



DoD INSTRUCTION 4500.56

USE OF GOVERNMENT AIRCRAFT AND AIR TRAVEL

Originating Component:	Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment
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Incorporates and Cancels:	Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, "Use of Government Aircraft and Air Travel," August 8, 2023
Approved by:	William A. LaPlante, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment

Purpose: In accordance with the authority in DoD Directive (DoDD) 5135.02, this issuance:

- Establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides procedures for:
 - The transportation of passengers and cargo on government aircraft. Includes all civil aircraft chartered by or on behalf of the DoD when the DoD is responsible for manifesting passengers.
 - The use of operational support airlift (OSA) aircraft for transportation.
 - DoD-wide OSA common movement management systems.
- Implements policy on the use of government aircraft for official business in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular Number A-126 and the July 30, 1993 White House Memorandum.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION	3
1.1. Applicability.	3
1.2. Policy.	3
a. General.	3
b. Exceptions.	5
c. Designations.	7
SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES	10
2.1. USD(A&S).	10
2.2. Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs.	10
2.3. Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer, Department of Defense.	10
2.4. Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security.	10
2.5. Director, Defense Intelligence Agency.	11
2.6. DoD Chief Information Officer.	11
2.7. DoD Component Heads.	11
2.8. Secretaries of the Military Departments.	14
2.9. Secretary of the Air Force.	15
2.10. CJCS.	15
2.11. Chief, NGB.	16
2.12. CCDRs.	16
2.13. Commander, USTRANSCOM.	17
2.14. DoD ExecSec.	18
SECTION 3: OTHER TRAVEL	19
3.1. Other Official Travel.	19
3.2. Unofficial Travel.	20
3.3. Spousal Travel.	21
GLOSSARY	24
G.1. Acronyms.	24
G.2. Definitions.	25
REFERENCES	30

SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION

1.1. APPLICABILITY.

a. This issuance applies to OSD, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the DoD (referred to collectively in this issuance as the “DoD Components”).

b. This issuance does **not** apply to DoD-owned, leased, chartered, or rental aircraft and related services operated by DoD Components in support of the First Lady, First Family, White House Support Missions, and White House Military Office airlift support requests, as these missions are executed in direct support of the President or Vice President and are deemed Presidentially directed missions.

1.2. POLICY.

a. General.

Pursuant to OMB Circular No. A-126, this policy applies to all government-owned, leased, chartered, and rented aircraft and related services operated by Executive agencies of the Federal Government **except** for aircraft while in use by or in support of the President or Vice President. The DoD will:

(1) Restrict transportation of all DoD personnel at any level, including commanders and airlift authorizing officials, on government aircraft, based on considerations tied to the identity of the traveler, the purpose of the trip, the method of transportation requested, and priority of travel.

(2) Prevent actual and perceived misuse of air transportation resources.

(3) Allocate aircraft missions based on configuration and communications requirements, scheduling demands, and security requirements necessary for the travel. Unless compelling operational, safety, or security reasons exist to require otherwise (see Paragraph 1.2.b. for determining authority), all DoD use of military airlift will comply with the policies for ordinary passenger travel as follows:

(a) Operational Support Aircraft flights will not be scheduled between locations when the ground transportation is 1 hour or less or flight time is 30 minutes or less.

(b) Only one basic crew and one aircraft are allocated per mission. Therefore, travel must be arranged within the crew duty day and crew rest limitations.

(c) Aircraft will be prioritized for required use travelers who require in-flight secure communications.

(d) Travelers may be supported by aircraft with:

1. Limited or no secure communications capability.
2. Passenger capacity of six or fewer individuals.

(4) Establish travel approval authority at least one organizational level above the person traveling.

(5) Collect reimbursement from the DoD Components or Federal agency requesting the airlift for transportation of other Executive agencies of the Federal Government in accordance with the provisions of Section 1535 of Title 31, United States Code (U.S.C.), unless non-reimbursable transportation is authorized in accordance with DoD Instruction (DoDI) 4515.13 or is directed by the Secretary of Defense (SecDef).

(6) Receive, review, and process OSA missions requests for passenger travel, provide OSA missions on a reimbursable and non-interference basis, to allied nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in accordance with DoDD 2010.09 or DoDI 4515.13 or when directed by the SecDef.

(7) Conduct missions with National Guard flight crews under Federal control when operating aircraft outside the continental United States for the Secretary of a Military Department in accordance with:

- (a) Sections 162(a)(2), 7013(b), 8013(b), and 9013(b) of Title 10, U.S.C.
- (b) Section 40124 of Title 49, U.S.C.
- (c) Sections 109(b) and 502(f) of Title 32, U.S.C.
- (d) DoDI 4500.43.

(8) Use aircraft for passenger and cargo transportation that are configured for and designated with the primary mission of carrying passengers and cargo.

(9) Ensure that travel on DoD cargo, transport, or utility aircraft supporting military operations is an appropriate use of DoD assets and complies with all legal, fiscal, and policy constraints.

(10) Use rotary-wing aircraft for passenger travel only when the use of ground transportation would have a significantly adverse impact on a DoD official's ability to effectively accomplish the purpose of the official travel or to achieve the mission of a controlling event at the home station.

(11) Ensure that members and employees of Congress in congressional delegation travel requests are sponsored by the DoD only when the purpose of travel is of primary interest to the DoD and bears a substantial relationship to programs or activities of the DoD. Travel must not

solely be for purpose of engendering goodwill or obtaining possible future benefits. (See Paragraph 4.d. of DoDD 4515.12 for additional information).

(12) Authorize travel on DoD transportation for public affairs purposes in accordance with DoDI 5122.08.

b. Exceptions.

Exceptions to the policy in this issuance as described in Paragraph 1.2.a.(3) are permissible under the circumstances described in this paragraph. All requests for exception to policy (ETP) must be submitted to the appropriate authorities at least 21 days before mission execution. If a traveler is unable to request an ETP 21 days before travel, a full explanation must be provided in the request as to why the required timeline was not met.

(1) Geographic Combatant Commanders (CCDRs).

(a) CCDRs with geographic areas of responsibility (AORs) are authorized to determine if compelling operational requirement, safety, or security reason(s) exist to utilize in-theater assigned airlift assets that:

1. Travel between locations where the ground transportation is 1 hour or less or flight time is 30 minutes or less.

2. Require use of multiple aircraft and multiple aircrews to support a single mission.

(b) Travelers **within** the CCDRs' geographic AOR may submit ETP requests directly to the CCDR pursuant to the authorization in Paragraph 1.2.b.(1)(a), which may not be further delegated.

(c) For ETP requests for travel **outside** the CCDR's geographic AOR, CCDRs must submit the ETP request to the Deputy Secretary of Defense (DepSecDef) or request the DepSecDef validate that a compelling operational requirement, safety, or security reason exists.

(2) Functional CCDRs Who Do Not Control Aircraft.

Functional CCDRs who do not control aircraft must submit an ETP to the DepSecDef or request the DepSecDef to validate that a compelling operational requirement, safety, or security requirement exists when submitting the airlift request.

(3) All Service Members and Civilian Personnel Not Under the Jurisdiction of a CCDR.

(a) The Secretaries of the Military Departments and Service Chiefs are authorized to determine if compelling operational requirement, safety, or security reasons exist to utilize Service Secretary-controlled aircraft (SSCA) within their area of operations that:

1. Travel between locations where the ground transportation is 1 hour or less or flight time is 30 minutes or less.

2. Require use of multiple aircraft and multiple aircrews to support a single mission.

(b) Travelers under these officials' jurisdiction who are traveling on SSCA may submit ETP requests directly to the cognizant Secretary of the Military Department or Service Chief. This approval authority to the Secretary of the Military Department or Service Chief may not be further delegated.

(4) Users from the DoD Components Other Than the Military Departments and the Combatant Commands.

All users from the DoD Components other than the Military Departments and Combatant Commands must request DepSecDef approval for transport based on compelling operational requirements, safety, or security risks for flights that:

(a) Travel between locations where the ground transportation is 1 hour or less or flight time is 30 minutes or less.

(b) Require use of multiple aircraft and multiple aircrews to support a single mission.

(5) Operational Aircraft (Fixed-Wing Grey Jets).

(a) Generally, the use of operational aircraft (fixed-wing grey jets) for OSA missions is inappropriate and should not be planned. However, use of operational aircraft is permitted for point-to-point travel within a geographic CCDR's AOR where safety or security conditions preclude the use of executive or non-executive passenger aircraft.

(b) The requirement for the use of operational aircraft to accomplish a mission in a geographic CCDR's AOR under such circumstances should be captured and documented on the airlift request such that the approving official can make this determination.

(6) Rotary-Wing and Tilt Rotary-Wing Aircraft.

(a) The approval authority for ETPs that involve rotary-wing and tilt rotary-wing aircraft is the Military Service or DoD Component that owns the asset, funds the mission, and provides the aircrew. Such requests for transportation on Military Service-owned rotary wing or tilt rotary-wing aircraft do not require OSD approval.

(b) The DoD Executive Secretary approves rotary wing or tilt rotary-wing transportation requests for:

1. Use within the National Capital Region by all DoD senior officials.

2. Use outside the National Capital Region for all DoD senior officials within OSD, the Defense Agencies, and DoD Field Activities.

c. Designations.

(1) The SecDef is designated as a required use travelers for official and unofficial travel, by the President in accordance with the guidance in the July 30, 1993, White House Memorandum.

(2) The SecDef designates certain travelers as required to use government aircraft for official and for unofficial travel because there is a continuous requirement for secure communications, a threat exists that could endanger lives, or a need to satisfy exceptional scheduling requirements dictated by frequent short-notice travel, which makes commercial transportation unacceptable.

(3) The SecDef designates key DoD officials as required use travelers based on the circumstances in Paragraph 1.2.c.(2). Required use designation is for official travel and, in very limited cases, for unofficial travel. Travel of accompanying unofficial travelers must comply with Paragraph 3.2. Required use officials may travel unofficially on DoD aircraft only with the advance notification and approval of the SecDef. All travelers, including family members or other invited guests, must reimburse the government for any unofficial travel at a full coach fare equivalent, as described in the OMB Circular No. A-126. Requests for changes, additions, or other recommendations to the required use designations will be forwarded to the SecDef through the Executive Secretary of the Department of Defense (DoD ExecSec).

(4) These DoD officials have met the criteria for designation as required use travelers:

(a) Official and unofficial travel:

1. DepSecDef.
2. CJCS.
3. Vice CJCS (unofficial travel authorized only when acting as the CJCS).

(b) Official travel only:

1. Secretaries of the Military Departments.
2. Chiefs of the Military Services.
3. Chief, National Guard Bureau (NGB).
4. Commander, United States Forces Korea.
5. CCDRs.
6. Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security.
7. Under Secretary of Defense for Policy.

(5) OSD and DoD Component priority use positions are not “required use” travelers. However, they may use government aircraft for official travel when the travel complies with OMB Circular No. A-126 and this issuance.

(a) The following are OSD Component priority use positions:

1. Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering.
2. Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD(A&S)).
3. Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer, Department of Defense.
4. Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

(b) The following are DoD Component priority use positions:

1. Commander, Air Combat Command.
2. Commander, Air Force Global Strike Command.
3. Commander, Air Force Materiel Command.
4. Commander, Air Mobility Command.
5. Commander, U.S. Army Materiel Command.
6. Commander, United States Army Futures Command
7. Commander, U.S. Army Forces Command.
8. Commander, Pacific Air Forces.
9. Commander, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.
10. Commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa.
11. Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command.
12. Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Africa.
13. Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet.
14. Commanding General, U.S. Army Pacific.
15. Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion.

16. Vice Chiefs of Military Services and Vice Chief, NGB (required user for official travel when designated in writing as the acting Chief of the NGB).

17. Under Secretaries of the Military Departments (required user for official travel when designated in writing as the acting Secretary).

18. Deputy CCDRs (required user for official travel when designated in writing by the SecDef as the acting CCDR).

(c) Requests by the individuals in Paragraphs 1.2.c.(5)(a) and (b) and all other DoD employees for the use of Air Force Special Air Missions (SAMs) aircraft that are assigned to the 89th Airlift Wing that support Presidential airlift missions and are based at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland must be submitted to the DoD ExecSec for approval. Travel aboard SAM aircraft and other DoD aircraft by these individuals may be interrupted to support “required use” traveler missions.

(d) In the event a conflict arises between travelers, the DoD ExecSec will resolve the conflict. The DoD ExecSec may approve other request for the use of government aircraft on a case-by-case basis following verification that each trip complies with OMB Circular No. A-126 and DoDI 4500.43.

(6) Officials in Paragraph 1.2.c.(4)(b) may travel on commercial aircraft for official travel when the traveler determines it is in the best interest of the DoD.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. USD(A&S).

The USD(A&S) provides oversight and establishes policy on the acquisition and use of government aircraft, including OSA aircraft.

2.2. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS.

The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs:

a. Approves and prioritizes all travel requests for congressional representatives, employees of Congress, other congressional staff, foreign national, and State governor delegations on military airlift missions in accordance with DoDD 4515.12, the February 8, 2008, DepSecDef Memorandum, and the March 31, 2016, DepSecDef Memorandum. This does not include transportation within the approval authority of the Secretaries of the Military Departments, the CJCS, and the CCDRs.

b. Provides approved travel requests to the Executive Airlift Scheduling Activity (EASA) to schedule aircraft in accordance with DoDD 4515.12.

c. Identifies Transportation Working Capital Fund as the source of funding for aircraft missions, when appropriate.

2.3. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (COMPTROLLER)/CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

The Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer, Department of Defense, develops and maintains procedures for preparing and executing budgets for OSA operations, including processes for budget submission and management of:

a. Training flying hours by the flying unit.

b. Operational flying hours and attendant communications costs by the mission scheduling authority in accordance with Volumes 2A and 2B of DoD 7000.14-R.

2.4. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security oversees defense attaché system aircraft use, process, and procedures.

2.5. DIRECTOR, DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.

Under the authority, direction, and control of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security, and in addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.7., the Director, Defense Intelligence Agency maintains operational control of and publishes regulatory guidance for defense attaché system aircraft.

2.6. DOD CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER.

The DoD Chief Information Officer serves as the single point of contact for improving command, control, and communications capabilities for DoD senior leader travel.

2.7. DOD COMPONENT HEADS.

The DoD Component heads:

- a. Manage use of government aircraft in a way that reflects use of government aircraft as a premium mode of travel involving high cost and limited resources.
- b. Direct managers and commanders at all levels to prevent misuse of transportation resources as well as the perception of their misuse.
- c. Allow transportation on government aircraft in strict accordance with the OMB Circular No. A-126 and this issuance.
- d. Restrict travel of all DoD personnel at any level, including commanders and airlift authorizing officials, on government aircraft based on considerations such as purpose of the trip, method of transportation required, and priority of travel.
- e. When use of government aircraft is approved, base selection of aircraft types on the minimum cost and size necessary to satisfy the requirement and to reduce travel cost for transportation on government aircraft.
- f. Allow for the travel of DoD personnel to satisfy operational requirements or other official travel requirements on scheduled missions for training only as provided for in this issuance.
- g. Schedule flights between locations when ground transportation between locations is 1 hour or less or flight time is 30 minutes or less or that require the use of multiple aircraft and multiple aircrews to support a single mission only when there are compelling operational, safety, or security reasons. DoD Component heads other than the Secretaries of the Military Departments and CCDRs must obtain DepSecDef approval for such flights in accordance with Paragraph 1.2.b.(4).
- h. Base allocation of government aircraft on configuration and communications requirements, scheduling demands, and security to meet the specific mission needs for the indicated travel. Travel status, distinguished visitor code or status, grade, or rank may be

considered only as secondary factors to support the use of government aircraft or to dictate a particular aircraft type.

i. Designate an official representative, at least one organizational level above the person traveling, to authorize travel in accordance with this issuance and DoDI 4515.13 except for:

(1) Individuals designated as required use travelers in Paragraph 1.2.c.(4).

(2) DoD senior officials in support of a contingency operation when the senior official's travel is mission essential, occurs within the confines of the AOR for the contingency operation, and only on theater owned or controlled aircraft.

j. Process requests for the use of DoD aircraft only when signed by the senior traveling official. This signature authority cannot be delegated.

k. Use designated passenger and cargo aircraft for passenger and cargo transportation.

l. Use only aircraft with the capacity to carry passengers that are designed or normally configured for passenger (e.g., non-aircrew personnel) transportation and whose primary mission is to carry passengers.

m. Disapprove passenger travel requests on training, fighter, bomber aircraft, or other aircraft whose primary mission does not include passenger travel.

n. Disapprove passenger travel requests on operational aircraft for OSA missions except for point-to-point travel within a geographic CCDR's AOR where safety and security conditions preclude the use of executive or non-executive OSA aircraft.

o. Permit travel on cargo, transport, or utility aircraft supporting military operations, excluding government missions scheduled through the Joint OSA Center (JOSAC) and commercial airlift services only when:

(1) The aircraft is already scheduled for an official purpose such as training flights.

(2) Travel is on a noninterference basis.

(3) The noninterference travel use does not require a larger aircraft than needed for the official purpose.

(4) Already scheduled official travelers or cargo is not displaced.

(5) The travel results in negligible additional cost to the DoD and is funded by the aircraft operator's organization or the Transportation Working Capital Fund.

p. Process OSA requests for passenger travel on rotary-wing aircraft only when the use of ground transportation would have a significant adverse impact on a DoD official's ability to effectively accomplish the purpose of the official travel. This includes:

(1) Submit OSA requests for the use of rotary-wing aircraft within the National Capital Region for all DoD senior officials to the DoD ExecSec for approval.

(2) Process other OSA requests and schedule operational use of rotary wing aircraft according to the regulations of the DoD Component concerned and DoDI 4515.13.

q. Make OSA aircraft operations visible through the common movement management systems to the extent classification and operations security permit, in accordance with DoDI 4500.43.

r. Maintain all records of travel requests in accordance with DoDI 5015.02 and Administrative Instruction 15.

s. Process reimbursements for the cost of transportation:

(1) From the agency requesting airlift for executive agencies of the Federal Government in accordance with the provisions of Section 1535 of Title 31, U.S.C.

(2) Unless non-reimbursable transportation is authorized in accordance with DoDI 4515.13 or directed by the SecDef.

t. Submit requests to the DoD ExecSec for assistance when conflicts arise due to limited airlift resources.

u. Give priority use of DoD aircraft for official travel to the officials listed in Paragraph 1.2.c.(5)(a) and (b) only when:

(1) The travel complies with the OMB Circular No. A-126 and this issuance.

(2) The requirements of their travel needs prevent the use of commercial aircraft.

v. Submit requests for travelers in designated priority use positions listed in Paragraph 1.2.c.(5)(a) and (b) to use of SAM executive aircraft (excluding SSCA) to the DoD ExecSec for approval.

(1) Travel aboard DoD aircraft by these officials may be interrupted to support required use traveler needs (including SSCA).

(2) Conflicts arising due to limited airlift resources will be resolved by the DoD ExecSec.

w. Submit requests for the use of government aircraft for other official travel, such as for an individual not listed in Paragraphs 1.2.c.(5)(a) and (b), in writing to the appropriate authorizing officials which is at least one organizational level above the individual who is traveling in accordance with this issuance and DoDI 4515.13.

x. Designate authorizing officials to approve the requests on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with delegated authority in DoDI 4515.13.

2.8. SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.7., the Secretaries of the Military Departments:

- a. Establish criteria for transportation on SSCA in accordance with the OMB Circular No. A-126 and this issuance.
- b. Review and approve airlift requests from within their respective Departments for transportation, including SSCA. Delegate this authority when needed but not below the major command chief of staff or civilian equivalent level.
- c. Establish a validation process for OSA transportation requests for personnel assigned to their respective Department.
- d. Schedule operations of OSA aircraft in accordance with this issuance and DoDI 4500.43.
- e. Approve travel in accordance with DoDI 7250.13 for foreign officials and their accompanying party who are invited to travel at the expense of the Military Department.
- f. Budget and fund for the cost of operating allocated OSA aircraft.
- g. Provide an annual inventory of OSA aircraft to the CJCS with:
 - (1) The number of executive aircraft.
 - (2) The number of OSA aircraft withheld.
 - (3) The primary mission, type, and communications capability of each aircraft.
- h. Maintain visibility of OSA aircraft schedules and operation.
- i. In conjunction with the CJCS, support the common movement management systems which provide enterprise-wide visibility and standardized metrics for all DoD OSA aircraft.
- j. Report the usage of operational flying hours for executive aircraft in accordance with the OMB Circular No. A-126 and Paragraph 3.1.f. of this issuance.
- k. Submit requirements for lease or charter of commercial aircraft when needed to supplement the OSA fleet to the Secretaries of the Military Departments in accordance with DoDI 4500.43.
- l. Must submit to the DepSecDef a summary of missions conducted under the policy in Paragraph 1.2.b. semi-annually on the 31st of May and 30th of November of each year. This report must provide sufficient details to allow understanding of the circumstances and the cost obligation for the use of multiple aircraft and aircrews or flights that are 30 minutes or less.

2.9. SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.7. and 2.8., the Secretary of the Air Force:

a. Schedules SAM aircraft only for:

(1) Code 1, Code 2, and Code 3 passengers who hold positions listed in DepSecDef Memorandum, the revised DoD order of precedence dated August 24, 2022 or current version.

(2) Passengers otherwise classified as distinguished visitor 1, 2, or 3 in accordance with Air Force Instruction 34-1201 and the August 24, 2022 DepSecDef Memorandum who are eligible to request travel on SAM aircraft.

b. Through the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, SAMs Directorate:

(1) Serves as the Chief of the EASA and as the point of contact when collaborative scheduling is required for DoD Component command executive airlift support.

(2) Uses common movement management systems to provide the DoD Components:

(a) Data to ease the preparation of the documentation required by the OMB Circular No. A-126 and this issuance.

(b) Visibility of executive travel.

(3) Coordinates with United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) when other airlift assets are needed to meet mission requirements.

2.10. CJCS.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.7., the CJCS:

a. Approves requests for transportation for Joint Staff members.

b. In coordination with the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the CCDRs, provides to the SecDef an annual validation that assesses DoD OSA requirements and the current OSA inventory in accordance with DoDI 4500.43.

c. Oversees the common movement management systems that provides enterprise-wide visibility and standardized metrics for all DoD OSA aircraft.

d. Appoints representatives to serve as the chairs for the OSA Steering Group and the OSA Working Group.

2.11. CHIEF, NGB.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.7., the Chief, NGB:

- a. Designates an official representative, at least one organizational level above the person traveling, to authorize travel for NGB members and for State and Territorial Adjutants General.
- b. Establishes a validation process for NGB transportation requests for personnel assigned to the NGB.
- c. Supports the common movement management system which provides enterprise-wide visibility and standardized metrics for all DoD OSA aircraft.
- d. Appoints representatives to the OSA Steering Group and the OSA Working Group.

2.12. CCDRS.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.7., the CCDRs:

- a. Oversee theater-assigned or theater-allocated assets to include using the common movement management systems to enable sharing of OSA capability across DoD Components and to maximize support travel for authorized users.
- b. Establish criteria for the transportation of senior officials assigned to their command in accordance with this issuance and the OMB Circular No. A-126.
- c. Review and approve government air requests from DoD senior officials within their respective commands, including Service components, sub-unified commands, and subordinate joint activities in accordance with this issuance. This responsibility may be further delegated in writing but may not be delegated below the two-star general officer and flag officer or civilian equivalent level.
- d. Approve transportation of foreign officials on DoD aircraft, in accordance with DoDI 4515.13, and DoDI 7250.13, for travel within the CCDRs overseas AOR.
- e. In accordance with DoDI 4500.43, maintain visibility of all OSA aircraft operating in or transiting their theater of operation using the common movement management system.
- f. Provide the Joint Chiefs of Staff J4 Logistics Directorate with OSA joint wartime readiness requirements for planning purposes as outlined in DoDI 4500.43.
- g. Establish a validation process for OSA transportation request for personnel assigned to their command.
- h. Provide an annual inventory to the CJCS with the assigned OSA aircraft, including executive aircraft and withheld aircraft.

- i. Support USTRANSCOM requirements to maintain visibility of OSA aircraft assigned to their commands.
- j. Report the usage of operational flying hours for executive aircraft in accordance with the OMB Circular No. A-126 and Paragraph 3.1.f.
- k. Submit requirements for lease or charter of commercial aircraft to USTRANSCOM when needed to supplement the OSA fleet in accordance with DoDI 4500.43.
- l. Appoint representatives to the OSA Steering Group and the OSA Working Group in accordance with the November 18, 2011 Vice CJCS Memorandum.
- m. Must submit to the DepSecDef a summary of missions conducted under the policy in Paragraph 1.2.b. semi-annually on the 31st of May and 30th of November of each year. This report must provide sufficient details to allow understanding of the circumstances and the cost obligation for the use of multiple aircraft and aircrews or flights that are 30 minutes or less.

2.13. COMMANDER, USTRANSCOM.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.7. and 2.12., the Commander, USTRANSCOM:

- a. Coordinates with the Secretaries of the Military Departments, CCDRs, and others as necessary on matters relating to airlift support using OSA assets not scheduled by EASA.
- b. Manages the common movement management system, in consultation with the CJCS, Secretaries of the Military Departments, and the CCDRs.
- c. Maintains visibility of all OSA aircraft using a common movement management system.
- d. Uses an OSA aircraft scheduling system that provides the DoD Components with data to ease the documentation and reports required by the OMB Circular No. A-126 and this issuance.
- e. Coordinates with the Secretaries of the Military Departments, the CJCS, and the CCDRs to identify joint wartime readiness requirements for OSA aircraft.
- f. Coordinates with the USD(A&S), the DoD Chief Information Officer, the Secretaries of the Military Departments, the CJCS, and the Chief, NGB, to develop guidance for the use of OSA aircraft.
- g. Serves as the single point of contact for United States Northern Command for non-EASA scheduled OSA airlift requirements within United States Northern Command AOR.
- h. Operates the JOSAC in accordance with DoDI 4500.43.
- i. Collects data from the Military Departments and Combatant Commands and compiles consolidated semiannual reports as part of the periodic review regarding the acquisition and management of aircraft for submission to the General Services Administration.

j. Collect data from the DoD Components for all uses of government aircraft including:

- (1) The type and tail number of the aircraft used.
- (2) The dates used.
- (3) The names of the pilots and flight crew.
- (4) The purpose of the flight.
- (5) The routes flown.
- (6) The names of all passengers.
- (7) Evidence that the applicable provisions of this issuance have been satisfied.

k. Compile the consolidated DoD semiannual report with:

(1) Each use of government aircraft for travel by civilian DoD senior officials, their spouses, and any non-Federal travelers, other than required use.

(2) All travel on government aircraft by senior Federal officials appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

l. Exclude information about all military personnel, including general officers, flag officers, and other DoD non-senior civilians.

m. Submit reports to the General Services Administration in accordance with the OMB Circular No. A-126 and retain documentation for 2 years.

2.14. DOD EXECSEC.

The DoD ExecSec:

a. Approves transportation requests for all non-DoD officials, as defined in the Glossary, and all DoD senior officials within OSD and the Defense Agencies. This does not include responsibilities to approve requests delegated to the Secretaries of the Military Departments in Paragraph 2.8.b., the Chief, NGB, in Paragraph 2.11.a. the CJCS in Paragraph 2.10.a., and the CCDRs in Paragraph 2.12.c.

b. Determines travel priorities when requests exceed available executive airlift capability.

c. Staffs requests for individuals requesting to be temporarily or permanently designated as a required use traveler to the SecDef.

d. Approves other requests for the use of DoD aircraft for the travel of officials in other positions of the DoD Components that are not specified in Paragraph 1.2.c.(5)(d) on a case-by-case basis following verification that each trip complies with the OMB Circular No A-126, DoDI 4515.13, and this issuance.

SECTION 3: OTHER TRAVEL

3.1. OTHER OFFICIAL TRAVEL.

DoD Components:

a. Normally use commercial transportation for official travel to conduct DoD official business.

b. May authorize travel to address matters such as giving speeches, attending conferences or meetings, making site visits to facilities, and permanent change of station. Requests for other official travel or using government aircraft must be submitted in writing to the necessary authorizing officials for approval on a case-by-case basis.

c. Authorize the use of commercial airline or aircraft when/unless commercial airline or aircraft is not reasonably available. Reasonable availability includes commercial airline or aircraft (including charter) service that is available to meet the traveler's departure and arrival requirements in a 24- hour period. Further, to determine that commercial service is not reasonably available, the senior traveler must:

(1) Clearly demonstrate that a valid official reason for the use of government aircraft exists, other than for personal convenience.

(2) Cite scheduling requirements and why they cannot be changed; whether secure communications are required; or that other factors make commercial transportation unacceptable and justify the use of government aircraft over alternative modes of transportation.

(3) Sign all requests for the use of government aircraft for other official travel. This signature authority cannot be delegated.

d. Consider the use of government aircraft for other official travel only if commercial airline or aircraft is not reasonably available and when at least one of the following criteria exists:

(1) Highly unusual circumstances that present a clear and present danger.

(2) An emergency.

(3) Other compelling operational considerations make commercial transportation unacceptable.

(4) Use of government aircraft is more cost-effective than other modes of transportation which could meet travel requirements as documented in the request with a cost comparison of all reasonable commercial travel alternatives, such as:

(a) The cost of the General Services Administration city-pair program fare for scheduled commercial airline service or the cost of the lowest available full coach fare, if a General Services Administration city-pair program fare is not available to the traveler.

(b) The cost to travel by other available modes of transportation that are capable of meeting the travel requirements. This includes JOSAC scheduled training missions.

(c) The cost of rental cars, the cost of lodging and meals if the travelers must remain overnight, and other such appropriate factors.

(5) Justification fully supports the unreasonable availability of commercial airline or aircraft (including charter) service to meet compelling operational requirements, as outlined in Paragraph 2.7.

e. For cost comparisons, scheduling agencies must use detailed cost data as required by the OMB Circular No. A-126 and compare it to the costs submitted by the requester.

f. Commands must provide flying hour cost data for OSA aircraft that complies with the requirements of the OMB Circular No. A-126 to OSA scheduling activities.

g. Combine separate government aircraft requests to fully use aircraft and reduce government aircraft cost for separate travel requests.

h. Establish a centralized airlift scheduling office to evaluate the cost comparisons when cost is part of the decision process to provide government aircraft.

i. Appoint authorizing officials to provisionally approve a request on the basis that, if consolidated with another request, it is determined to be cost effective. When an aircraft has been scheduled to satisfy a mission requirement or required use travel in accordance with OMB Circular No. A-126, secondary use of that aircraft for other official travel does not require a cost comparison.

3.2. UNOFFICIAL TRAVEL.

DoD Components:

a. Establish procedures for travelers accompanying a DoD official on government aircraft, including family members or other invited guests, to reimburse the government for any unofficial travel at the full coach fare, as described in the OMB Circular No. A-126. This requires an invitational travel authorization (ITA). The DoD official must attach to their travel voucher:

(1) A record of payment method such as a personal check made payable to the Treasurer of the United States or a pay.gov receipt for an electronic funds transfer.

(2) A travel office printout that reflects the full coach fare.

(3) A completed cash collection voucher on a DD Form 1131, "Cash Collection Voucher," located at https://www.esd.whs.mil/Directives/forms/dd1000_1499/.

b. Collect reimbursement for unofficial travel by a family member, non-DoD civilian, or non-Federal traveler when accompanying a senior DoD or other senior Federal official who is traveling on government aircraft on official business.

c. Unofficial travel differs from the space-available privilege in DoDI 4515.13 since it is limited to travel in the company of a DoD senior official and is reimbursable by the traveler at the full coach fare, as required by the OMB Circular No. A-126.

d. Allow unofficial travel on government aircraft only if:

- (1) The aircraft already is scheduled for an official purpose.
- (2) The noninterference use does not require larger or additional aircraft than needed for the official purpose.
- (3) Official travelers are not displaced.
- (4) It results in negligible additional cost to the government.
- (5) The unofficial traveler reimburses the government at the full coach fare.

3.3. SPOUSAL TRAVEL.

DoD Components:

a. Allow the spouse of an authorized traveler (e.g., DoD sponsor) on government aircraft only with a reimbursement to the government for such travel. Expend appropriated funds on commercial air travel for the spouse of an authorized traveler only when authorized in accordance with the Joint Travel Regulations and this issuance.

b. Establish procedures for DoD sponsors to:

(1) Submit requests for non-reimbursable travel in accordance with Paragraph 2.7., when needed, with documentation that the DoD sponsor has determined in advance that, in their judgement under the circumstances, the spouse's presence would further the interest of the DoD, the Military Service, or the command.

(2) Submit written requests for non-reimbursable spousal travel when needed under the criteria in Paragraphs 2.7.e, 2.7.h, and 2.7.i. to the same designated approval authority as that of the DoD sponsor.

c. Permit non-reimbursable travel on government aircraft when the spouse travels to:

(1) Attend a function in which the DoD sponsor is participating in their official capacity and in which the spouse is to play an active role and visible part.

(2) Attend a function (with or without the DoD sponsor) attended by spouses of community leaders, government officials, foreign dignitaries, or foreign military officers with whom the sponsor is meeting in their official capacity.

(3) Attend a function (with or without the DoD sponsor) where a substantial portion of those present are military families or where the focus is on matters of particular concern to military families.

d. When reviewing non-reimbursable travel requests for a spouse to accompany a DoD sponsor for official purposes on government aircraft:

(1) Permit non-reimbursable travel only when the spouse is accompanying the DoD sponsor on government aircraft and there are no additional costs to the government. .

(2) Consider the need to withstand public scrutiny and avoid the appearance that non-reimbursable travel on government aircraft is being abused.

(3) Counsel against non-reimbursable travel if:

(a) The official function that the spouse is to attend is an incidental part of the trip and the spouse will be occupied primarily with personal activities.

(b) Travel to the official function is immediately preceded or followed by personal leave in the same locale.

(4) Allow travel on a mission noninterference basis only and only under an ITA, which normally must authorize reimbursement only of transportation costs, not to include per diem and other expenses under the Joint Travel Regulations.

e. DoD Components may receive requests with unusual circumstances that may occur which may necessitate exceptions to the requirement for noninterference travel supported by an ITA (e.g., unplanned or unanticipated schedule changes or compelling mission requirements of the DoD sponsor). Under these unusual circumstances and subject to written approval by the designated approving authority, the spouse may travel unaccompanied in the most cost-effective manner available, which may include commercial travel, when the spouse's travel furthers the interest of the DoD, the Military Service, or the Combatant Command concerned.

f. Certain officials specified in DoDI 4515.13, including Code 2 civilians, four-star general officers and flag officers, and certain three-star general officers and flag officers serving as overseas or combined commanders, may approve transportation, per diem, or other expense allowance for their spouses on a case-by-case basis using the criteria in Paragraph 2.7., and must personally sign the ITAs. This authority does not constitute blanket approval authority.

g. Approval authorities must maintain records of all approved requests for spouse travel that, at a minimum, detail:

(1) The spouse's name.

(2) Dates and purpose of travel.

(3) Information that supports justification of the approval.

h. Document each use of government aircraft for non-mission travel (other than required use) by civilian DoD senior officials, their spouses, and any non-Federal travelers.

i. Document all travel on government aircraft by senior civilian officials appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

j. Submit reports semiannually to USTRANSCOM with documentation of each use of government aircraft that include:

(1) The type and tail number of the aircraft used.

(2) The dates the aircraft was used.

(3) The names of the pilots and flight crew.

(4) The purpose of the flight.

(5) The routes flown.

(6) The names of all passengers.

(7) Evidence that the applicable provisions of this issuance have been satisfied.

k. Exclude information about all military personnel, including general officers, flag officers, and other DoD non-Senior Executive Services that are exempt from the reporting requirements.

GLOSSARY

G.1. ACRONYMS.

ACRONYM	MEANING
AOR	area of responsibility
CCDR	Combatant Commander
CJCS	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
DD	Department of Defense (form)
DepSecDef	Deputy Secretary of Defense
DoDD	DoD directive
DoD ExecSec	Executive Secretary of the Department of Defense
DoDI	DoD instruction
EASA	Executive Airlift Scheduling Activity
ETP	exception to policy
JOSAC	Joint Operational Support Airlift Center
ITA	invitational travel authorization
NGB	National Guard Bureau
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OSA	operational support airlift
SAM	special air mission
SecDef	Secretary of Defense
SSCA	Service Secretary-controlled aircraft
U.S.C.	United States Code
USD(A&S)	Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment
USTRANSCOM	United States Transportation Command

G.2. DEFINITIONS.

These terms and their definitions are for the purpose of this issuance.

TERM	DEFINITION
Code 2 civilians	DoD officials listed on the revised DoD order of precedence in the August 24, 2022 DepSecDef Memorandum.
contingency operation	A military operation that is either designated by the SecDef as a contingency operation or becomes a contingency operation as a matter of law pursuant to Section 101(a)(13) of Title 10, U.S.C.
distinguished visitor	A guest of a DoD Component who, by virtue of rank or position, receives honors or protocol in accordance with the revised DoD order of precedence in the August 24, 2022 DepSecDef Memorandum.
DoD aircraft	Any aircraft owned, controlled, leased, chartered, rented, or hired as part of a contract by any DoD Component. These aircraft include, but are not limited to, common user aircraft, executive aircraft, OSA aircraft, SAM aircraft, and aircraft assigned to the National Guard. This also includes aircraft belonging to or controlled by a foreign military or international organization when the DoD has purchased, or otherwise arranged for, capacity on the aircraft for DoD use.
DoD senior official	General officers, flag officers, Presidentially-Appointed, Senate-confirmed officials, and civilian employees of the Senior Executive Service.
EASA	The collaborative activity among Headquarters, U.S. Air Force; Office of the Secretary of the Navy; the Office of the Secretary of the Army. United States European Command, United States Africa Command, and United States Indo-Pacific Command to support the transportation of DoD-approved senior officials.
executive aircraft	A subset of the OSA fleet solely dedicated to the airlift of DoD and Federal officials and DoD senior officials. These aircraft are specially configured to support travel when other aircraft do not provide the timeliness, security, communications capability, or workspace required. Executive aircraft include SAM aircraft, which are specifically configured non-Combatant Command aircraft assigned to the 89th Airlift Wing.

TERM	DEFINITION
exempt aircraft	The Presidential Aircraft Group assigned to the 89 th Airlift Wing and Marine Corps aircraft assigned to Marine Helicopter Squadron One are not included within the overall number of OSA aircraft and are exempt from DoD issuances addressing OSA.
full coach fare	Any fare that is available to the general public, including restricted fares, between the time the travel is planned and actually occurs, as long as the individual can satisfy the restrictions associated with the particular fare.
functional CCDR	A CCDR who has transregional responsibilities and normally support geographic CCDRs in their AORs. Current functional CCDRs are the Commanders, United States Cyber Command, United States Special Operations Command, United States Strategic Command, and USTRANSCOM.
General Services Administration city-pair program	A program managed by the GSA in which U.S. air carriers compete for annual contracts awarded to U.S. Government businesses for specific domestic and international scheduled service city pair routes as described on the GSA website https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/transportation-airfare-pov-etc/city-pair-program-cpp .
geographic CCDR	A CCDR assigned a geographic AOR by the President with the advice of the SecDef as specified in the Unified Command Plan. Current geographic CCDRs are the Commanders of the United States Africa Command, United States Central Command, United States European Command, United States Indo-Pacific Command, United States Northern Command, United States Southern Command, and United States Space Command.
government aircraft	Any aircraft owned, leased, chartered, or rented by an executive agency of the U.S. Government.
National Capital Region	The geographical area located within the boundaries of the District of Columbia, Montgomery, and Prince George’s Counties in the State of Maryland, and Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
non-DoD official	Any individual who is not an employee of the DoD.

TERM	DEFINITION
operational aircraft	Government aircraft primarily designed to conduct or support military operations and not designed or normally configured for small passenger carrying capability. This includes, but is not limited to mobility (e.g., inter-theater and intra-theater airlift), tanker, and fighter aircraft.
operational use	<p>Includes those missions required to accomplish the DoD mission and to maintain the combat readiness of the units concerned. Operational use missions include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Actual or simulated tactical and combat operations.Aircrew training.Intelligence.Counter-narcotics activities.Search and rescue.Transportation of prisoners.Use of defense attaché system aircraft.Research and development.Maintenance flights.Flight tests.Repositioning or reassignment of aircraft.Transport of troops or equipment.Special use (e.g., humanitarian, disaster relief, and deployments).Aeromedical evacuation by aeromedical units.
OSA aircraft	Fixed-wing aircraft acquired or retained exclusively for OSA missions, as well as any other DoD-owned or controlled aircraft, fixed or rotary wing, used primarily for OSA missions.

TERM	DEFINITION
OSA missions	Movement of high-priority passengers and cargo with time, place, or mission-sensitive requirements. OSA missions are a special classification of airlift mission support to provide for the timely movement of limited numbers of priority personnel or cargo.
priority use positions	These positions are designated by the DoD Components and are not required use travelers. They may use government aircraft for official travel only, and only when the travel complies with the OMB Circular No. A-126, this issuance, and when the exigencies of their travel needs prevent the use of commercial aircraft.
required use	Defined in OMB Circular No. A-126.
rotary-wing aircraft	Aircraft that do not have fixed-wings, (e.g., helicopters and the V- 22).
space-available	Travel authorized for passengers traveling in the company of a DoD senior official on a space-available basis in accordance with DoDI 4515.13.
SSCA	Defined in DoDI 4500.43.
unofficial travel	Travel by a family member, non-DoD civilian, or non-Federal traveler when accompanying a senior DoD or other senior Federal official who is traveling on government aircraft on official business. The traveler must reimburse the government for the cost of the transportation at the full coach fare, as required by the OMB Circular No. A-126. (NOTE: May also include Required or Priority Use travelers who are requesting use of government aircraft for unofficial travel in conjunction with their official travel).

TERM

DEFINITION

withheld aircraft

Aircraft in-service to meet wartime requirements of the owning Service/Combatant Command/Agency and are withheld from OSA joint wartime planning, and JOSAC scheduling but included in OSA reporting to the extent permitted by classification and operations security. Includes:

Aircraft assigned for attaché support missions.

Security assistance organization activities.

Aircraft in the Navy and Marine Corps-unique fleet-essential airlift.

Nonstandard aviation aircraft employed by the United States Special Operations Command.

REFERENCES

- Administrative Instruction 15, “OSD Records and Information Management Program,” May 3, 2013, as amended
- Air Force Instruction 34-1201, “Protocol,” August 18, 2020
- Defense Travel Management Office, “The Joint Travel Regulations (JTR): Uniformed Service Members and DoD Civilian Employees,” current edition
- Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “2022 Department of Defense Order of Precedence,” August 24, 2022
- Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Congressional Travel,” February 8, 2008
- Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Delegation of Approval Authority for Foreign National Passenger Travel on Congressional Delegation Military Airlift Missions,” March 31, 2016
- DoD 7000.14-R, Volume 2A, “Department of Defense Financial Management Regulation (DoD FMR): Budget Formulation and Presentation (Chapters 1-3),” current edition
- DoD 7000.14-R, Volume 2B, “Department of Defense Financial Management Regulation (DoD FMR): Budget Formulation and Presentation (Chapters 4-19),” current edition
- DoD Directive 2010.09, “Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements,” April 28, 2003, as amended
- DoD Directive 4500.09, “Transportation and Traffic Management,” December 27, 2019
- DoD Directive 4515.12, “DoD Support for Travel for Members and Employees of Congress,” January 15, 2010
- DoD Directive 5135.02, “Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD(A&S)),” July 15, 2020
- DoD Instruction 4500.43, “Operational Support Airlift,” July 30, 2021
- DoD Instruction 4515.13, “Air Transportation Eligibility,” January 22, 2016, as amended
- DoD Instruction 5015.02, “DoD Records Management Program,” February 24, 2015, as amended
- DoD Instruction 5122.08, “Use of DoD Transportation Assets for Public Affairs Purposes,” December 17, 2014, as amended
- DoD Instruction 7250.13, “Use of Appropriated Funds for Official Representation Purposes,” June 30, 2009, as amended
- Office of Management and Budget Circular No. A-126, “Improving the Management and Use of Government Aircraft,” May 22, 1992, as amended
- United States Code, Title 10
- United States Code, Title 31, Section 1535
- United States Code, Title 32
- United States Code, Title 49, Section 40124

Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Memorandum, “Operational Support Airlift (OSA),”
November 18, 2011¹

White House Memorandum, “Use of Government Aircraft for Official Business,” July 30, 1993¹

¹ This reference can be found at https://www.acq.osd.mil/log/LOG_TD/policies.html