



ADMINISTRATIVE CIRCULAR ADM/Dir/2008/01

20th March 2008

TRAVEL STANDARDS AND PRACTICES

Below please find the new travel provisions, as approved by the Director, with effect from 25th March 2008.

1. Duty travels of staff and consultants.

ICTP's travel agency, Carlson Wagonlit Travel, is putting at the disposal of the Centre a range of instruments with the aim of optimizing its travel costs. One of these is the provision, for each requested fare, of three comparable quotations.

For paid visitors, Operations & Travel decides on which ticket alternative to book; normally the cheapest one will be chosen but, to the extent possible, account will be taken of the connections and time schedule. Operations & Travel may control these quotations to comply with ICTP's travel standards and practices.

Staff members and consultants shall be offered three quotations from Carlson Wagonlit Travel. They should, in line with the ICTP's travel policy and practice, avail of the most competitive fare. The use of Low Cost Carriers should be considered. The preferred option should be communicated to Operations & Travel, who will process the travel order.

Operations & Travel is provided access to the software systems of Carlson Wagonlit Travel, and will thus have much improved statistics on the price and pattern of travels undertaken including price quotations made. This will among others be used for following up of the various discount agreements that ICTP has with various airlines.

As a reminder, the following is abstracted from the Administrative Circular ADM/Fin/2004/003:

Early travel arrangements

As a standard practice, staff and consultants are requested to make their own travel arrangements and to purchase their tickets (either directly or through Operations & Travel) at least two weeks in advance, for travels within Europe and to the USA, and at least one month in advance, for travels to the rest of the world. Exceptions to this standard will have to be expressly authorized by the Director, for scientific staff/consultants, or by the Administrative Director, for administrative staff/consultants.

Use of the most competitive fares

In order to avail of the most competitive fares (such as the APEX), as a standard practice staff should, to the maximum possible extent, include the night between Saturday and Sunday in their travel schedule; in this case, provided that the total cost does not exceed that of the APEX fare, the Centre would cover the additional cost of subsistence by paying one or two extra days of allowance, as applicable.

2. Duty travels under 10 hours

From 25th March 2008, no DSA will be payable for missions under 10 hours duration, trip included.

3. Introduction of new Daily Subsistence Allowance Rates for Long-Term Scientists¹

A new rate—corresponding to 50% of the UN daily subsistence allowance applicable at the place of destination—has been fixed for coverage of costs incurred by non-staff scientists entitled to travel grants that are attending outside scientific conferences or visiting Italian or foreign institutes.

The refund of expenses will not be settled as per receipts presented but will be forfeited through the payment of the new DSA rate. If free board and/or lodging are provided, the rate will be reduced applying the standard percentages, i.e.

- 30% reduction if board is provided;
- 50% reduction if lodging is provided;
- 80% reduction if both board and lodging are provided.

Hotel and, whenever possible, meal bills should be submitted as supporting documents to allow Operations & Travel to calculate the correct DSA percentage payable.

4. Introduction of new Daily Subsistence Allowance Rates for Faculty of outside activities

New rates—corresponding to a percentage of the UN daily subsistence allowance applicable at the place of destination—have been established for directors (70% of UN DSA rates) and lecturers, speakers and instructors (60% of UN DSA rates) attending outside activities, whose budget is funded entirely or at least for 50% by the ICTP, provided they do not receive local payment for the same.

If accommodation and/or meal costs are covered by the host institute, deductions will be applied under the same terms as for staff members (see 3. above).

5. Terminal fares and Taxi costs

Until now, in exceptional cases, and only if authorised, terminal expenses have been forfeited through the payment of up to \$ 152 (\$ 38 each leg, was \$30 until November 2007).

From now, the following applies to invited scientists:

a) Higher categories, not receiving meal coupons (*directors and VIP guests, lecturers and conference speakers, senior guest scientists*) and SSA holders: the actual cost borne for terminal expenses will be paid up to a maximum of \$ 152 upon request from travellers and supply of the relevant documentary evidence.

b) Lower categories, receiving meal coupons (*course participants, associates, affiliates, jr. guest scientists, senior participants*):

¹ Long-Term Scientists refers to those visiting scientists that are entitled to a travel grant.

on a limited number of proven exceptional circumstances (such as arrival at the airport and/or at the railway station late in the night when no other means of transportation are available; the carrying of bulky or heavy luggage or equipment; etc.), Operations & Travel, upon request from travellers and supply of the documentary evidence, will reimburse the actual expenses borne up to a maximum of \$152. If the exceptional circumstances are known in advance, Operations & Travel, to the maximum possible extent, will inform scientists of the possibility of being refunded these extra costs. Special efforts will be made towards informing first-time visitors arriving late of the possibility of taking a bus or a train to the Trieste train station and thereafter a taxi to the ICTP guesthouse. The same will also apply to late arrivals through the Venice airport in which case visitors will be informed of suitable nearby hotels.

Claims in excess of \$ 152 will be considered on a very exceptional basis and will be addressed to the Director for approval.

In-city transport is non-reimbursable expenses, since deemed to be covered by the per diem.

6. Lump sum payment option

In order for an expense to be reimbursable, its nature must be clearly identified and refer to the approved rules and standards. Travel expenses have to refer to the applicable fare quotation and can be quantified and expressed as a contribution towards a roundtrip fare. Living expenses must refer to the applicable daily subsistence allowance rate and be calculated as a multiple of it.

Expenses for which no reimbursement is foreseen, cannot be refunded by means of lump sum payments created ad-hoc, as this would be a circumvention of the rules.

The use of lump sums is authorized only when it is intentionally wanted to offer a support towards living expenses in an amount which is globally lower than that which would result from the application of the appropriate subsistence rate.

It is reminded that the responsibility lies with the Operations & Travel unit to calculate the reimbursable travel costs. Please contact the unit for advice and assistance, whenever required. Other offices shall not make direct arrangements with visitors or quantify or promise any refunds on behalf of the ICTP.

Exceptions and/or particular exigencies, which should be kept to the minimum, should be addressed, through Operations & Travel, to the Director for his approval.

7. Review of travel policy

ICTP is currently reviewing its travel policy following last year's audit. Any further changes will be communicated in due time.

Dag Harald Johannessen
Director Administration