

State Travel Office News



In The Spotlight

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Special Point of Interest:

When checking in on-line or at the airport kiosk and paying for baggage fees, remember to check the box to receive a receipt. A receipt for the baggage fee needs to be turned in for reimbursement.

Test your STO Knowledge
\$25 Starbucks Card
September Winner

Joyce Van Sickle
DPS Juneau

ResX Training and
Travel Coordinator Meeting
To be announced.

New Travel Contract Implementation

The State Travel Management Team (STMT) is currently gearing up for a November 4th implementation of the new online booking tool, a substantially enhanced version of ResX, as part of the new contract with USTravel.

Beginning October 5, 2009 representatives from Departments of Administration, Health and Social Services, and Fish and Game will participate in the pilot for approximately three weeks.

The pilot testing group was selected because they represent a variety of travel needs and user types. Users include travelers who book their own travel, experienced travel planners, and new users of the ResX software.

Pilot testing is a valuable resource before implementa-

tion in November. Participants will be providing feedback on the tool's functionality, their likes and dislikes, to help make this the best booking tool it can be.

To encourage test user participation, one representative from each of the three departments will receive a Starbucks gift card.

The STMT held a meeting with department Travel Coordinators in mid-September to discuss the pilot, future expectations of profile maintenance, and processes to be thinking about as departments are set up in the new on-line booking tool. STMT members will meet with each department Travel Coordinator before going live to review profile and policy set up.

To pique travelers' curiosity, each profiled traveler will be

able to do travel research in the tool and see their own trip list. What does this mean? Join the training when it is offered to find out.

Training will be provided by USTravel and ResX. The dates and time will be announced. The plan is to train current ResX users first and then add new-user training sessions. It is encouraged that current users participate in the training as there will be many additional features in the new online booking tool.

Special Point of Interest:

Have you ever wondered how to determine the correct city or airport three-character alpha code? Check out [World Airport Codes](#) to find airport codes, country names, runway lengths, and more.

Fall Weather

Fall is in the air and the leaves are turning color. Winter boots and coats are peeking out of the closet. Fog and snow will soon surround us.

Sounds enchanting, unless you're a traveler! Fall weather brings delayed driving times to the airport, longer check-in lines, along with delayed and / or cancelled flights.

It's that time of year to start planning ahead.

- Plan to be at the airport earlier to avoid long check-in lines or possibly denied boarding.
- Know the airport check-in times.
- Provide the airline with a contact number in the departure and arrival cities, so the airlines can advise the traveler of a weather delay.

Traveler contact information can be provided at check-in, by calling the airline, or entering a cell phone number in the traveler's profile.



STATE TRAVEL OFFICE

Department of Administration
Division of Finance
400 Willoughby Avenue, 3rd floor
PO Box 110232
Juneau, AK 99811-0232

STO USTravel agents
(907) 465-8208 in Juneau
1-866-762-8728 outside of Juneau
FAX: (907) 465-8288

Sunny Israelson
State Travel Manager
(907) 465-8281
FAX: (907) 465-6057

Email:
doa.dof.statetraveloffice@alaska.gov

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Test Your STO Knowledge

There will be a random drawing for a prize from the answers submitted by October 15, 2009 to: doa.dof.statetraveloffice@alaska.gov

1. Name a new function that profiled travelers will be able to do in the new on-line booking tool.
2. What web site provides three - character alpha airport codes ?
3. Name a benefit to being a State One Card holder.
4. What service does Southwest Airlines newest fee provide?
5. What is the purpose of a Known Redress Number?

Prize winnings from the contest are considered non-cash compensation, and will be included as W2 earnings.

TSA Screening Powder Substances

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) announced that it is further bolstering existing explosives detection capabilities by deploying additional tools to screen powdered substances at checkpoints around the country.

While there is no specific threat at this time, TSA says they want "to stay ahead of emerging threats while continually strengthening our layered approach to security."

Travelers should know that while common powders are not prohibited, a small percentage may require additional screening. Typical security checkpoint procedures will remain the same.

The vast majority of commonly carried powders, like most medication, infant formula, and makeup, are unlikely to need further screening.

Transportation Security Officers (TSOs) will use X-ray

technology to determine which substances may require additional screening with a powder test kit. If the substance does require additional screening, TSOs will use a powder test kit to collect a small sample and apply a solution to it to test for traces of potential explosives.

For more information about TSA, visit www.tsa.gov.



Special Point of Interest:

Did you know that by being a State One Card holder that the card provides you with insurance?

See [Insurance Information on the Department of Administration, Division of Finance web site for the details.](#)

Government Exemption for Rental Car Tax

Travelers on State business within the State of Alaska are entitled to receive an exemption for rental car taxes when the rental is paid using a State form of payment.

Sometimes it may be necessary for travelers to remind a rental car vendor that they are tax exempt. Most of the time, due to the contract with Budget, a reminder

should not be necessary, when renting with Budget in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau.

Rental car companies should have on hand an [Alaska Vehicle Rental Tax Exemption Certificate](#). The form is provided to State travelers to obtain a signature to support tax exemption. This form is also available on the Department of Revenue's website.

Southwest Airlines New Fee



Southwest Airlines just announced its newest product, EarlyBird Check-in, which gives travelers the option to score an early boarding position by adding an additional \$10 to the price of a one-way fare. With Southwest Airlines' open-seating policy, EarlyBird Check-in allows travelers to begin boarding ahead of the crowd, immediately following the Business Select and Rapid Rewards A-List travelers.

Known Redress Number

What is the Secure Flight [Known Redress Number](#) all about?

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) developed [DHS Travel Redress Inquire Program](#) (DHS TRIP) an on-line form meant to help travelers seek assistance for adverse screening experienced and to resolve possible watch-list misidentification issues.

While the U.S. government does not reveal whether a

particular person is on the terrorist watch list, many people are erroneously told or led to believe that they may be on a watch list during a screening process.

Travelers who have been delayed or denied boarding, or subjected to enhanced screening or inspection may seek a Known Redress Number by completing a DHS TRIP [on-line form](#). The Known Redress Number should be added to traveler profile as Secure Flight Information.