

TRANSVERSAL AIR TRAVEL & RELATED SERVICES POLICY

TRANSVERSAL POLICY NO: _____

1. INTRODUCTION

Employees of the Provincial Government of the Western Cape (PGWC) are from time to time expected to utilise air travel for official purposes. The purpose of this policy is to establish and implement explicit standards with regard to class of air travel, hotel grading and hired vehicle groups available to PGWC officials, when travelling on behalf of the PGWC and to ensure that air travel remains cost effective.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

The PGWC is committed to ensuring the effective, efficient and economic utilisation of public funds in the discharge of its responsibilities towards achieving Provincial goals and objectives and in particular display clean, value-driven practices.

3. SCOPE

This policy is applicable to employees in the PGWC whether permanent, on probation, in excess, on contract or an intern, who travels for official purposes and is effective from date of signature of the Director-General.

4. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Section 38 (1) (a) of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999, as amended by Act 29 of 1999

The National Treasury Regulations, May 2002 (as amended)

The Western Cape Provincial Treasury Instructions, April 2008

The Public Service Act, Act of 1994 (as amended)

The Public Service Regulations, January 2001

5. STANDARDS FOR DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

5.1 Officials may travel on official visits to domestic or international destinations if there is a demonstrated need or benefit for the Province and with due regard to the availability of Departmental funds.

5.2 To ensure fiscal discipline, the absolute minimum number of officials should undertake official visits.

5.3 For domestic travel:

- All officials must utilise economy class when travelling for official purposes. If the airline chooses to upgrade the air ticket to business class at no additional cost to the Department, the official may accept the upgrade.
- If a travel agent confirms that there is no economy class availability across the various airlines and the official is unable to postpone the trip, the official may opt for business class at the expense of the relevant Department, provided that the relevant Programme Manager approves the request.

5.4 For travel beyond the South African borders but within the African continent:

- Officials may utilise business class only if the flight duration is longer than eight hours.

5.5 For international travel:

- All officials must utilise economy class when travelling for official purposes. If the airline chooses to upgrade the air ticket to business class at no additional cost to the Department, the official may accept the upgrade.
- If the flight duration is longer than eight hours, a Member of the Provincial Cabinet may approve that his/her Head of Department (HoD) utilises business class;
- The travel arrangements of members of staff in the Offices of Members of the Provincial Cabinet are prescribed in the Handbook for Members of the Provincial Cabinet. Where a departmental official is requested to accompany a Member of the Provincial Cabinet on official visits to render assistance in official matters relating to the work of the Member, the official may, at the discretion of the Member, travel in the same class as the Member, at the expense of the relevant Department.

5.6 Car rental linked to domestic and international flights

(i) Car rental is limited to the following groups/class of vehicles, as follows:

- For road travel within a 100km radius: Group B for salary levels 1-14 and Group D for salary levels higher than 14;
- For road travel exceeding a 100km radius: Group C for salary levels 1-14 and Group D for salary levels higher than 14.

(ii) Hiring of vehicles with drivers:

The hiring of vehicles with drivers is allowed in the following instances:

- the official does not have a valid driver's license;
- the official is disabled and not able to drive a vehicle on his/her own;
- where an official is not familiar with the vicinity in which he/she has to travel;
- where it is impractical for the official to utilise either government or private transport between his/her base and the airport.

5.7 Accommodation

The accommodation norm for all government officials travelling domestically and internationally is a three star rated hotel/guest-house.

- Officials are required to adhere to this norm, except when travelling on the African continent (South Africa excluded) where the three star hotel/guest-house rating at times deviates from the generally accepted definition. In these cases, a four star rated hotel/guest-house may be utilised;
- Officials may stay in accommodation with a rating higher than the norm if he/she attends an official meeting based in that establishment, provided that no cheaper accommodation possibilities exist within close proximity of that establishment;
- Discretion must be exercised when selecting accommodation – for example, if it can be proven that utilising accommodation with a higher rating is cheaper than driving to cheaper accommodation, the principle of cost efficiency takes precedence.

6. DELEGATED AUTHORITY

Requests for domestic air travel must be approved at the level of Director (level 13) or higher. The current approval processes in respect of international air travel remain in effect.

7. CONCLUSION

Accounting Officers must ensure adherence to this transversal policy on air travel and related services and may deviate only in exceptional circumstances, with due regard to cost-efficiency and effectiveness.

ADVOCATE B GERBER
DIRECTOR-GENERAL
DATE: