



Introduction to Constructed Travel in DTS

Summary

When you perform official travel for DoD, the Authorizing Official (AO) will authorize or direct you* to use a specific transportation mode (i.e., the *directed transportation mode*). Per the *JTR, 020206. M.*, Commercial airplane is the preferred mode for official travel more than 400 miles one way or more than 800 miles round trip. Sometimes you might prefer traveling using a different transportation mode (i.e., your *selected transportation mode*). For example, the AO directed you to use commercial air, but you want to drive your own car**.

The [Joint Travel Regulations \(JTR\)](#) allows you to use your selected transportation mode, but it also gives the AO the right to *limit* your transportation reimbursement, if your choice is more expensive. Constructed travel lets the AO compare the true costs of the same trip using different transportation modes.

You can learn more about using a POV, see the *JTR, 020210. Privately Owned Vehicles (POV)* and the *Table 2-11. Cost Comparison Rules for Using a POV*.

*In this information paper, “you” are a traveler; however, the actions described can apply to others who create travel documents – e.g., Non-DTS Entry Agent, travel clerk. Also included is a section for Authorizing Officials (AOs).

** The [JTR](#) defines a personal vehicle (e.g., car, motorcycle) a privately owned vehicle (POV).

Note: The primary focus of this information paper is on planning and coordinating constructed travel on an authorization. Although, many of the same actions can also apply on a voucher, if you used a transportation mode the AO did not authorize.

The Basic Constructed Travel Process

It’s important to understand that constructed travel does not apply on most official trips. To determine if constructed travel rules apply to your trip, ask yourself these questions:

- Do I want to use a transportation mode that is neither the directed transportation mode nor Government transportation?
- Do I want to drive a POV (car or motorcycle) over 400 miles on any one-way travel leg (e.g., from home to a TDY location)?

If the answer to both questions is, “**Yes**,” constructed travel applies and you must complete a Constructed Travel Worksheet (CTW). If the answer to either question is “**No**,” constructed travel does not apply, and you don’t need to complete a CTW, even if DTS displays a Constructed Travel Pre-Audit flag (see the *Constructed Travel Pre-Audit Flag Triggers* section of this information paper). **Note:** Follow your local business rules on what your organization wants you to enter for the Constructed Travel Pre-Audit flag when under the *JTR* miles threshold.

When constructed travel applies, here’s what happens:

The Basic Constructed Travel Process
(continued)

1. You create your DTS authorization to reflect the total costs of the trip for your selected transportation mode.
2. You complete a CTW to show the estimated cost (a.k.a., the *constructed cost*) of the directed transportation mode and attach it to the DTS document. You may also include cost avoidances and additional considerations on the CTW.
3. The AO considers the information in both your authorization and the CTW and decides how to authorize your trip either allowing:
 - a. Full reimbursement for the selected transportation mode.
 - or-
 - b. You to use your selected transportation mode, but limit your transportation reimbursement to the constructed cost of the directed transportation mode.

Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the constructed cost decision process.

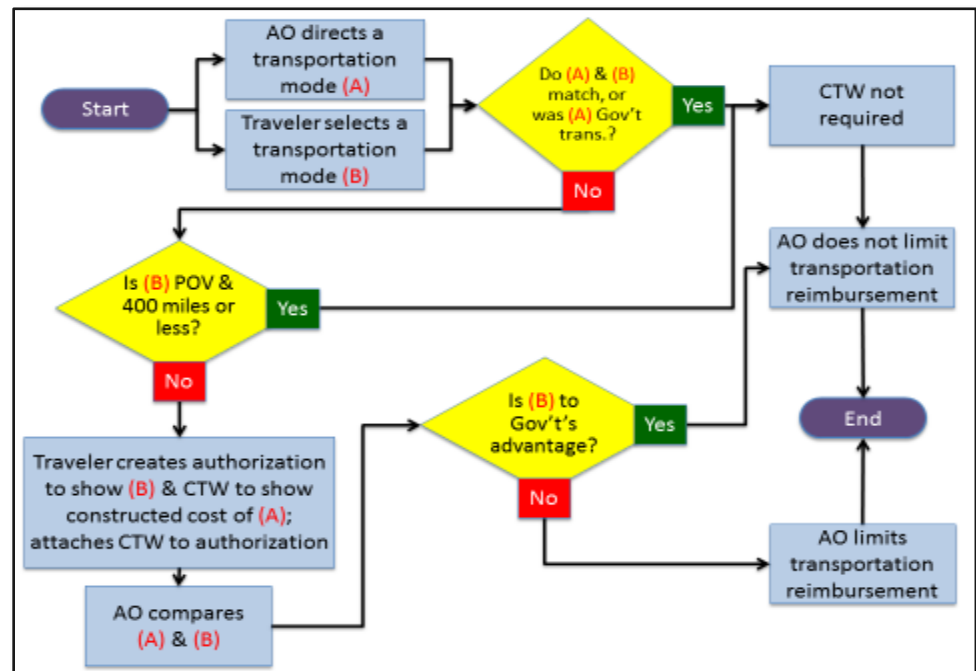


Figure 1: The Constructed Travel Process

Constructed Travel Pre-Audit Flag Triggers

Some selections you make in DTS trigger a **Constructed Travel Worksheet Pre-Audit** flag (Figure 2, Indicator 1), which tells you that you may need to provide a CTW. You will need to justify this flag in one of two ways:

- If you don't need to complete a CTW, justify the flag by stating that a CTW is not required, and explain why (e.g., *JTR, 020210. POV, Table 2-10*, states "If the official distance between authorized locations [as determined by the DTOD* or from appropriate distances (non-DoD

Constructed Travel Pre-Audit Flag Triggers (continued)

Services]) is 400 miles or less one way or 800 miles or less round trip - Then use of a private automobile or motorcycle is considered advantageous to the Government.”

- If you do need to complete a CTW, select the CTW link (Figure 2, Indicator 2) to obtain a blank form (follow the guide) attach it to your DTS authorization, and justify the flag by stating you attached the CTW to your trip.

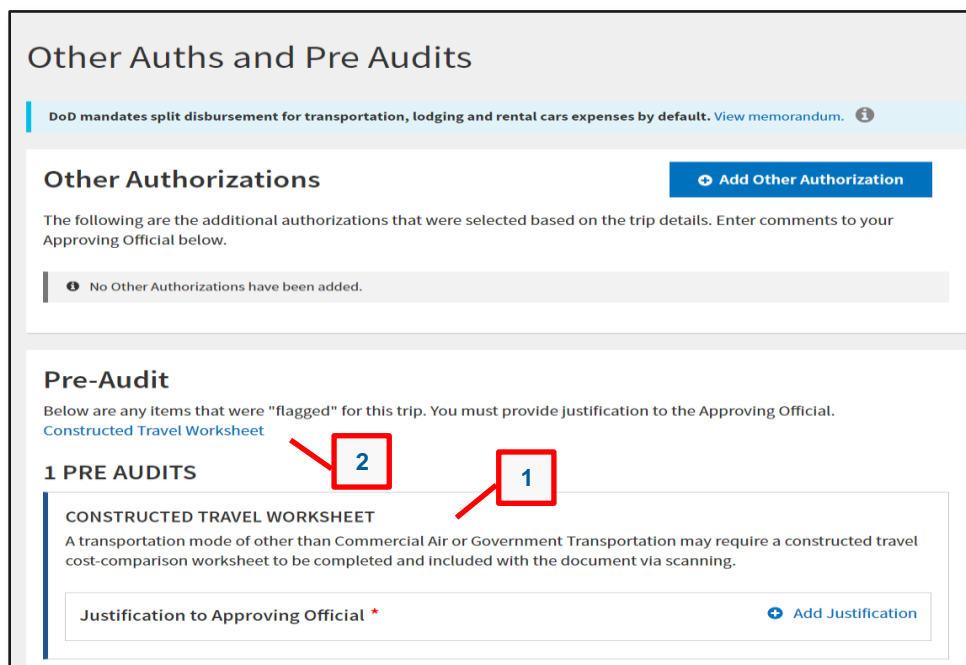


Figure 2: Other Auths and Pre Audits Screen (Top)

The list below identifies the most common selections that trigger the **Constructed Travel Pre-Audit** flag:

- On an authorization the flag triggers when:
 - On the **Reservation Expenses** screen, in the *Select a Rental Car* section, under **Advanced Options**, checking the **Using to travel to my TDY location** box (Figure 3) to indicate en route travel (travel mode to and from the TDY location).

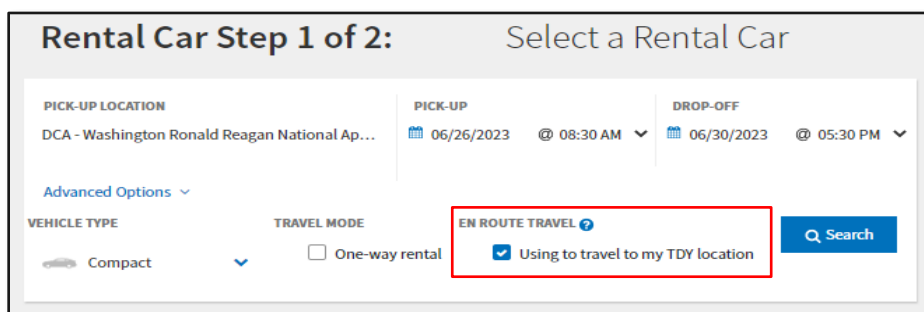


Figure 3: Select a Rental Car Screen (En Route Travel)

Constructed Travel Pre-Audit Flag Triggers (continued)

- Selecting any expense on the **Add New** (Figure 4) pop-up screen that reflects travel to, from, or between TDY locations by any transportation mode other than a commercial flight or Government vehicle. Examples include (but are not limited to):
 - *Mileage Expense*: Private Auto or Motorcycle – To/From TDY
 - *Transportation Expense*: **Rental Car – at TDY Area**
 - *Ticketed Expense*: **Bus Ticket** (i.e., Commercial Bus).

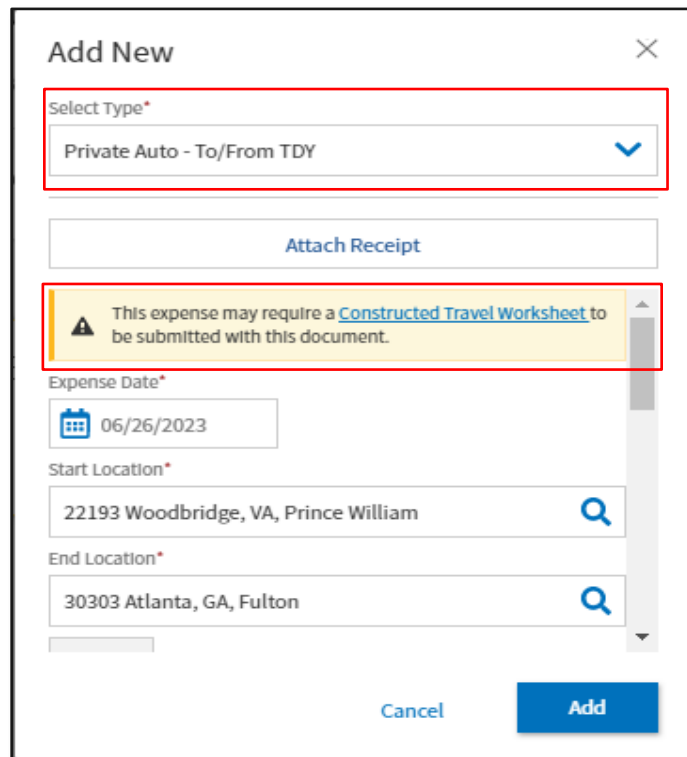


Figure 4: Add New Screen (Private Auto)

- On a voucher the flag triggers when:
 - Entering any transportation mode that was not on the approved authorization, unless that transportation mode is a commercial flight or any form of Government transportation (triggers the CT flag).
 - The flag in Figure 5 occurred by adding **POV en route** mileage on the voucher, when the authorization *only* reflected a commercial air travel mode.

Note 1: The Pre-Audit flag for CTW as described in Figure 2 may also appear.

Note 2: In the description for the **Transportation Mode Change** flag, **CP** stands for Commercial Plane.

Constructed Travel Pre-Audit Flag Triggers (continued)

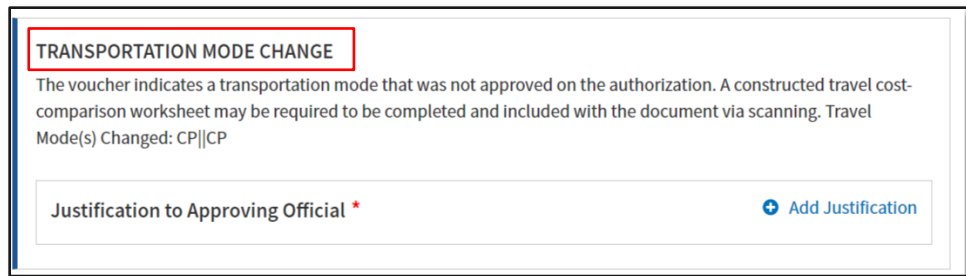


Figure 5: Pre-Audit Flag (Transportation Mode Change)

CTWs and Guides Locations

There are two ways to locate and open a blank CTW:

1. Open through DTS.
 - a. In your document, navigate to the **Other Auths and Pre Audits** screen. Select **Constructed Travel Worksheet** (Figure 6).

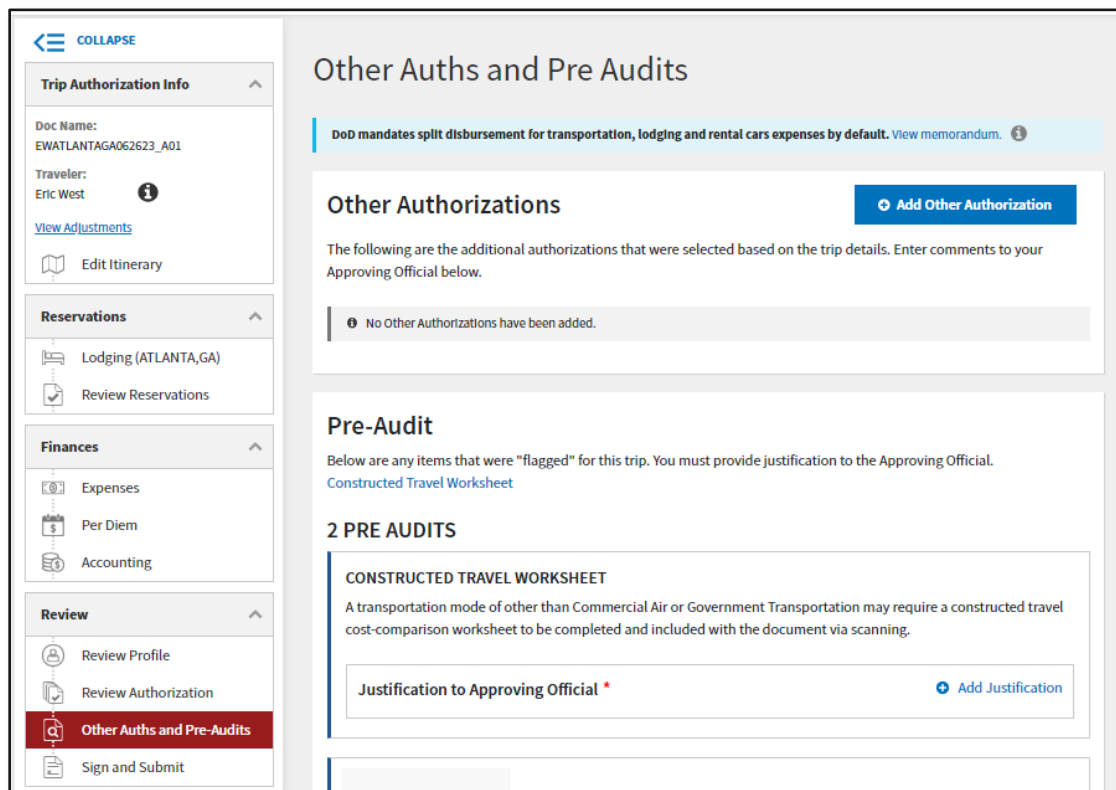


Figure 6: Pre-Audit (for CTW) Screen

- b. The **Constructed Travel Worksheets Home** page opens (Figure 7).

CTWs and Guides Locations (continued)

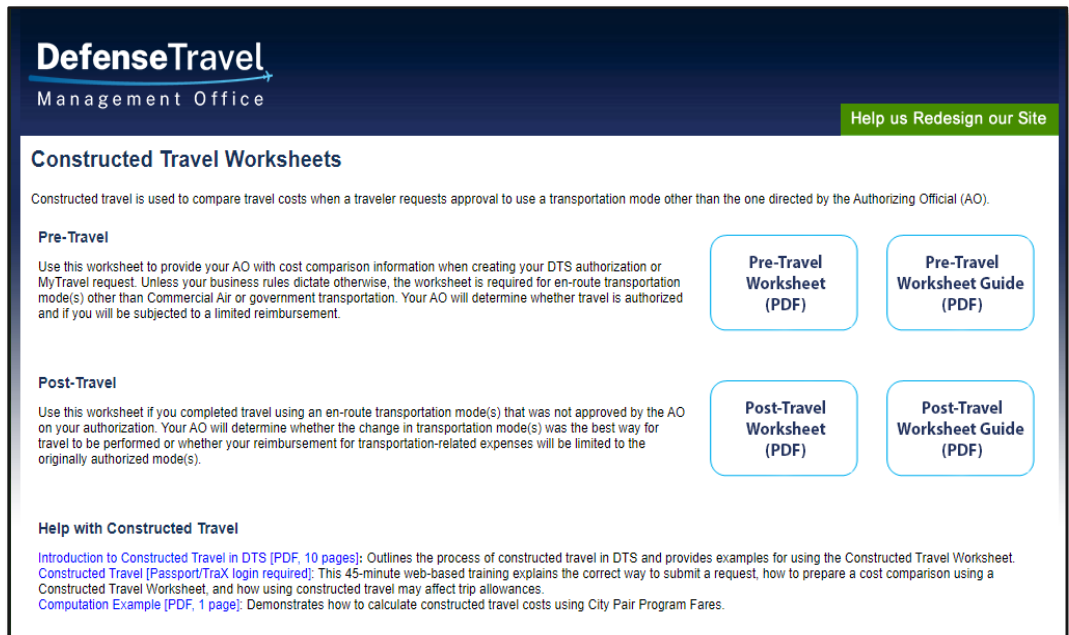


Figure 7: Constructed Travel Worksheets Screen

- c. Review the information and then select the appropriate worksheet or guide.
2. Access the DTMO Website. In a web browser, copy and paste the CTW URL <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/cnsttvl/> (e.g., Chrome, Edge, or Firefox). You receive a warning message (Figure 8). To advance, review the information and then select **OK**. **Note:** Refrain from using Internet Explorer (IE) browser.

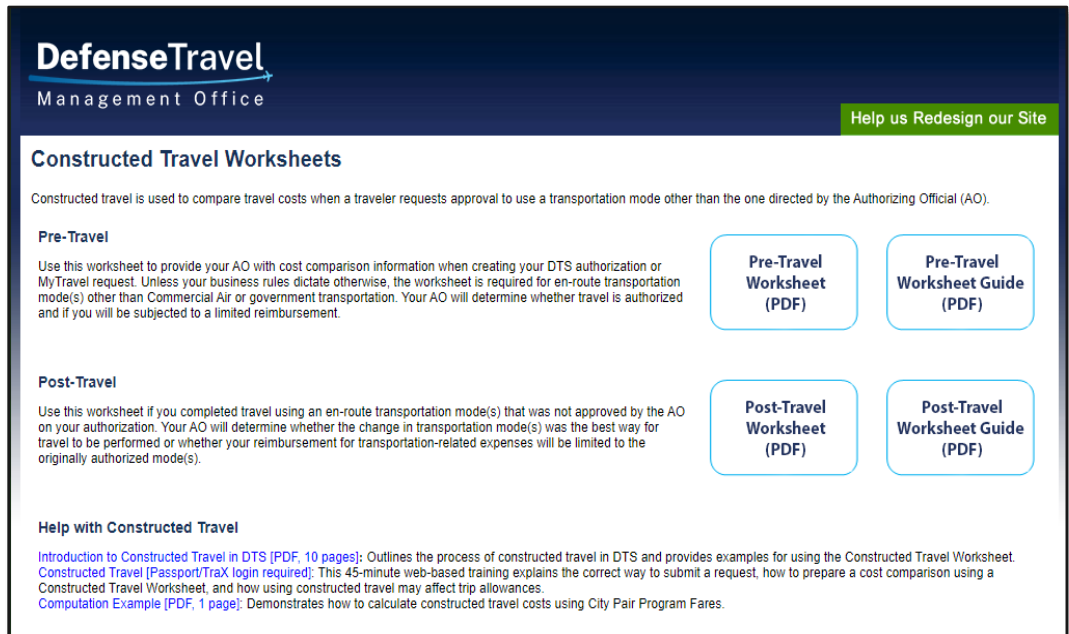


Figure 8: DoD Warning Message

- a. The **Constructed Travel Worksheets Home** page displays. **Note:** It is the same as Figure 7. This page provides the access links to the **Pre-Travel and Post-Travel Worksheets** as well the **Pre-Travel and Post-Travel Guides**. **Note:** For DTS

CTWs and Guides Locations (continued)

Authorizations if CT applies then use the **Pre-Travel Worksheet**. For DTS Vouchers if CT applies then use the **Post-Travel Worksheet**.



Same as Figure 7: Constructed Travel Worksheets Screen


- b. Select either the **Pre-Travel or Post-Travel Worksheet (PDF)** link. A **Save As** window opens. Select the folder on your PC or other designated location that you want to save the file into.
 - c. Open the blank worksheet from the saved location folder. **Note:** If you try to download the worksheet and open it using Chrome without saving it first, you may receive a “Please wait” message. If the page freezes, then the file doesn’t open. This situation is specific to the Chrome browser and not a problem with the actual CTW file. **To resolve:** Close all browser windows, try again to save the worksheet to folder, and then open the file from the folder location.
3. There are guides for completing the CTWs. You should always review them when documenting constructed cost. You access the **Pre-Travel Worksheet Guide** and **Post-Travel Worksheet Guide** in the CTW (Figure 7) or you can copy and paste the direct links in a browser and then save the files to a folder:
 - **Pre-Travel Worksheet Guide (PDF):**
<https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/CnstTvl/Pre-Travel-Worksheet-Guide.pdf>
 - **Post-Travel Worksheet Guide (PDF):**
<https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/CnstTvl/Post-Travel-Worksheet-Guide.pdf>

**CTW
Layout**

The **Pre-Travel Worksheet** has four main sections, as shown in Figure 9. The accompanying guide explains in detail how to complete the CTW. The **Post-Travel Worksheet** contains 5 main sections (not shown for this paper) and has an accompanying guide.

As stated previously, obtain the guides from the DTMO website using the defined URL (See # 3 in the above section). Be sure to save a copy to a folder of your choice then open the file.

Note: Consult your local business rules to ensure you comply when using constructed travel.



Constructed Travel Worksheet - Pre-Travel

Not required for any travel legs of 400 one-way miles or less, if by your privately-owned car or motorcycle. Refer to worksheet instructions for complete guidance.

Name:

1. Travel itinerary for the standard transportation mode:

| Travel Leg | Date | Departure Location | Arrival Location | Mode (+Fare Class if air) | Cost |
|------------|------|--------------------|------------------|------------------------------|--------|
| PDS to TDY | | | | ▼ | \$0.00 |
| TDY to PDS | | | | ▼ | \$0.00 |

For trips with multiple TDY locations:

| | | | | | |
|------------|--|--|--|---|--------|
| TDY to TDY | | | | ▼ | \$0.00 |
| TDY to TDY | | | | ▼ | \$0.00 |
| TDY to TDY | | | | ▼ | \$0.00 |
| TDY to TDY | | | | ▼ | \$0.00 |

2. Constructed cost of the standard transportation mode:

| | |
|---|--------|
| A. Transportation costs from PDS departure terminal to TDY arrival terminal (e.g., home airport to TDY airport) | \$0.00 |
| B. Transportation costs from TDY departure terminal to PDS arrival terminal (e.g., TDY airport to home airport) | \$0.00 |
| C. Transportation costs from one TDY terminal to another (e.g., TDY airport to TDY airport) | \$0.00 |
| D. Total transportation cost | \$0.00 |
| E. Fee normally charged by your CTO | \$0.00 |
| F. Total constructed transportation cost | \$0.00 |

3. Potential transportation costs avoided by using your requested transportation mode:

| | |
|--|--------|
| A. Transportation costs from trip start point to PDS departure terminal (e.g., driving from home to the airport) | \$0.00 |
| B. Transportation costs at all TDY sites (e.g., rental car, bus to/from airport, taxi) | \$0.00 |
| C. Transportation-related costs at all TDY sites (e.g., gas for rental car, parking at hotel, tolls) | \$0.00 |
| D. Transportation costs from PDS arrival terminal to trip end point (e.g., driving home from the airport) | \$0.00 |
| E. Parking at PDS terminal (e.g., parking at the airport while TDY) | \$0.00 |
| F. Shipping costs (e.g., baggage fees, official equipment shipping fees) | \$0.00 |
| G. Constructed transportation cost of official travelers sharing driver's vehicle (Line 2F x # of passengers) | \$0.00 |
| H. Total avoided transportation cost | \$0.00 |

4. Additional considerations (non-monetary):

Check all that apply to this trip:

- Scheduled common carrier departure time, arrival time, or total travel time would negatively impact the mission
- Scheduled common carrier is not available or is not practical to support the mission
- Potential for traffic, weather, or routing delays would negatively impact the mission
- POC use would be more efficient, more economical, or result in a more expeditiously accomplished mission

May 2022 defensetravel.docx.mil

Sections 1 & 2
Constructed
Itinerary and
Constructed Cost

Section 3
Cost Avoidances

Section 4
Other Considerations

Figure 9: CTW – Pre-Travel Sections

The sections of the CTW provide key information the AO will use when deciding whether to limit your transportation reimbursement. They are:

**CTW
Layout
(continued)**

- **Sections 1 and 2:** Enter details of the itinerary and transportation costs as if you were using the directed transportation mode. This establishes the constructed cost. If the AO limits your transportation reimbursement, this is the maximum amount you may receive to reimburse you for your transportation costs.
- **Section 3:** Enter additional travel-related costs that are neither in the constructed cost nor on the authorization, but that you would incur if you were to use the directed transportation mode. It helps the AO to better understand the complete cost of the trip, if it were accomplished using the directed transportation mode.
- **Section 4:** Select factors that could influence the overall trip cost or that could prevent you from accomplishing your mission if you used the directed transportation mode (e.g., shipping equipment costs, weather delay possibilities).

**Constructed
Travel
Examples**

Here are a few examples to help improve your understanding of constructed travel. Except for Scenario 5, let's assume the AO wanted you to take commercial air, but you wanted to drive your POV.

Note: This paper only provides a few scenarios and other CT situations are possible.

Scenario 1: A simple comparison with cheaper airfare

1. Per your DTS authorization, your POV mileage and allowable reimbursable expenses equal **\$400**.
2. Per your CTW, the constructed airfare cost is **\$350**. You entered no cost avoidances or other considerations.
3. Result: Drive=**\$400**. Fly=**\$350**. The AO limited your transportation reimbursement, so you'll receive **\$350** if you drive.

Scenario 2: A simple comparison with cheaper driving costs

1. Per your DTS authorization, your POV mileage and allowable reimbursable expenses equal **\$650**.
2. Per your CTW, the constructed airfare cost is **\$800**. You entered no cost avoidances or other considerations.
3. Result: Drive=**\$650**. Fly=**\$800**. The AO did not limit your transportation reimbursement, so you will receive **\$650** if you drive.

**Constructed
Travel
Examples
(continued)**

Scenario 3: A comparison with cheaper airfare and cost avoidances

1. Per your DTS authorization, your POV mileage and allowable reimbursable expenses equal **\$450**.
2. Per your CTW, the constructed airfare cost is **\$375**. You'll have your own car at the TDY location and you won't have to rent a vehicle that you otherwise would have rented, so you entered a cost avoidance of **\$325** for the rental car and gas.
3. Result: Drive=**\$450**. Fly=**\$375** (+**\$325** for the rental car = an overall cost of **\$700**). Flying initially seems cheaper, but given the extra costs associated with the rental car, allowing you to drive is a better value for the Government. The AO did not limit your transportation reimbursement, so you will receive **\$450** if you drive.

Scenario 4: Another comparison with cheaper airfare and cost avoidances

1. Per your DTS authorization, your POV mileage and allowable reimbursable expenses equal **\$525**. You will also incur an additional **\$300** for per diem on the extra travel days required to drive to and from the TDY location.
2. Per your CTW, the constructed airfare cost is **\$550**. You'll have your own car at the TDY location and you won't have to rent a vehicle that you otherwise would have rented, so you entered a cost avoidance of **\$250** for the rental car and gas.
3. Result: Drive=**\$525** (+**\$300** in extra per diem = an overall cost of **\$825**). Fly=**\$550** (+**\$250** for the rental car = an overall cost of **\$800**). Although the transportation costs are higher to fly, when you consider the extra per diem, flying is a better value for the Government, even after factoring in the extra costs associated with the rental car. The AO limited your transportation reimbursement and required you to enter a non-per diem status (e.g., leave) on all extra travel days, so you'll receive **\$525** if you drive, but no extra per diem.

Constructed Travel Examples (continued)

Scenario 5: A voucher comparison with cost avoidances and additional considerations

1. Per your DTS voucher, you did not fly back to your PDS as the AO approved on the authorization. Instead, you drove a one-way rental car at a cost of **\$300**. As you explained in a comment, you used the rental car because A) a snowstorm closed the airport for your connecting flight, B) no other flights to your destination were available until the next day, and C) you had an urgent meeting at your duty station that you would have missed, if you stayed at the TDY location for an extra day.
2. Per your CTW, the authorized airfare cost for the return flight was **\$150**. It also shows that had you remained overnight to catch a re-scheduled flight, you would have incurred **\$125** for an extra day of per diem. It also shows the weather delay mentioned above, but without the explanation.
3. Result of this one-way trip: Drive=**\$300**. Fly=**\$150** (+**\$125** in extra per diem = an overall cost of **\$275**). Flying seems cheaper, even with the extra per diem factored in, but because of the additional considerations (the weather delay, the urgent meeting), the AO chose not to limit your transportation reimbursement, so you will receive **\$300** for the return trip to your PDS. **Note:** Remember when changing travel modes and incurring additional cost, it is a good idea to contact the AO for approval for the changes (e.g., one-way rental car).

Mixed Modes – Constructed Travel

Mixed-mode constructed travel occurs when you use more than one en route transportation mode (e.g., POV + Airfare, POV + Train, POV + Rental Car, POV + Bus). Per the *JTR, G. Reimbursement for Mixed-Mode Travel When POV Is Involved* states, “When an individual travels partly by POV and partly by commercial modes between any two points listed as separate legs of the trip (see par. 020205), the travel is mixed mode. Reimbursement depends upon whether or not use of the POV was more advantageous to the Government.”

You will need to complete a CTW providing a comparison between the total cost of using both transportation modes (fly + drive) and the cost of using the directed mode for the entire trip (fly + fly) and include it in the document. You will need provide documentation validating the cost of the standard transportation mode, use either the DTS Travel module cost display, GSA City Pair Program (CPP) website, or a statement from the TMC and include it in the document.

The *JTR, Table 2-12. Mixed-Mode Allowances and Reimbursements* outlines the conditions for **Allowances** and the **Determining Reimbursement**. If POV use is not to the Government’s advantage, then reimbursement is limited to the constructed cost of the authorized mode of transportation for the entire leg of the journey, plus the associated per diem.

Authorizing Official- Review and Approve Travel Documents

The Authorizing Official (AO) determines whether travel is necessary and appropriate to the mission, ensures that all expenses claimed by the traveler are valid, and authorizes or approves the valid expenses IAW the *Joint Travel Regulations (JTR)*. As an Authorizing Official (AO) you will carefully review each expense entry, all comments, the supporting documentation, receipts,

**Authorizing
Official- Review
and Approve
Travel
Documents
(continued)**

Pre-Audit flags, Reason Codes, and justifications confirming the document is within compliance of travel regulations and local policy.

To assist you in completing the task, the [Desktop Guide for Authorizing Officials](#) provides basic information to AOs/COs on their official roles, explains the various tasks to complete along with a detailed checklist for each DTS document type. If you determine a document does not meet compliance and policy requirements, then return it (with comments) for traveler corrective action. In addition to the Desktop Guide for Authorizing Officials, the [AO Checklist](#) Trifold provides assists with reviewing documents and steps on how to complete actions in DTS.

If a traveler prefers to use a POV as the mode of travel, you will need to ensure the transportation reimbursement is in accordance with the *JTR*. As an AO you should review the sections of the *JTR* to assist you with understanding constructed travel and determining reimbursement thereof such as POV use, *20203. Transportation Types Most Advantageous to the Government*, constructed travel (what is allowable in the comparison), and the section *020302. Allowable Travel Time As It Affects Per Diem* to name a few.

Within the DTS document, when the mileage expense type is indicated you will need to verify the following:

- Traveler entered all mileage allowances accurately.
- If mileage is authorized, allowable, and not duplicated elsewhere in the document.
- The traveler used the DTOD for en route mileage.
- The Traveler entered reasonable odometer mileage to official locations for in-and-around mileage.
- If the CTW is required, ensure that the traveler attached the supporting record.
- Documentation validating the cost of the standard transportation mode, such as the DTS Travel module cost display, GSA City Pair Program (CPP) website, or a statement from the TMC is included in the document.

During the review process, if the traveler requested (authorization) or used (voucher) a transportation mode you did not authorize, the **Digital Signature** screen will display a **Constructed Travel Worksheet (CTW) Cost Comparison tool**. Use the available information within the tool to either *limit* the traveler's transportation reimbursement or to *allow* the traveler to receive the *full* reimbursement for their selected transportation mode. Once you approve the trip, the traveler is able to view their document and see if their transportation reimbursement reflects *full* or *limited*.

Note 1: If you were prompted to *limit* the travel on the authorization and did not, then you are not allowed to *limit* it on the voucher. See the *JTR, 010206. Travel Authorizations and Orders, A* and the [JTR Supplement, Travel Orders, Amending a Travel Order, B](#).

Note 2: Mixed-mode constructed travel occurs when the traveler uses more than one en route transportation mode. For example, you direct a traveler to fly commercial air. The traveler flies to a TDY location, then purchases a POV and drives it home. The traveler must provide a

Authorizing Official- Review and Approve Travel Documents

comparison between the total cost of using both transportation modes (fly + drive) and the cost of using the directed mode for the entire trip (fly + fly) and include it in the document. If you don't limit the transportation reimbursement, the traveler will receive the total constructed cost for all transportation types used. If you approve the trip as *limited*, the traveler's transportation reimbursement may not exceed the constructed cost of travel by the directed mode.

Checking for Transportation Reimbursement Limitation

There are several ways you can see whether the AO *limited* your transportation reimbursement. This information paper shows just two of them. They both start with you logging onto DTS and viewing your travel document, which opens on the **Review Trip Authorization** (or **Voucher**) screen.

1. Scroll down to the *Accounting* section (Figure 10), which shows two costs, **ACTUAL** (Indicator 1) and **ALLOWED** (Indicator 2).
 - The **ACTUAL** amount (Figure 10, Indicator 1) shows the costs you entered.
 - The **ALLOWED** amount (Figure 10, Indicator 2) shows the costs the AO approved.
 - If the amounts match, the AO did not limit your transportation reimbursement. If the amount in the **ALLOWED** column is smaller than the **ACTUAL**, the AO limited your transportation reimbursement.

| ACCOUNTING LABEL | ORGANIZATION | ALLOWED | ACTUAL |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|
| 23 Default CIC:15L2POL2P33186 | DTMO SDN:002QPY | \$1680.75 | \$1705.47 |

Figure 10: Review Trip Screen (Accounting Summary Section)

2. Select Sign and Submit from the **Progress Bar**. The **Digital Signature** screen opens.
 - Select **Show Previous Stamps** to open the document stamping history. If it contains a **CONSTRUCTED TRAVEL** stamp (Figure 11), the **COMMENT** identifies whether the AO limited your transportation reimbursement. **Government Amount** means they did; **Traveler Amount** means they did not. Go to the **Cost Comparison** tool to see the costs involved.

| 06/25/2023 02:50PMEST | NAME | COMMENT |
|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| CONSTRUCTED TRAVEL | Chris A West | Government Amount |

Figure 11: Digital Signature Screen (Document History)

Checking for Transportation Reimbursement Limitation (continued)

Note: When **Constructed Travel** rules apply, the **Digital Signature** screen displays a **CTW Cost Comparison** tool (Figure 12). The screen displays the figures the AO used when deciding whether to limit your transportation reimbursement, but does not identify whether they actually limited the trip. See the **Digital Signature** stamp for transportation reimbursement.

| CONSTRUCTED TRAVEL WORKSHEET (CTW) COST COMPARISON | | | |
|--|------------------|--|------------------|
| The traveler has indicated a preferred mode of transportation different from the one directed by their AO. The AO has approved the following allowed cost: | | | |
| Government Preferred Transportation | | Traveler Preferred Transportation | |
| Transportation Costs (Box 2.D)* | \$ 120.00 | Pvt Auto-TDY/TAD | \$156.97 |
| TMC Fee (Box 2.E)* | \$ 12.25 | | |
| Total Allowed Cost | \$ 132.25 | Total Allowed Cost | \$ 156.97 |

Figure 12: Digital Signature Screen (CTW Cost Comparison Tool)

Key JTR References

Regulations about constructed travel appear throughout the *JTR*. Below are some key *JTR* entries to consult when using constructed travel:

- JTR, Par. 020210, for information on:
 - Using private autos and motorcycles
 - Cost comparisons, highlighting constructed costs allowable when comparing POVs against other transportation modes
 - Cost comparisons when using mixed transportation modes that include a POV
- JTR, Table 2-11. Cost Comparison Rules for Using a POV
- JTR Table 2-12. Mixed-Mode Allowances and Reimbursements
- JTR, Appendix A: Definitions and Acronyms, Policy Constructed Airfare (definition)

Resources

The DTMO website provides a number of travel resources. To see the full list, go to the main [Training](#) page and search the [Training Resources Lookup Tool](#). Below are some references.

- [DTS Guide 2: Authorizations](#) and [DTS Guide 3: Vouchers](#)
- [How to Calculate POV Mileage Allowances](#)
- [Joint Travel Regulations \(JTR\)](#)
- [Desktop Guide for AOs/COs](#)
- [AO Checklist](#)
- Web based training (WBT) classes accessed through [Passport](#): Constructed Travel, DTS Basics – DTS Travel Documents (DTS 101), and DTS Approval Process.