. non-DFAT Australian Government agency staff undertaking travel from Australia at the instruction of their own agency where their travel arrangements do not utilise the security services or related administrative assistance of a DFAT-managed overseas post while overseas.</li> <li>c. Volunteers, unless they are directly employed by a DFAT-managed overseas post.</li> </ul>
5.	Information relating to security arrangements for Head of State, Prime Ministerial, Ministerial and similar level visits to posts can be found in the <a href="#">s 47E(d)</a>
6.	<b>Non-adherence to the requirements of this policy</b> will be regarded as a security infringement, breach or violation depending on the nature of the non-adherence (see <a href="#">s 47E(d)</a> ) Comcover insurance for official travel may also be affected.

[1]'Worker' is defined under Part 1, Division 3 of the WHS Act 2011.

[2]Individuals who are not direct employees of DFAT, including APS staff and contractors of non-DFAT agencies at DFAT-managed posts (i.e. partner agencies), are regarded as 'DFAT workers' for the purposes of the DFAT Security Framework in accordance with DFAT's overall responsibility for protective security at overseas posts under the Guidelines for Management of the Australian Government Presence Overseas (Prime Minister's Directive).

### Smartraveller travel advice

7. Before undertaking any official or private international travel, DFAT workers and official travellers of any Australian government agency must read the relevant DFAT travel advice and subscribe to alerts on [Smartraveller](#).
8. All general safety precautions outlined on Smartraveller should be followed.

### Official Travel

#### Pre-travel training requirements

9. DFAT workers undertaking official overseas travel, including long-term postings, STAs, STMs, or official visits, must be aware of the security risks associated with travel to certain destinations.
10. Prior to undertaking a long-term posting, STM or STA, DFAT workers are required to complete security training consistent with the Security training guidelines and procedures, with details available on the [s 47E\(d\)](#) pages. The [s 47E\(d\)](#) can provide further advice upon request.

#### Reconsider Your Need to Travel or Do Not Travel destinations

1. Official travel to **Reconsider Your Need To Travel (RYNTT)** or **Do Not Travel (DNT)** locations will be approved only where the proposed travel is determined to be **essential**. Delegates have no authority to approve travel to these destinations until they have considered all relevant information on the [Official Travel Security Approval Form](#) (Travel SAF), including the required security risk assessment and travel plan, and consulted with other relevant areas of DFAT. [Official travel forms](#)
- The Travel SAF is **not required** for destinations where the setting of RYNTT or DNT is **not** due to security reasons (for example, because of natural disaster or pandemic reasons), as indicated on each travel advisory on [Smartraveller](#).
1. For travel to be considered **essential** it must:
    3. a. be central to advancing a key consular, foreign, trade, investment or aid policy objective or to the delivery of an important administrative or program outcome, and
    - b. have an objective or outcome that could not normally be achieved by any means other than the proposed travel.

#### DFAT-led security arrangements

1. DFAT workers undertaking essential official travel to locations defined as **Reconsider Your Need To Travel** or **Do Not Travel**, where the travel security arrangements will be directly managed or supported by DFAT, are to complete Section A of the Travel SAF. This policy also applies to travel within a country of accreditation.
1. Travel SAFs must include a **security risk assessment (SRA)** and a **travel plan** with proposed risk mitigation measures.
1. Once reviewed and cleared by staff supervisors, completed Travel SAF are to be sent to the [s 47E\(d\)](#) ) with responsibility for the destination post at least 14 days prior to travel, and copied to [s 47E\(d\)](#) and/or [s 47E\(d\)](#) If needed, [s 47E\(d\)](#) can assist in advising staff which [s 47E\(d\)](#) to contact. [s 47E\(d\)](#) will review the Travel SAF before it is submitted to the delegate for approval.
1. Partner agency staff may use a different security risk assessment template if preferred, but that assessment must be sent to the relevant travel security approver in Table 1 for approval prior to travel from post.

#### Non-DFAT led security arrangements

1. Where an organisation other than post (for example, a UN agency, a non-Australian mission or an NGO) is arranging, providing or ensuring security and logistics for official travel to **Reconsider Your Need To Travel** or **Do Not Travel** locations, DFAT workers must complete Section B of the Travel SAF. This policy also applies to travel within a country of accreditation.
1. Once reviewed and cleared by staff supervisors, completed Travel SAF are to be sent to the [relevant s 47E\(d\)](#) for review, copied to [s 47E\(d\)](#) and/or [s 47E\(d\)](#) at least 14 days prior to travel. [s 47E\(d\)](#) and/or [s 47E\(d\)](#) can assist in advising staff which [s 47E\(d\)](#) to contact if needed. [s 47E\(d\)](#) will review the Travel SAF before it is submitted to the delegate for approval.
2. Partner agency staff may use a different security risk assessment template if preferred but that assessment must be sent to the relevant travel security approver in Table 1 for approval prior to travel from post.

#### Approvals required

2 1.	Travel to <b>Reconsider Your Need To Travel</b> and <b>Do Not Travel</b> areas must be approved in accordance with <b>Table 1 – Travel security approval</b> . The level of approval required is based on the <b>residual security risk</b> resulting from the SRA prepared for the Travel SAF.
2 2.	Posts where staff are required to undertake regular official travel into <b>Reconsider Your Need To Travel</b> and <b>Do Not Travel</b> areas can seek approval for travel to the same location for periods of up to three months. Should the threat environment or the travel arrangements (for example accommodation, transport or venues) change significantly a revised SAF will be required. Note the 'essential' travel test must always be met.
2 3.	For <b>s 47E(d)</b> the security travel approver will depend on the reporting line. <b>a.</b> For regional officers who are located at post and report to Australia, follow 'Travel from Australia (DFAT)' in Table 1. <b>b.</b> For regional officers who are located at post and report to Post, follow 'Travel from DFAT- managed Post' in Table 1

**Table 1 - Travel security approval for Reconsider Your Need To Travel and Do Not Travel locations:**

Travel from	Travel security approver <sup>[3]</sup>
Australia (DFAT)	<p><b>Where the residual security risk is <i>Very High</i>:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DFAT geographic Deputy Secretary</li> </ul> <p><b>Where the residual security risk is <i>High</i>:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DFAT geographic FAS</li> </ul> <p><b>Where the residual security risk is <i>Low or Medium</i>:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The travel approver under the DFAT Travel Policy and relevant Administrative Circulars</li> </ul>
Australia (non-DFAT Australian Government agencies)	Travel security approval is the responsibility of the sending agency, which must consult with the relevant post prior to approving.
DFAT-managed Post (travel by all workers including partner agencies)	<p><b>Where the residual security risk is <i>Very High</i>:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DFAT geographic Deputy Secretary (or partner agency equivalent)</li> </ul> <p><b>Where the residual security risk is <i>High</i>:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HOM/HOP for staff travel<sup>[4]</sup></li> <li>DFAT geographic FAS for HOM/HOP travel</li> </ul> <p><b>Where the residual security risk is <i>Low or Medium</i>:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The travel approver under the DFAT Travel Policy and relevant Administrative Circulars</li> </ul>

[3] The Travel security approver authorises the proposed travel to DNT or RYNTT destinations based on the risk mitigations set out in the Travel SAF, including security arrangements put in place or managed by the post in whose jurisdiction the DNT/RYNTT destination is located (the 'receiving post') or travel security provider (in the case of non-DFAT led security arrangements). Once the travel has commenced, overall responsibility for the traveller's ongoing security at the DNT/RYNTT destination rests with the receiving post or travel security provider (in the case of non-DFAT led security arrangements).

[4] Advice of travel approval in these cases must also be provided to the relevant geographic FAS and Deputy Secretary, for their information.

### Private Travel

2 5.	All DFAT workers who hold a security clearance must report any private overseas travel as a change of circumstances through the <b>s 47E(d)</b> as soon as practicable, as outlined in the <b>s 47E(d)</b>
2 6.	DFAT workers whose security clearances are maintained by an agency other than DFAT, including by the Australian Government Security Vetting Agency (AGSVA), are to also report their private overseas travel to the agency maintaining their clearance.
2 7.	Private travel must be undertaken on a private passport. However, for posted staff and dependants, diplomatic or official passports can be used for private travel.
2 8.	DFAT workers should not travel privately to <b>Do Not Travel</b> destinations, and in no circumstances is it permitted to use diplomatic or official passports for private travel to <b>Do Not Travel</b> destinations outside the traveller's country of posting (this includes private travel to a <b>Do Not Travel</b> destination in a country of non-resident accreditation).

29.	DFAT workers posted to <b>Do Not Travel</b> locations should follow post management's guidelines on private travel within the country of posting.
30.	DFAT workers should note they are not covered by the department's <a href="#">Overseas Health Provisions</a> (OHP) when undertaking <b>private</b> travel outside their country of posting (i.e. country of residence). OHP coverage does <u>not</u> extend to private travel in a country of non-resident accreditation. Private travel to <b>Do Not Travel</b> areas within a country of posting is also not covered under the OHP.

s 33(a)(i), s 33(a)(iii), s 47E(d)

### Related Material

[Official Travel Security Approval Form](#)

[Security Risk Assessment template](#)

[Security Risk Assessment guide](#)

[Travel Plan](#)

[Smartraveller](#)

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