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## Information Paper:

# Introduction to Constructed Travel in DTS

### Summary

There may be times when you\* want to travel using a different transportation mode than what the Authorizing Official (AO) directed you to use. For example, the AO may have decided that you should travel using commercial air, but you want to drive your own car\*\*.

The [Joint Travel Regulations](#) (JTR) gives you some leeway in choosing your 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.

\* In this information paper, “you” refers to a traveler; however, the actions described can also apply to anyone who creates travel documents for you – e.g., Non-DTS Entry Agent, travel clerk.

\*\* The JTR calls a personal vehicle (e.g., car, motorcycle) a *privately owned vehicle (POV)*.

**Note:** For simplicity, this information paper generally uses future tense, indicating that the actions are taking place on an authorization while planning a TDY trip. However, all actions can also apply on a voucher if you use a transportation mode the AO did not approve on the authorization.

### The Basic Constructed Travel Process

For starters, it’s important to understand that constructed travel does not apply on most trips. To determine if constructed travel applies on a particular trip, ask yourself these questions:

- Do I want to use a different transportation mode than the AO wants me to use?
- Do I want to drive a POV (car or motorcycle) over 400 miles, one-way?

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 CTW pre-audit flag (see the *DTS Constructed Travel Pre-Audit Flag Triggers* section of this information paper).

When constructed travel does apply, here’s what happens:

1. You build your DTS authorization to show the costs of using your preferred travel mode.
2. You complete a CTW to show the assumed cost (that is, the *constructed cost*) of the AO’s chosen travel mode. You may also include cost avoidances and additional considerations on the CTW.
3. The AO considers the information in your authorization and the CTW and makes one of two decisions:
  - a. To authorize the trip your way with full reimbursement for the transportation mode you entered in DTS. In this case, a CTW is no longer needed.
  - b. To allow you to travel the way you want, but limit your transportation reimbursement to the constructed cost on the CTW.

Figure 1 provides a visual representation of this process.

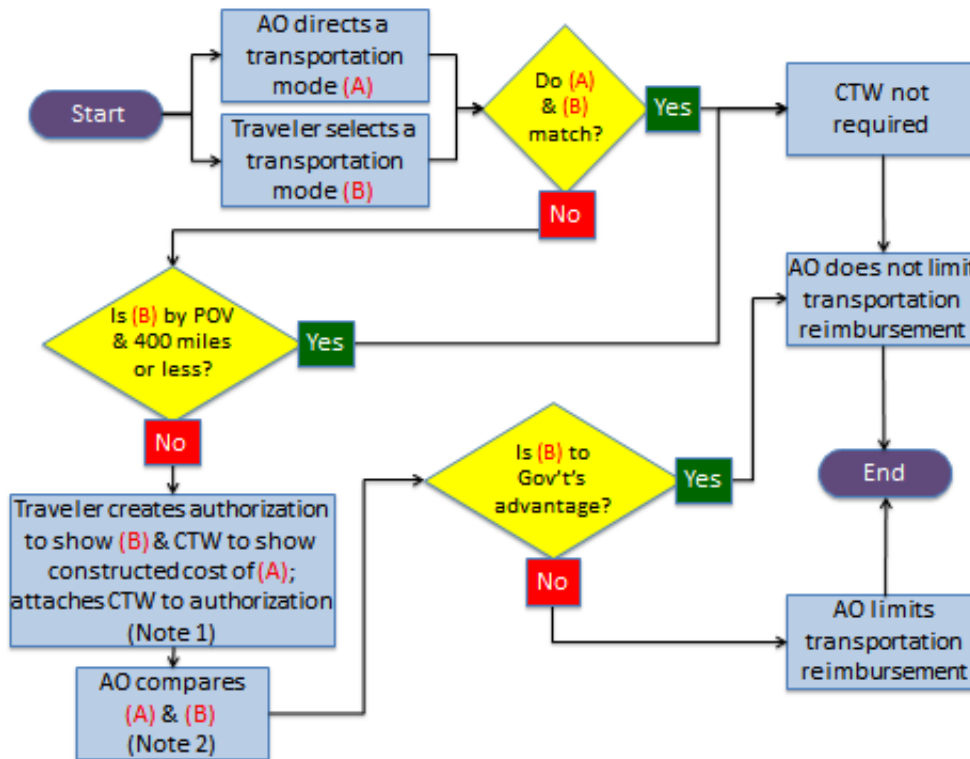


Figure 1: The Constructed Travel Process

### DTS Constructed Travel Pre- Audit Flag Triggers

Some actions you take in DTS trigger a pre-audit flag informing you that you may need to submit a CTW. The list below identifies the most common selections that trigger the Constructed Travel Worksheet pre-audit flag:

- On an authorization:
  - Checking the **(ER) En Route** box on the Rental Car screen.
  - Selecting any expense on the My Expenses screen that reflects travel to, from, or between TDY locations by anything other than a commercial flight or Government vehicle. Examples include:
    - *Mileage Expense: Pvt Auto –TDY/TAD or Private Plane*
    - *Transportation Travel Expense: Commercial Auto – TDY/TAD or Private Vessel*
    - *Ticketed Expense: Comm Bus* (i.e., Commercial Bus) or any **Prepaid** option.
- On a voucher, entering any transportation mode that was not present on the approved authorization, unless the transportation mode is a commercial flight or any form of Government transportation



## Locations of the CTWs and CTW Instructions

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

1. Open it in DTS:
  - a. Navigate to the Pre-Audit Trip screen of your active travel document and select **Constructed Travel Worksheet** (Figure 2, indicator #1). A new screen opens.
  - b. Select either CTW link – for an authorization or for a voucher. The CTW opens (Figure 3).

1.	Reason Flagged	Item Description	* Justification to Approving Official <Help>
->	LODGING NOT USED	-> HOUSTON, TX: No lodging	Reason Codes

Figure 2: Pre-Audit Trip Screen (Top)

2. Select a direct link:
  - a. CTW for authorizations: <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/CnstTvl/auth.pdf>
  - b. CTW for vouchers: <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/voucher.pdf>

CTWs come with instructions that you should consult as you complete the CTW. Open the instructions by selecting **Worksheet Instructions** in the CTW (Figure 3, indicator #1) or use a direct link:

- Instructions for CTW for authorizations:  
[https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/CnstTvl/CT\\_Authorization\\_Instructions.pdf](https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/CnstTvl/CT_Authorization_Instructions.pdf)
- Instructions for CTW for vouchers:  
[https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/CnstTvl/CT\\_Voucher\\_Instructions.pdf](https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/CnstTvl/CT_Voucher_Instructions.pdf)



## CTW Layout

Each CTW has three primary sections, as shown in Figure 3. This figure is provided for reference when reading the scenarios below. The CTW instructions (Figure 3, indicator #1) explain in detail how to complete the CTW.

**1**

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Worksheet Instructions

**DTS Constructed Travel Worksheet - Authorization**  
Not required for any travel logs of 400 one-way miles or less, if by POV (auto or motorcycle)  
Refer to worksheet instructions for complete guidance

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Travel itinerary for the directed 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 directed transportation mode:**

	Cost
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 TMC	\$0.00
F. Total constructed transportation cost	\$0.00

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

	Cost
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
- POV use would be more efficient, more economical, or result in a more expeditiously accomplished mission

Save

Constructed Itinerary and Constructed Cost

Cost Avoidances

Other Considerations

Figure 3: CTW – Authorization

## Constructed Travel Examples

The following examples will help improve your understanding of constructed travel. They all assume the AO wants you to take commercial air, but you want to drive your POV.

### Scenario 1: A simple comparison with cheaper airfare

1. Per your DTS authorization, your driving costs will be **\$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 limits your transportation reimbursement to **\$350**.

### Scenario 2: A simple comparison with cheaper driving costs

1. Per your DTS authorization, your driving costs will be **\$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 does not need to limit your transportation reimbursement, so you will receive **\$650**.



**Scenario 3:** A comparison with cheaper airfare and cost avoidances

1. Per your DTS authorization, your driving costs will be **\$450**.
2. Per your CTW, the constructed airfare cost is **\$375**. However, since you'll have your own car at the TDY location, you won't have to rent a vehicle, so you entered a cost avoidance of **\$325** for the rental car and gas.
3. Result: Drive=**\$450**. Fly=**\$700**. The AO does not need to limit your transportation reimbursement, so you will receive **\$450**.

**Scenario 4:** Another comparison with cheaper airfare and cost avoidances

1. Per your DTS authorization, your driving costs will be **\$525** plus **\$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 **\$350**. However, since you'll have your own car at the TDY location, you won't have to rent a vehicle, so you entered a cost avoidance of **\$250** for the rental car and gas.
3. Result: Drive=**\$825**. Fly=**\$600**. The AO limits your transportation reimbursement to **\$600**.

**Scenario 5:** A voucher comparison with cost avoidances and an additional consideration

1. Per your DTS voucher, you did not fly, which was the transportation mode the AO approved on the authorization. Instead, you drove a one-way rental car back home at a cost of **\$525** for the vehicle and gas.
2. Per your CTW, the authorized airfare cost was **\$350**. However, a snowstorm closed the airport your connecting flight was supposed to use. Since no other flights were available to your destination on that day. You would also have incurred **\$125** for an extra day of per diem, you had an urgent meeting at your duty station that required your attendance.
3. Result: Drive=**\$525**. Fly=**\$475**. Because of the additional consideration, even though driving was more expensive, the AO chose not to limit your transportation reimbursement, so you will receive to **\$525**.

Obviously, this is only a small sampling. Many other scenarios are possible.

**Key JTR  
Paragraphs**

Regulations about constructed travel appear throughout the [JTR](#). Although the following list is not comprehensive, it contains the key entries you should consult when using constructed travel:

- **JTR, Ch. 2, Par. 020210** (Privately-Owned Vehicle use), for information on:
  - Using private autos and motorcycles
  - Cost comparisons, highlighting constructed costs allowable when comparing POVs against other transportation modes
  - Cost comparisons that apply when using mixed transportation modes, including a POV
- **JTR, Appendix A: Definition of Policy-Constructed Airfare**



### Checking for Transportation Reimbursement Limitation

You can see whether the AO limited your transportation reimbursement by logging onto DTS and opening your travel document, which opens on the Preview Trip screen.

Scroll down to the **Accounting Summary** (Figure 4), which shows two cost columns. The key amounts for this purpose are the **Calculated Trip Cost** amounts:

- The amount in the **Actual/Estimate** column (Figure 4, indicator #1) shows the costs you entered.
- The amount in the **Allowed** column (Figure 4, 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 right column is smaller, as seen in Figure 4, the AO limited your transportation reimbursement to the cost the Government would have paid.

Accounting Summary			
Actual/Estimate		Allowed	
Accounting Code:	17 DEFAULT <a href="#">view</a>	Accounting Code:	17 DEFAULT <a href="#">view</a> SDN: 0031Z8 CIC: 200021190023185
LODGING:	\$1,036.00	LODGING:	\$1,036.00
M&IE:	\$793.50	M&IE:	\$793.50
MILEAGE:	\$676.24	MILEAGE:	\$539.70
OTHER:	\$190.00	OTHER:	\$70.00
17 DEFAULT Sub Total:	\$2,695.74 <b>1</b>	17 DEFAULT Sub Total:	\$2,439.20 <b>2</b>
Calculated Trip Cost:	\$2,695.74	Calculated Trip Cost:	\$2,439.20

Figure 4: Preview Trip Screen (Accounting Summary Section)