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INTERNATIONAL TRIPS



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
Office of Chief Financial Officer

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Officer

INTERNATIONAL TRIPS

1. PURPOSE. This Manual provides detailed requirements to supplement DOE P 551.1, INTERNATIONAL TRIPS.
2. CANCELLATION. DOE N 551.1, INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL, dated 4-15-96.
3. REFERENCE. See DOE P 551.1, INTERNATIONAL TRIPS, dated 7-31-96.
4. CONTACT. Comments and pertinent data that may improve this document should be sent to the Director, Office of Financial Policy, (202) 586-4860.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF ENERGY:



ARCHER L. DURHAM
Assistant Secretary for
Human Resources and Administration

1. OBJECTIVES. This Manual is intended to assist in the efficient management of the Department's resources while maximizing the effectiveness of its international travel incident to interaction with other nations, multinational organizations, and other appropriate foreign entities. Specifically, the Manual establishes minor and major trip requirements and procedures relative to international travel.
2. APPLICABILITY. The provisions of this Manual apply to international trips sponsored by the Department that involve travel by Federal employees and, in some instances, private sector participants (invitees) whose travel is funded by the Department. Included are all trips of Principal Departmental Officers (defined as the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Under Secretary) and trips involving other employees and invitees when the Department's trip costs are \$50,000 or higher. Trips are classified as either minor or major as follows:
 - a. A minor trip is any international trip by a Principal Departmental Officer with a trip cost to the Department of less than \$150,000 and any international trip involving other employees with a cost between \$50,000 and \$150,000.
 - b. A major trip is one with a total cost to the Department of \$150,000 or more.
 - c. A trip not subject to this Manual (i.e., one that does not involve a Principal Departmental Officer or one that costs less than \$50,000) shall be conducted in accordance with existing requirements and procedures.
3. RESPONSIBILITIES.
 - a. Sponsoring Official. As the highest ranking official (Assistant Secretary level or higher) either leading the trip or directing that the trip occur, this official is responsible for the following actions.
 - (1) Determines the need, benefits, and opportunities for international travel and decides whether such travel will be pursued.
 - (2) Reviews and clears the trip plan and forwards it to the Chief Financial Officer for approval.
 - (3) Designates in writing a Senior Trip Official for each international trip in all instances where such official has not been designated by a Principal Departmental Officer.

- (4) Approves the private sector participant selection criteria developed by the Senior Trip Official (if applicable).

- b. Senior Trip Official. As a knowledgeable and accountable staff member, coordinates all elements of an international trip, including planning, approvals, logistics, reconciliation, and requests for exceptions.

(1) Planning.

- (a) Compiles the trip plan consisting of the mission objectives, itinerary, any individual policy and logistics plans (including staffing plans), budget, and other material unique and essential to the trip and submits the plan to the Sponsoring Official.
- (b) Certifies that each Federal employee included in the staffing plan, invitee (i.e., non-Federal employee who will be extended an invitation to travel at the Department's expense), and participant from the private sector traveling at his or her own expense is essential to the trip.
- (c) Develops mission-specific, objective criteria for selecting participants from the private sector.
- (d) Upon approval of the trip plan, obtains any approvals required from the Department of State, the National Security Council, and the Executive Office of the President.
- (e) Distributes the final approved trip plan.
- (f) With approval of the sponsoring official and the Chief Financial Officer, documents and signs any approved changes to the approved trip plan.

(2) Logistics.

- (a) Where deemed appropriate and required, designates in writing the Trip Logistics Officer.
- (b) When requested, may provide guidance to non-Federal personnel in arranging with vendors for administrative costs to be identified and pre-paid.
- (c) For trips expected to cost more than \$150,000, transmits approved trip plan (with budget) to the appropriate DOE procurement official and the designated U.S. embassy procurement official for use in planning domestic and in-country procurements, respectively, pursuant to this Manual.
- (d) Works with the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Chief Financial Officer, program officials, Director of Administrative Services, and other

designated officials to request the Department of State and the U.S. embassy in the host country to assist in trip preparation and execution.

- (e) For major trips and other trips as determined by the Senior Trip Official, negotiates advance understandings with U.S. embassies.
- (f) As needed, prepares initial air transport requirements and requests the Director, Office of Field Support, to prepare transportation options analyses and acquire approved transportation services.
- (g) Documents changes in the trip itinerary that must be made during the trip and coordinates those changes with the Trip Logistics Officer, policy and program staff, and Event Logistics Officers (if any) so that all arrangements can be adjusted as necessary.
- (h) Requests General Counsel to approve all uses of Government aircraft as required by OMB Circular A-126 and, where non-Federal passengers are included, also provides a list of those passengers to General Counsel for approval.

(3) Approvals.

- (a) Approves all trip-related expenditures consistent with the approved budget. This responsibility may be delegated in writing to a Trip Logistics Officer or Event Logistics Officer as appropriate.
- (b) Maintains records of goods and services requested.
- (c) Maintains a separate record of requested representation expenses and approves their payment consistent with the approved budget. This responsibility may be delegated in writing to a Trip Logistics Officer.
- (d) Approves the detailed air transport requirements.

(4) Documentation.

- (a) Prior to returning to the United States, obtains copies of all available invoices, orders for services and supplies, and other related records of expenses; the advance understanding (if any) with the embassy; the Department's request for embassy support; and any correspondence advising the embassy of clarifications or changes to requests.
- (b) With assistance from the Director, Office of Scheduling and Logistics, prepares a trip report in accordance with the Department's foreign travel

authorization requirements upon trip completion and simultaneously compiles and indexes all official documents, records, plans, required approvals, certifications, and waivers.

- (5) Reconciliation. With assistance from responsible embassy officials, the Director, Office of Scheduling and Logistics, and the Chief Financial Officer, reconciles all costs incurred in the planning and execution of every minor or major trip and certifies the results. (For missions in excess of \$150,000, the Chief Financial Officer also shall certify the results of the reconciliation.)
- (6) Exceptions. With the approval of the sponsoring official, requests written exceptions to the requirements and procedures of this Manual from the Chief Financial Officer.

c. Assistant Secretary for Policy.

- (1) Performs the following functions in connection with all trips involving a Principal Departmental Officer:
 - (a) Clears the trip plan with the Principal Departmental Officer and forwards it to the Chief Financial Officer for approval;
 - (b) Clears all proposed changes to the trip plan before submitting them to the Chief Financial Officer for approval and makes appropriate distribution of such changes;
 - (c) Oversees development of the objective criteria to be used for selection of non-Federal participants in any trip; and
 - (d) Concurs in requests for exceptions to the Manual that are to be granted by the Chief Financial Officer.
- (2) As requested by a Senior Trip Official, researches the opportunities, objectives, potential benefits and outcomes, and potential obstacles for trips, seeking input from interested DOE program officials and representatives of the Executive Office of the President, host countries, Department of State and its embassies, Department of Commerce, and interested business and non-profit organizations.
- (3) Working with Senior Trip Officials, prepares planning and policy documents for proposed major trips and, upon request, for minor trips.
- (4) Assists the Senior Trip Official in obtaining approvals required for the various portions of the trip plan.

d. Chief Financial Officer.

- (1) Establishes policies, procedures, and controls for fiscal management and travel involving international trips and ensures policies are applied appropriately.
 - (2) Approves all trip plans after clearance by the appropriate sponsoring officials.
 - (3) Approves travel budgets for both major and minor trips in consultation with the Director, Office of Administrative Services.
 - (a) Approves all transfers and increases of budgeted amounts.
 - (b) After budget approval, ensures that all proper authorizations are in place (e.g., travel authorizations) and expenses incurred are tracked against the budget.
 - (c) At the request of the Senior Trip Official, approves changes to trip plans and budgets during the trip.
 - (4) Certifies availability of funds.
 - (5) Collects outstanding balances owed to the Department, including amounts from non-Federal participants where appropriate.
 - (6) Approves, in consultation with the sponsoring official, all requests for exceptions to provisions of this Manual.
- e. Director, Office of Scheduling and Logistics. For trips involving a Principal Departmental Officer:
- (1) Assists the Senior Trip Official in completing the administrative and logistical elements of the trip, calling on other Departmental staff as needed.
 - (2) Coordinates all travel authorizations necessary for Federal travelers and invitees for preliminary meetings, advance trips, and travel associated with the trip itself.
 - (3) Ensures that authorizations are consistent with the approved trip plan and budget, that invited travelers have been identified as necessary in the approved trip plan, and that documentation required for official travel has been approved by appropriate officials.

- f. Director, Office of National Security. Develops security plans for proposed international travel, including executive protection if appropriate, under DOE 5632.7A, PROTECTIVE FORCE PROGRAM, of 4-13-94.
- g. Trip Logistics Officer. The responsibilities set out below for Trip Logistics Officers fall to Senior Trip Officials for trips where Trip Logistics Officers have not been designated.
 - (1) Manages the logistics of a major or minor trip, including arrangements for advance trips, transportation, lodging, meeting space, administration, and communications.
 - (2) For major trips, designates Event Logistics Officers.
 - (3) Ensures that the costs of all logistical and event planning activities are within the approved trip budget and that all goods and services arranged in connection with advance activities are consistent with this Manual.
 - (4) When delegated by the Senior Trip Official, approves in writing the procurement of goods and services (other than transportation to the host country, which is handled separately).
 - (5) Approves invoices prior to payment for goods and services procured directly by the Department.
 - (6) Approves and coordinates with embassy officials changes in administrative or logistical support (including goods and services requested through the embassy) and certifies that such changes will not cause the event or trip to exceed the approved budget.
 - (7) Tracks and distributes any authorized changes to the travel budget.
 - (8) Works with the appropriate embassy official to confirm that requested goods and services are properly documented, and at the conclusion of a trip, obtains from the embassy all outstanding invoices and other information for previously undocumented expenses and obtains agreement on the processing of invoices received after the departure of Departmental travelers.
 - (9) Maintains records of all goods and services received.
- h. Event Logistics Officer. Carries out the responsibilities of the Trip Logistics Officer, or Senior Trip Official where appropriate, for assigned events involving expense authorization for the events, advance work, transportation, administration, and other support activities.

- i. Director, Office of Field Support.
 - (1) Upon receipt of air transport requirements from or upon request of the Senior Trip Official, prepares a transportation options analysis and recommends the most cost effective option that will meet air transport requirements in accordance with written procedures established by the Director.
 - (2) Prepares detailed aircraft requirements, submits them to the Senior Trip Official for approval, and submits approved requirements to the appropriate procurement official to acquire the air transport services indicated in accordance with the Department's Acquisition Letter 96-08.
 - j. Executive Secretary. Establishes and maintains archives for all trip plans and related documentation.
4. DESIGNATION OF SPONSORING OFFICIAL. For a minor trip, the Sponsoring Official shall be a Department official at the Assistant Secretary level or higher. For a major trip, the Sponsoring Official shall be the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, or Under Secretary.
5. TRIP PLANS.
- a. General.
 - (1) Preparation. Each trip that falls within the purview of this Manual will be approved on the basis of a trip plan approved by the Chief Financial Officer. Trip plans consist of itineraries, any individual policy and logistics plans, budgets, and other information unique and essential to the trip.
 - (a) Trip plans will outline the objectives, scope, and proposed outcomes of the trip.
 - (b) Itineraries must identify places to be visited (sites of meetings, working sessions, and any other events integral to the trip), dates of travel, and travelers and other participants. (Minor updates to itineraries occasionally may occur. Such changes that have little or no impact on the trip budget or scope of the trip may be approved by the Senior Trip Official.)
 - (c) Specific individual plans related to such areas as policy, logistics, and security may be required as set out in this Manual.

- (2) Approval. The trip plan shall be submitted through the Sponsoring Official to the Chief Financial Officer for approval. For trips involving a Principal Departmental Officer, this will be the Assistant Secretary for Policy.

b. Policy Plans.

- (1) Policy Staffing. These plans shall identify travel participants acting in policy roles. Staffing plans will include the following information.
 - (a) An outline of the policy and program work required to support the mission,
 - (b) A list of mission-specific supplemental participant selection criteria,
 - (c) A list of the specific programmatic and policy expertise required on the trip to accomplish the mission, and
 - (d) A description of programmatic or policy followup work expected after the trip.
- (2) Policy Items Preparation. A plan shall be prepared addressing the requirements for the programmatic and policy issues specific to the trip. The plan shall include the following information.
 - (a) Background material that must be developed,
 - (b) Plans for preliminary meetings or communications with the host government and with U.S. program and policy experts,
 - (c) Potential obstacles to be addressed (including any diplomatic issues),
 - (d) Policy requirements and staffing plan, and
 - (e) Proposed itinerary.

- c. Logistical Staffing Plans. These plans shall be prepared to propose all advance and support personnel who will provide logistical, communication, and clerical support needed for the trip. When travel by a Principal Departmental Officer is involved, the plans must be consistent with criteria established by the Director, Office of Administrative Services. Support provided by such personnel shall not duplicate support that can be provided by the embassy. The travel and related costs of advance and support staff will be included in the trip budget. This plan shall not include security staffing (see below).

- d. Security Plans. These plans shall be prepared to address staffing and related transportation, communication, and logistical requirements needed to supplement security provided by the State Department. Associated costs shall be included in the trip budget. Security plans also must summarize the threat assessment and identify the basis for it. The security plan, threat summary, assessment basis, and budget data may be included as a classified appendix to the trip plan.
- e. Budgets. Budgets must be carefully completed to reflect all anticipated costs of the trip. Essentially, these include all costs that would not have been incurred except in response to the trip requirements. Once approved, the Chief Financial Officer must approve all increases or transfers of budgeted amounts. Any change that occurs during the trip must be approved in writing by the Trip Logistics Officer with oral concurrence from the Chief Financial Officer prior to expenses being incurred. To the extent that a change modifies an amount associated with support requested from a U.S. embassy, the Trip Logistics Officer immediately should present the change in writing to the appropriate embassy official for countersignature.
 - (1) Budgets - Minor Trips. Minor trip estimates shall identify the following categories. (Minor trip estimates shall not include administrative costs associated with non-DOE participants.)
 - (a) Total direct costs of the trip including travel (of employees and others traveling for the Department), security, and communications;
 - (b) Pre-trip planning and preparation costs;
 - (c) Reception and representation activity costs; and
 - (d) Fund cites and availability of funds for all costs including security.
 - (2) Budgets - Major Trips. In addition to the Minor Trip requirements, Major Trip estimates shall also address the following categories.
 - (a) Trip planning and preparation;
 - (b) Security;
 - (c) Staff, meeting, and conference rooms;
 - (d) Communications;
 - (e) Transportation (including in-country transportation) when not included in employee travel estimates;

- (f) Representation;
- (g) Contingencies (e.g., foreign exchange and emergencies); and
- (h) Any anticipated recoverable expenses.

6. DEPARTMENT OF STATE COORDINATION. Advance understandings between the Department and U.S. embassies are required for all major trips. For other trips, advance understandings are optional as determined by the Senior Trip Official. Advance understandings are formal requests for assistance that describe embassy support required, expenses to be incurred by the embassy from its own accounts, advance funding from the Department, representation expenses, accounting procedures, and all other elements of requested assistance. The formal request for assistance shall address the following information.

- a. Name of the Senior Trip Official and, if designated, the Trip Logistics Officer and Event Logistics Officer (s).
- b. A detailed list of required goods and services with the specific funding cites and amounts for each.
- c. A list of costs to be covered directly by private sector participants.
- d. A statement that only the Senior Trip Official or Trip Logistics Officer may request changes (in writing) to the items or services listed in the request and that only the Senior Trip Official or Trip Logistics Officer may authorize any expenditures in excess of stated amounts.
- e. A statement that all invoices and supporting documentation are to be provided before the end of the trip (or as soon thereafter as practicable) to allow a full and complete reconciliation of all trip expenses incurred through the embassy and that the embassy is to establish an accounting mechanism or cost center to ensure accurate and timely accounting and reconciliation. In addition, Department and embassy officials shall agree on a method and schedule for processing invoices that must be processed after the group's departure.

7. TRANSPORTATION.

- a. General. When air transportation other than commercial airline service is being considered or is required, the Director, Office of Field Support, shall be requested to prepare a transportation options analysis and be responsible for the acquisition of transportation services. A request for such service from the Senior Trip Official will include the trip itinerary and be submitted as early in the planning process as practicable. The written request shall include information on the number persons traveling as a group and the number of persons traveling individually.

- b. Transportation Options. Transportation options analyses prepared by the Director, Office of Field Support, shall address the following consistent with published procedures.
- (1) All reasonable alternatives (including the use of regularly scheduled commercial airlines, commercially available charter aircraft, DOE-owned aircraft, and other Government aircraft).
 - (2) The impact of minor changes in itinerary, schedule, or requirements.
 - (3) A detailed cost estimate of the available options.
 - (4) Potential limitations or modifications to the trip plan.
 - (5) Recommendations for the least expensive transportation alternatives (based on best estimates when necessary) that will meet the basic requirements identified in the request.
 - (6) Cost-recovery options for service provided to non-DOE participants.
 - (7) Assurance, when appropriate, that non-commercial transportation providers have the capability to:
 - (a) establish a mechanism to accept direct payments for prorated shares of air transport costs and
 - (b) accept a Government Transportation Request (GTR) to cover the cost of all Federal travelers (including invitees). (The GTR shall be issued by the Office of Procurement and shall be supported by approved travel authorizations for all Federal travelers and invitees.)
 - (8) Liaison and coordination activities with the Government-contract travel agent to arrange transportation on commercial charter when this method of transportation has been selected. The Director shall ensure that transportation arrangements provide for a full, prorated portion of the air fare to be paid by each traveler with collection of fares to be the sole responsibility of the travel agent.
 - (9) Detailed aircraft requirements if military or charter aircraft are to be used for the travel. This includes all safety and flight crew specifications; the passenger list (approved by General Counsel if non-Federal personnel are included); cargo estimates; flight distances; and other information to be needed to acquire the transportation. The detailed aircraft requirements shall be

submitted to the Senior Trip Official for approval and forwarded to the Office of Procurement within 21 days after approval.

- (10) Decisions with respect to mode and carrier selection and procurement are made fully consistent with the Department's published requirements and procedures for aircraft acquisition in Acquisition Letter 96-08.

8. PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS.

- a. No Commitments Prior to Approval. No arrangements for goods or services (either in the United States or in the host country) other than those associated with trip planning, coordination, and approval, may be completed before the trip plan and budget are approved.
- b. Written Advance Approval Required. The requirement for goods and services necessary to complete the trip shall be approved by the Senior Trip Official in writing in accordance with the approved trip budget prior to procurement action.
- c. Procurements Within and Outside the United States. Requests for approvals of the procurement of goods and services both inside and outside the United States must describe the product or service required, estimate the cost of the product, explain why the product or service is required, and certify that the expense is within the approved trip budget.
 - (1) Within the United States. Goods and services that must be acquired in the United States are procured with the assistance of the Director, Office of Administrative Services, and appropriate procurement officials.
 - (2) Outside the United States. Goods and services that must be acquired outside the United States shall be procured through the designated U.S. embassy procurement official in accordance with the detailed request outlining the administration of such expenses, or the advance understanding when applicable, and they shall be approved by the Senior Trip Official.
- d. Travel Costs. To the maximum extent practicable, meal and lodging costs for DOE travelers (employees and invitees) shall be procured through the usual Department travel mechanisms without using embassy services.

9. COST CONTROL GUIDELINES.

- a. Support Staff. Staff traveling in support of a trip shall be the minimum number necessary to fulfill mission objectives.
- b. Budget Limitations. No expenses in excess of the approved mission budget can be incurred without prior approval from the Senior Trip Official and the Chief Financial Officer. Changes in amounts required for administrative or logistical support (including goods and services requested through the embassy) must be approved in writing prior to an expense being incurred.
- c. Federal Travel Rules Apply. Subsistence and related travel expenses for Federal travelers (employees or invitees) shall be authorized and administered through the

- standard Federal regulations and processes. Lodging and meals for Departmental travelers should not be obtained through funding arrangements involving the Department of State or the U.S. embassy in the host country.
- d. Meal Deductions. Federal travelers are required to deduct the designated amounts from the meal portion of their allowances for every meal provided to them incident to their official travel (e.g., meals provided in connection with an official luncheon meeting).
 - e. Prorating Federal Administrative Costs. Appropriated funds are available only for administrative costs that can be identified clearly as official Government business expenses. In unique situations where items or services procured with appropriated funds are made available for the use of members of the private sector, those costs should be identified and collected from those private sector members wherever practical and deposited in accordance with the Department of Energy Accounting Handbook.
 - f. Private Sector Costs. At no time will DOE incur an expense for the sole benefit of the business community or other private sector personnel.
10. REPRESENTATIONAL ACTIVITIES. Departmental funds shall not be used to pay for receptions or other social gatherings of any type unless provided for in a trip budget from funds specifically appropriated for reception and representational activities of the Secretary. Such expenses are considered entertainment and typically consist of food, beverages, and gifts to foreign dignitaries.
- a. The trip budget for representation activities shall be the exclusive Departmental funding source for all official entertainment expenses for the trip. No other appropriated funds may lawfully be used for these expenses. The U.S. embassy in the host country, the Senior Trip Official, and all Trip and Event Logistics Officers shall be informed of this requirement.
 - b. Increases in amounts required for items or services for representational activities (including those requested through the embassy) must be approved in writing by the Senior Trip Official with oral concurrence from the Chief Financial Officer prior to expenses being incurred. To the extent that such changes impact amounts associated with embassy support, the Senior Trip Official shall notify the appropriate embassy official in writing and obtain his/her countersignature.
 - c. Outstanding balances owed to the Department must be monitored by the Trip Logistics Officer to ensure remittance to the Department within 30 days of trip completion. Uncollected balances beyond that time will be brought to the attention of the Senior Trip Official who will act to facilitate collection.

11. PERSONAL EXPENSES OF TRAVELERS. The following costs are considered the personal expenses of individual travelers and shall not be allowed as official expenses of any international trip as communicated to embassies and vendors by Trip Logistics Officers.
 - a. Food and Beverage Costs. Participants, both DOE and non-DOE, are responsible for all food, beverage, and other incidental costs of items and services personally requested. All minibar, room service, restaurant, or other food and beverage charges shall be the responsibility of the individual and shall not be billed to the Department, either through the embassy or through the travel voucher process.
 - b. Incidental Charges to Staff Rooms. No charges shall be billed to the staff support facilities except charges for the room itself and any official phone charges. No minibar, room service, conference material, or other types of charges shall be allowed. All arrangements with embassies and hotels will specify that service charges are not authorized for staff rooms and such services will not be provided to individuals using those rooms.
 - c. Advances or Expenses on Behalf of Business Participants. No funds shall be used to procure goods or services on behalf of a private sector participant. All such charges must be funded directly by the participant with no involvement or liability to the Department.
12. INVITATIONAL TRAVEL. This is travel of non-Federal personnel in accordance with the policy and requirements of section 1060, title 10, Code of Federal Regulations. These individuals (invitees) are required to travel under Departmental invitational travel authorizations. Such travel will be at the Department's expense, and reimbursement of travel expenses will be the same as for Departmental employees.
13. TRAVEL OF OTHER NON-DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL.
 - a. Employees of other Federal agencies traveling at the invitation of the Department must be certified as essential to the trip and shall travel under authorizations from their respective agencies. The Department shall reimburse an agency for an invited Federal employee's travel only when that employee's specific travel requirement is agreed upon in advance in writing.
 - b. Non-Federal personnel not traveling under Departmental invitational travel authorizations generally will be selected based on mission-specific, objective criteria established under the lead of the Sponsoring Official. Selected individuals are expected to make significant contributions to the success of the trip but are not providing direct services to the Department. Individuals known to possess appropriate qualifications will be invited to participate. In addition, general notice of proposed trips may be announced in industry or trade publications so that other

qualified individuals may propose themselves as members of the traveling group. All selected individuals must be notified in writing of their selection in advance of the travel. The notification shall outline background information relevant to the trip, itinerary, the fiscal responsibilities of the individuals (including addresses and contacts for transportation and other payments). The major costs for which these private sector participants are responsible are set out below.

- (1) Transportation. All private sector participants traveling with the other trip members must pay their full prorated share of the arranged transportation costs by the date established for payment. This payment is to be made directly to the transportation provider. Travelers not paying their share of transportation costs shall not travel with the group. Individuals traveling separately to the host country shall be responsible for their own transportation arrangements.
 - (2) Lodging, Meals and Incidental Subsistence Expenses. Private sector participants shall be responsible for their own lodging, meals and related subsistence costs incurred during the trip. The host country embassy and hotel should be reminded that the Department will not be responsible for the subsistence expenses of private sector participants.
 - (3) Administrative and Other Expenses. Private sector participants shall make advance arrangements for payment of the costs of administrative services and supplies associated with the private sector participant's activities and the private sector share of any joint activities. Although the Department may make information available to travelers with respect to administrative arrangements, the Department will not be liable for or a party to any such private arrangements of participants and shall not participate in billing or payment activities.
14. RECURRING TRIPS. In a few instances, recurring international trips will be mandated as the result of the Department's required involvement under a treaty or formal agreement between the United States and one or more other countries. Similarly, because it is in the best interests of the United States and falls within our lawful mission, the Department may be required to participate in recurring multinational events. Some of these trips may involve major or minor trips. If so, and when the circumstances of travel remain essentially the same from trip to trip, an initial, complete trip plan fully explaining the recurring nature of the trips may be submitted for approval in lieu of a series of trip plans for each individual trip. The trip plan must be updated when the circumstances of travel change. Also, a memorandum from the Sponsoring Official notifying the Chief Financial Officer must be provided for each trip to document the recurring nature of the trips. This memorandum shall be maintained with the trip plan in the Executive Secretariat trip archives.

15. EXCEPTIONS. Exceptions to these provisions may be granted by the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Under Secretary, or Chief Financial Officer if in the official's opinion some exigency of the Government (such as a unique emergency or security requirement) warrants the exception. Requests for exceptions should be submitted in writing through the Sponsoring Official to the Chief Financial Officer. Requests for exceptions or deviations from the requirements and procedures of this Manual shall identify the specific requirement at issue, describe how the mission requirements conflict with that requirement, and fully describe the alternative requested. For acquisition of services, products, or air transport services, the request must also demonstrate why conformance to this policy is not in the best financial interest of the Government.