



E-Travel News

Inside This Issue

Alaska Airlines Contract

Farewell from Sunny

Travel Expense Management

Travel E-Qs

Taxi Payments

Baggage Tip



Alaska Airlines Contract

The contract between the State and Alaska Airlines has been renewed for two years with continued savings in all markets served by Alaska Airlines.

The contract is similar to the previous one, with additional market share cities to markets outside of Alaska, and more flexibility in markets with one flight a day, such as Cordova.

Reason codes for choosing other airlines will be verified under the new contract.

E-Travel Online Training

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

January 12 10:00 am

January 25 10:00 am

January 25 2:00 pm

See E-Travel Online User Home Page for more training opportunities.

Farewell from Sunny

When I was hired to be the State Travel Manager in November of 2004, the State did not have a cohesive travel management program. I know many State travelers believed that the system(s) being used worked “just fine.” However, what worked for the traveler, or even the travel planner did not necessarily work for the State in terms of industry “best practices,” data acquisition for easy understanding of State travel spend, dollars spent, or standardization across the State.

In 2004, the State purchased travel with personal Alaska Airlines Visa cards, State Travel Requisition (STR) forms, State warrants, and State charge cards. Today, the State purchases travel with State charge cards. This has made the job of accounting for State travel a great deal easier, although still not perfect.

Travel Expense Management

The State is currently working on a travel expense management project with DATABASICS. The principal goal is to standardize and automate the creation of travel authorizations (TA) and the calculation of reimbursable expenses to the employee or the State. This simplifies the travel process for

The State now has a single point of purchase to obtain discounts on air, car, and hotel transactions. I can assure you that the State is saving money. The advent of the E-Travel Online Booking Tool significantly reduced the fee amount to the Travel Management Contractor. The air carrier contracts completely cover the fees with savings to spare.

The State Travel Management Program has come a great distance since November 2004. Constant involvement of stakeholders in the travel process has enabled the State of Alaska to move forward in providing the best possible user experience. The State follows industry “best practices” and is a leader among other states. Most states pay higher fees for travel arrangements. The State of Alaska has a “pay for performance” con-

tract that ties fees to performance. This idea is gaining popularity among other states.

As you read this, I am no longer the travel manager for the State of Alaska. I have passed the torch to Kathy Adair. I know you will all be kind and considerate when sharing your ideas and frustrations about travel, and I am confident that the State will continue to make improvements that benefit travelers, travel planners, and the State.

Thank you to all the great people I have worked with over the past six years. You have helped me with great ideas, simple suggestions, and even criticism. It has been a pleasure serving with and for each of you.



Sunny Israelson, Citizen

the travelers, travel planners, and those who reconcile the One Card charges.

The beauty of the system is that it uses the same traveler information as E-Travel Online and creates an integrated system that researches travel, creates TAs, requests approvals, and tickets

the itinerary. When travel is completed the system creates an expense report for final reimbursement. It will also assist with AutoPay clearing.

Department of Administration is piloting the program in January and roll out to other departments will begin thereafter.

E-Travel Office

USTRavel

E-Travel Online Help Desk
(907) 500-4290 / 877-500-4290
Email: e-travelhelp@ustravel.us

Reservation Call Center
(907) 500-4292 / 866-762-8728
FAX: (907) 465-8288
Email: e-travelaprvt@ustravel.us

Research
Email: soaresearch@ustravel.us

ETMT

Kathy Adair
State Travel Manager
(907) 465-6534

Carmen Engen
Accountant IV
(907) 465-2447

FAX: (907) 465-3798

Email:
doa.dof.e-travel@alaska.gov

See us on the Web!
<http://statetravel.alaska.gov>



**Travel E-Qs
December
Winner**
Michelle Steinman
DPS—Anchorage

Travel E-Qs

There will be a random quarterly drawing in **March** for a prize from the answers submitted by January 15, 2011 to: doa.dof.e-travel@alaska.gov

1. Since 2004, how has the State changed the way travel is purchased?
2. What is the principal goal of the travel expense management project?
3. What are employees responsible for when paying for a taxi with a State charge card?
4. How do you determine which carrier to use for travel between Anchorage and Homer?

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

Taxi Payments

Now that some taxi cabs are accepting State charge cards as a form of payment, it's time to remind travelers that they must declare that they are State employees when offering the State charge card to pay a taxi. This prevents taxes from being included in the fare. Drivers do not know who State employees are and often cannot see the cards that well, especially late at night, or if the travelers insist on swiping the card themselves.

When presented with the charge document, travelers should circle the fare amount and write that amount on the total charge line of the receipt. Do not include a tip when using a State charge card. The driver is not able to remove the tax from the slip. The boxes are calibrated and locked by the municipalities. The taxes are backed out by the cab company's accounting office if the

State traveler included only the fare amount on the total line.

Cab companies will not reimburse taxes after the fact. The tax amount is usually very small. The amount of time and energy expended by both the State employee and the taxi service is not justified to recoup such small amounts. In addition, the cab companies are required to give these taxes to their local taxing authority and must have justification if they waive taxes.

State employees are ultimately responsible for making sure State or local sales taxes are not charged if using a State charge card to purchase services or products in Alaska. The State

A New Year's resolution is something that goes in one year and out the other.
Anonymous 

Baggage Tip

Three employees traveled out of state headed to Bismarck, N.D. One took a carry-on bag, while the other two checked their baggage and did not pack enough clothes in their carry-on in case there was an emergency.

On the way to Bismarck, they were detained in Salt Lake City due to blizzard conditions and stayed the night. The next morning they were rerouted to Raleigh, N.C. due to continued blizzard conditions, conducted some business, and then flew to Bismarck to complete their business.

Although they finally made it to Bismarck, their luggage didn't. The luggage was lost on the initial attempt to get to Bismarck during the blizzard.

Scrambling to show up at meet-

ings in professional attire, two of the three went clothes shopping. They did not receive their bags until the end of their trip.

When they arrived home, they requested reimbursement for the clothes, shoes, and toiletry items they had to purchase (approximately \$500).

Per AAM 60.220, lost or stolen articles are not reimbursable. This is a good reminder for those who travel to take into account the weather and the possibility of lost bags when packing a carry-on. Lost luggage reimbursements may be available from the airlines, and travelers should pursue this avenue in situations of this nature.

Article idea submitted by Alavini Lata, CED



is subject to the taxes of other states or localities outside Alaska, and many federal fees and taxes.

Vendors should not be held responsible when travelers fail to identify themselves as State employees, and some judgment based on cost/benefit criteria should be applied when determining when to seek credits for small amounts of taxes on State purchases after the fact.

Tips & Tricks

Alaska Airlines Market Share Exceptions

Travel booked between Anchorage/Homer, Anchorage/Valdez, or Anchorage/Kenai is not considered part of the Alaska Airlines market share requirement.

E-Travel Online displays a reminder notation on the flight selection page under the "Complete Options" tab.

Reservations are often booked to these three locations on an Alaska Airlines' codeshare flight (4-digit flight number) and at a higher fare. When asked why the lowest fare was not chosen, the reason most often selected in E-Travel Online is "Paid more to use the contract fare."

This is not correct because the codeshare option is not a discounted contract fare.

Choose the carrier with the lowest applicable fare in these three markets.

E-Travel Fees Effective January 3-April 3

Unassisted	\$10.15
Assisted	\$20.77
Change Refund	\$11.63