



E-Travel News

January 2012
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Sabre Update

USTRavel has successfully completed the reservation system conversion from Apollo to Sabre.

Danielle states they are continuing to learn new things and they are still working on a few changes to enhance itineraries. She said that their processing time is beginning to speed up and that Sabre processes ticket exchanges and refunds faster than before.

Prior to Sabre, PenAir could be booked in E-Travel Online but there were some restrictions attached to the bookings, and availability was not always the most current. Sabre allows PenAir's availability and schedules to update in the booking tool as soon as PenAir loads them in the Global Distribution System (GDS).

Wings of Alaska, dba SeaPort, displays their schedule in the booking tool under the name of SeaPort. USTRavel is working with Wings of Alaska to get the carrier to display as Wings of Alaska for their Alaska routes. Travel arrangements can be started in the booking tool but require agent assistance to complete the booking because rates need to be verified with the carrier. USTRavel is working with Wings of Alaska on enhancements that will allow instant purchase. This was not an option in Apollo.

USTRavel will be coming out with an ad-free version of Virtually There in the first half of 2012. This will be available to all state travelers and will offer more mobile capability. (Virtually There replaces Apollo's ViewTrip.)

Survey Response

The survey results for both the **E-Travel Satisfaction Survey** and the State of **Alaska Managed Travel Survey** will be posted to the travel website later this month. They will be posted under the [Contract / Audit tab](#) in the Past Surveys section.

Survey responses have not been posted since 2009, and the E-Travel Management Team (ETMT) feels that it is important to begin posting the results again. It is anticipated that the responses to the questions and issues in the surveys will be productive and will serve to help answer questions on travel policy and procedures.

A reply will be sent to those who provided their name in the surveys. Names will be held confidential and will be removed from the surveys prior to being posted. The ETMT is formatting

the E-Travel Satisfaction Survey by categories that will enable you to search for a specific topic to see the response.

Booking the Budget contract rate by the off-site location in E-Travel Online continues to be the most frequently mentioned issue in the surveys. The off-site location must be used to obtain the contract rate because Budget offers the contract rate in only three cities: Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau. Budget does not provide any other means for the contract rate to show up in the booking tool. The current rental contract ends in February and we are working to improve the booking process.

It remains our goal to continue to improve the service to the satisfaction of our customer agencies.

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Be always at war with
your vices,
at peace with your neighbors,
and let each new year
find you a better man.

Benjamin Franklin



E-Travel Online Training

Contact your [Department Travel Coordinators](#) to sign up.

January 24 9:45 a.m.

January 26 1:45 p.m.

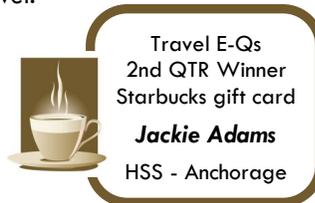
See E-Travel Online's User Home Page for more training opportunities by USTRavel.

Travel Arrangements Considered Confidential

Airlines and travel agencies are required to keep travel arrangements confidential, and they are not allowed to disclose traveler information to the public, including family members.

Travel planners are expected to uphold the same level of confidentiality and should keep the following in mind when arranging state travel:

- Information maintained in E-Travel Online and itinerary and approval details about pending travel should only be shared with those directly involved in the travel.
- All printed travel documents regarding travel should be held in a secure place prior to travel.



Non-Commercial Lodging

A non-commercial lodging allowance is available to all state employees and is paid when commercial lodging facilities and state or vendor provided facilities are not available, or when travelers elect to stay in a non-commercial lodging facility.

E-Travel Online Fees	
Effective January 2 - April 1	
• Unassisted	\$8.85
• Assisted	\$19.04
• Change/Refund	\$10.27

A non-commercial lodging facility may include, but is not limited to, a public facility in a rural setting such as a community building or school, motor home, or private home. Please note that "private home" does not correlate to a traveler's privately owned home(s). Travelers are not entitled to a lodging allowance when staying in their own home.

2012 Preferred Hotel Program

The [2012 Preferred Hotel Program](#) spreadsheet has been posted to the travel website. This program offers preferred lodging choices for travelers conducting business on behalf of the state.

The spreadsheet has a new look with all the properties included on one page in alphabetical order by city. A new column has been added to help locate non-smoking properties.

A few new properties have been added this year. Some properties have been removed because they have not responded to the request for participation. These properties can be added at any time once their information is submitted again.

All of the properties participate in the Global Distribution System (GDS) except for the Anchorage Copper Whale Inn which must be manually booked.

Hotels participating in the program must agree to accept the state charge cards, and to refrain from charging taxes when travelers use a state form of payment. (Please note that it is the traveler's responsibility to remind the hotel personnel at check-in about their tax-exempt status and to check the billing receipt on departure to ensure that tax was not added in error.)

The [Preferred Hotel Program](#) can be found on the [travel website](#) under the travel planner tab and in E-Travel Online.

The Preferred Hotel Program has garnered the state real savings. The savings is calculated by comparing the total booked cost to the federal per diem rate. The savings the state received for the first quarter of FY12 was \$69,254.55.

FY 2012 QTR	Total Booked Cost	Federal Per Diem Rate	Savings
JUL-SEP 2011	\$1,499,691.03	\$1,568,945.58	\$69,254.55

Travel E-Qs



There will be a random quarterly drawing in March for a prize from the answers submitted by January 16, 2012 to: doa.dof.e-travel@alaska.gov

1. What is the carrier name that represents Wings of Alaska?
2. Where will the survey results be posted?
3. Should travel arrangements made for others be discussed with family and friends?
4. Are travelers entitled to a non-commercial lodging allowance when staying in their own home?
5. What is the amount of the last quarter hotel savings?



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Research
Email: soaresearch@ustravel.us

Contest prize winnings are considered non-cash compensation, and will be included as W2 earnings.