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About the Publishing Entity:
The mission of the Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO) is to serve as the single focal point for commercial travel within the Department of Defense; to establish strategic direction, set policy, and centrally manage commercial travel programs.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR:

As I write this message, the signs of autumn—the crisp fall air and changing leaves—are apparent just outside my window and I am reminded once again that "the only constant is change." That axiom is apparent across the Defense Travel Enterprise today as we continue our modernization efforts. Modernizing our travel systems will result in the most significant and visible change to the traveler, and it remains my highest priority.

There are also other important initiatives underway that will transform the enterprise. One of our most noteworthy efforts is reforming the way we manage our Travel Management Company (TMC) contracts. Over the years, we have made great progress in reducing the costly administrative footprint of managing these essential travel service and support contracts. At one time there were over 100 contracts across DoD, today we manage 17—and plan to get to 12 by 2021. Our new TMC acquisition strategy includes a strengthened partnership with GSA as we collaborate to meet the federal government-wide mandate to make smarter use of common, best-in-class contract solutions to deliver more value and savings within our programs.

Other changes underway include a new contract to support our expanding Integrated Lodging Program Pilot (page 2) and a new and improved DoD Bus Program (page 11). I always encourage you to visit our website (www.defensetravel.dod.mil) to stay up-to-date about our strategic initiatives and commercial travel programs, but soon you will see change there as well. We have been working with the digital solution gurus at 18F, an office at GSA, to redesign our website. 18F partners with agencies to improve the user experience of government services by helping them build and execute new technologies. We are excited to have them as partners.

I am blessed to have a dedicated staff who are often asked to do more with less. In this issue we introduce you to two of them, Lisa Moreno and Beth Carver, through Q&A articles on the Defense Travel Modernization Prototype and our Integrated Lodging Program Pilot. Lisa brought along her best friend, our DTM Product Owner, Lance Jenkinson, for the DTM Q&A. That's a winning team!

And speaking of winning teams, this fall we got to celebrate an additional victory within the Nation Capital Region as the Washington Nationals made it all the way to the World Series—and WON! Go Nats!!

-Bill Mansell, Director, DTMO

DoD PREFERRED LODGING MEANS DUTY OF CARE FOR TRAVELERS

The DoD Integrated Lodging Program Pilot (ILPP) consists of DoD lodging, Public-Private Venture lodging, and the DoD Preferred commercial lodging programs. The Defense Travel Dispatch recently sat down with Beth Carver, the program manager for the DoD Preferred commercial lodging program, to learn more about it. Here are excerpts from that informative conversation.

What's new with the DoD Preferred lodging program?

We're excited to begin the fiscal year with a new contract for helping manage the Request for Proposal process. The result is a government-wide temporary duty lodging contract that supports both the DoD Preferred program and FedRooms to offer government travelers a best-in-class experience.

This new contract provides several key benefits. For the hotel industry, it improves service and program delivery to our industry partners and drives the participation of higher-quality hotels. More important, the new contract provides for delivery of enhanced reporting data to help the program managers make even more informed decisions, which helps the DoD, the traveler, and the hotels.

Any hot topics in 2020?

One really important program enhancement this year was an increased focus on hotel awareness of human trafficking. We now have a requirement that hotels in the DoD Preferred commercial lodging program have an established training process for all hotel employees, not just the desk clerks, to recognize the warning signs of human trafficking. It's a very serious issue that we're taking seriously as well.

What do you see as a key to ensuring that hotel quality is maintained year by year?

One of the primary ways we keep a pulse on DoD Preferred hotel quality is by visiting hotels to monitor quality.

Each year we visit DoD Preferred locations to inspect for quality, safety, and security and to talk with hotel managers about the program. The current year program has 362 hotels and these inspections helped us to narrow the selection from the much larger pool of hotels solicited

last year. This year, our team visited more than 500 hotels in the summer alone, all in preparation for the 2020 program. When it's time for the site visits, it's all hands on deck. Everyone on the team travels, our Branch Chief included; and senior leadership gets involved too! When anyone at DTMO travels to a DoD Preferred site, they provide feedback on the DoD Preferred hotel where they stayed.

Is that effective? Sounds like a lot of work.

Well, it is a lot of work, but it's completely worth it. The process allows us to personally validate individual hotel duty of care program requirements. DoD leadership and our travelers know that we travel too and we make hotel program participation decisions based on what we learn firsthand.

The site visits are a key aspect of maintaining program integrity. We have worked over the years to significantly increase the quality of the hotels in the DoD Preferred program and these site visits help us to continue that momentum. Our customer satisfaction scores and the percentage of hotels with three or four AAA Diamonds are both at all-time highs.

We identify quality hotels in each location and meet with hotel management in person so we can do an effective job of explaining the program benefits. These face-to-face meetings are a key reason the hotel quality continues to increase.

How do you gauge that traveler satisfaction?

Every traveler that stays at a DoD Preferred property is

sent a link to a short questionnaire to ask about their stay. We have recently reduced the time it takes to complete the survey to less than five minutes. Travelers told us we were asking too many questions and we agreed, so if they haven't completed a questionnaire this year, they'll be surprised at the changes. In fact, we researched industry best practices in developing our own questions. Hotels scoring below our benchmark are provided feedback and could be removed from the program if scores don't improve.

That's a lot of great information. Any final sage advice for travelers?

Follow policy and book through DTS or DTM and you can't go wrong. When you follow the system prompts, they will guide you through the appropriate steps and display the hotels that conform to your TDY location requirements. It's easy to be compliant when you use the DoD travel systems. You'll avoid audit flags, justifications, and, most importantly, paying out of your own pocket for non-compliant bookings.

Also, please take a few minutes to do the survey when you get it, it helps us help you have a great stay, every time!

THE STATS:

2019 Lodging Updates
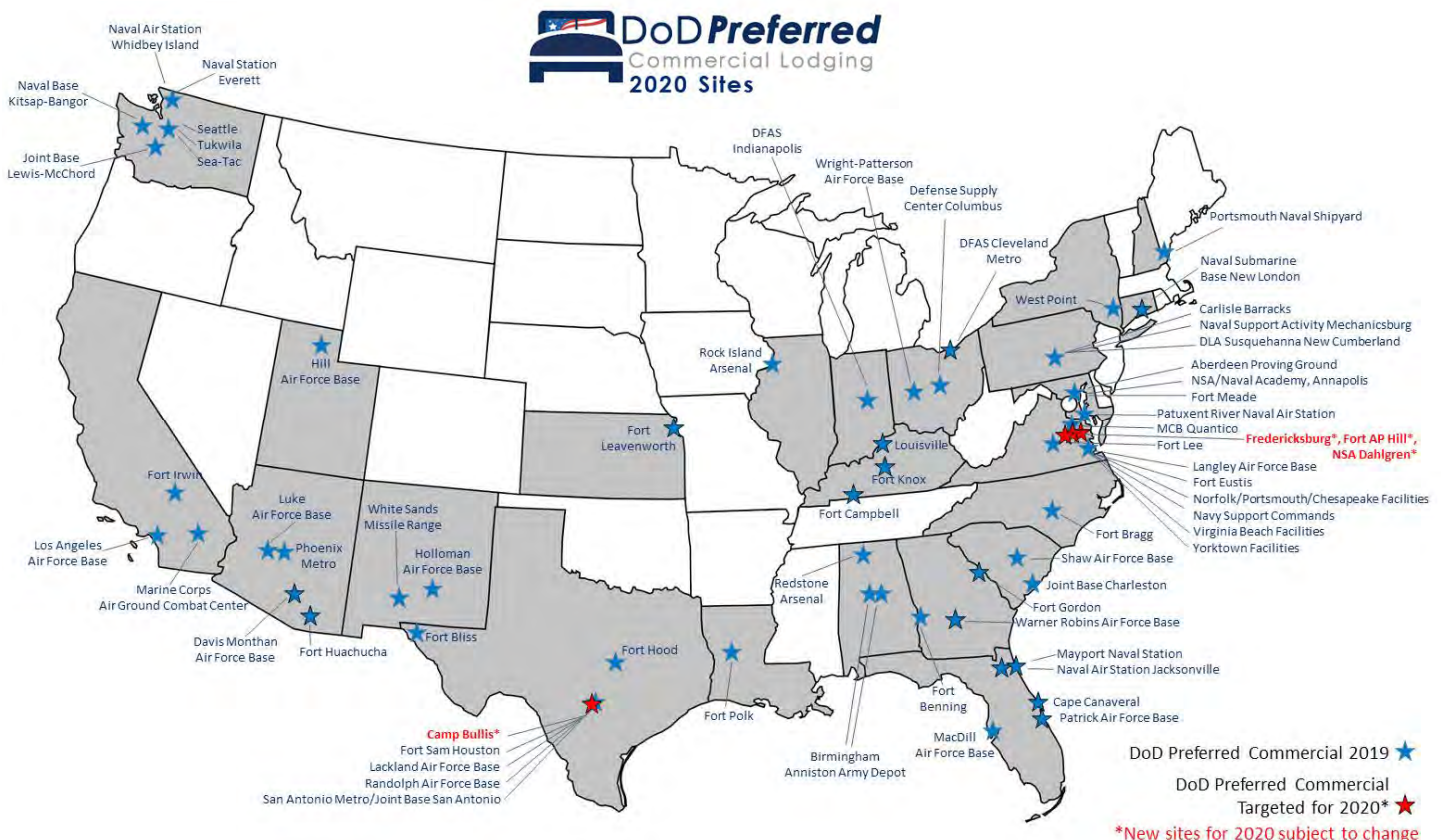- 362 hotels in 65 sites
- 83% of hotels with 3 or 4 AAA Diamonds
- 82% include breakfast
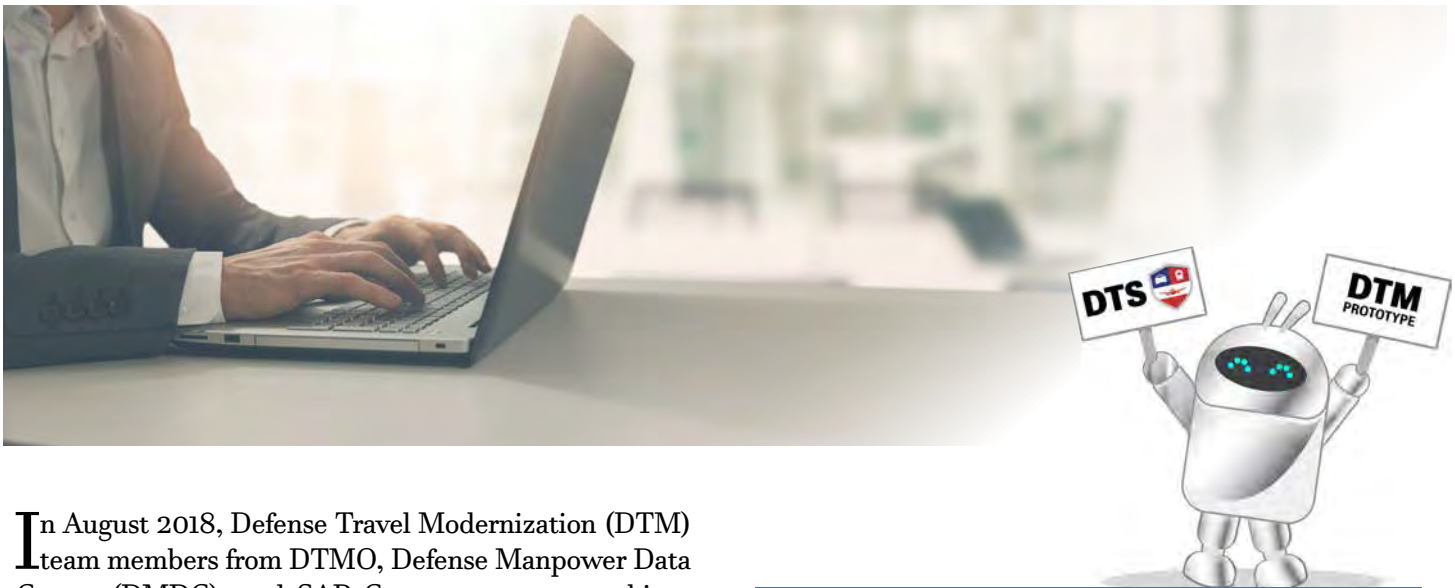- 86% Customer Service score (up from 83% in 2018)

2020 Lodging Updates
- Privatized Army Lodging added at Fort Carson
- Possible 69 sites-targeting:
  - Dahlgren, VA
  - Fort AP Hill, VA
  - Fredericksburg, VA
  - Camp Bullis, TX

Go to www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/comLodging.cfm for a full size map.

DTM PROTOTYPE ROLLED OUT TO MORE DoD ORGANIZATIONS

In August 2018, Defense Travel Modernization (DTM) team members from DTMO, Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), and SAP Concur set out to achieve the vision of "Efficiency and Effectiveness." Using a commercial off-the-shelf product, they successfully configured an end-to-end DoD prototype travel system that includes advanced technologies such as e-receipt capability and a mobile application.

DTM was first implemented for the Defense Human Resource Activity (DHRA)'s 1,174 users. Subsequently, Washington Headquarters Services (WHS) went live in September 2019 adding an additional 814 users. At the end of fiscal year 2019, trips booked via the DTM prototype totaled nearly one million dollars.

The next DTM roll out will be the Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA), one of our largest Defense Agencies, with over 8,000 potential new users traveling with DTM. With a group this size, the DTM implementation team looks forward to working closely with DCMA Travel Managers to discover unique travel situations, approval, and expense scenarios to challenge the current system rules. Together with these findings, the team will review rules and configurations to ensure a smooth deployment.

Successful implementation relies on five key elements: change management, employee on-boarding, training, communication, and sustainment.

The biggest anticipated challenge with deploying a prototype is usually "change." Change is not always welcome, but when addressing change with a forward thinking, innovative approach, the target audience is sure to adopt and even embrace change.

DTM is not yet configured to process every type of travel, so while the team is constantly improving the system, we direct travelers to use "TravelBot"—our friendly decision tree— to assist with determining which system to use. "Living" on the DTMO website, TravelBot asks 7 simple questions guiding you to either the prototype or DTS.

Once on-boarded, newly deployed organizations will receive an invitation to join our weekly "Blastoff" meetings where they contribute to and preview weekly enhancements to the prototype, gaining a sense of ownership in the success of DTM. We welcome the DoD travel community involvement and we are excited to welcome change to our Department!

Just a few members of the DTM team; meet more of the team on page 6

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR GOVTRAVELS 2020

Save the date for the 2020 National Defense Transportation Association (NDTA) GovTravels symposium, being held from Monday, February 24 through Wednesday, February 26, 2020 at the Hilton Mark Center in Alexandria, VA. GovTravels provides us with a better understanding of the challenges facing travel managers across the federal government and the travel industry, and provides a relevant backdrop to help inform the strategic direction of the Defense Travel Enterprise as we consider industry best practices and new technologies. This is the fourth year that the Defense Travel Management Office is co-sponsoring of this event.

Planning is well underway and GovTravels 2020 is already shaping up to be a terrific event including informative panel discussions with key industry and government leaders, educational breakout sessions, and noteworthy guest speakers. This year's theme will focus on shaping the future traveler experience. Considering that Defense Travel Modernization is one of our key initiatives, expect it to take center stage.

Registration for 2020 is now open. Visit the GovTravels webpage at www.ndtahq.com/events/gov-travels for more information or to sign up!

GTCC BACK END SYSTEM TRANSITION COMING

On March 6, 2020, the Citi Commercial Cards Team will upgrade your commercial cards program. This upgrade will allow Citi to serve Agency Program Coordinators (APCs) and Component Program Managers (CPMs) more efficiently, as the management tools will have added functionality and improved performance.

Citi will offer APCs and CPMs several training options prior to the conversion. Training will begin January 2020 and will continue through March 2020. Training registration begins in early December 2019 in the CitiManager Learning Center. Webinar sessions will be offered daily and there will also be an opportunity for classroom training (with location details in the Learning Center).

Please note: This training is for program coordinators/managers; cardholders will not be directly impacted.

GET TO KNOW THE TEAM BEHIND DTM

This is an interview with two important members of the Defense Travel Modernization team, Lisa Moreno and Lance Jenkinson.

Dispatch: Why don't you start off by telling the readers a little bit about yourselves.

Lisa: I am the Branch Chief of Travel Systems and Support at DTMO and I serve as the Functional Lead for the Defense Travel Modernization effort. As the DTM Functional Lead, I have the best job ever; I get to collaborate every day with a highly energetic, passionate team. Our team has functional oversight on the DTM travel system ensuring it operates and performs as it should. We assemble requirements from policy and the commercial travel programs, and provide them to the Product Owner, Lance Jenkinson who then configures the system to meet the requirements.

Lance: I am a proud change-agent for the Department of Defense. I draw strength from focusing on what can be and how my teams learn and grow as we iterate towards our shared vision. I'm unashamedly assertive when it comes to meeting mission but guarantee that we will have FUN doing it. On DTM, I am the Functional Product Owner. It's my job to guide the SAP Concur Core Functional Configuration team, the Travel Management Company (TMC) team, cyber-security team, and Project Management Office (PMO)/Requirements team. Additionally, I provide guidance and work closely with the Financial Integration team.

Dispatch: What has been the biggest challenge AND success so far with the DTM initiative?

Lisa: The biggest challenge for the DTM initiative is avoiding over-configuration. With the complexity of our travel policies, it is easy to fall into this pattern where we want to account for every policy exception. In order to do so requires highly customized systems as seen with DTS, and that becomes expensive and difficult to maintain.

There is, however, always the option to change policy, which is not an easy process either. Many travel policies are written into law, which means it would take an act of Congress to change in some instances. Nevertheless, we definitely want to avoid making the same mistakes with this travel system by not over-customizing it, while still complying with policy.

The biggest success is having leadership and travel managers support in this effort. I think folks realize

Lance, Melanie, and Lisa rocking their DTM team swag

it is time for a change and desperately want to take advantage of the available technology like mobile and e-receipt capability.

Lance: I feel that the biggest challenge has been getting the Department and stakeholders used to Agile methodology's iterative nature; we deliver live work products in 2-week chunks that are called "sprints." We continuously build upon prior releases so what we release each sprint isn't always as polished as some would like, but, we can turn on a dime when changes need to be made or priorities shift...and that happens a lot! The biggest success has been how we have configured this out-of-the-box product to meet the Department's policy requirements without having to make many customizations. If we run into an obstacle, we come together as a team (DTMO, DMDC, and DHRA) to make it work; and we will continue to do so!

Dispatch: What is your vision for the next year? If you could achieve one DTM "thing" to make you happy, what would it be?

Lisa: My vision is to provide an effective, efficient, user friendly, simple, enterprise-wide DoD community travel system solution that supports our principles, always keeping in mind to "do no harm" and apply duty of care.

Lance: For the next year, I want to continue iterating the great work the team has done thus far. We have some great features rolling out soon including: making changes to requests/booked travel, traveling OCONUS, processing local travel vouchers, leveraging artificial intelligence to prevent fraud, and the use of smart algorithms to automate approvals of travel requests and

changes that are already within policy ("auto approval") where appropriate. If I had to pick just one thing, it would be auto approval. We are building a coalition that believes it's time to stop being penny-wise and pound foolish as a culture and move away from micro-management. At senior leadership briefings I have quoted a famous princess that "the more we tighten our grip, the more [travel savings opportunities] will slip through our fingers."

Dispatch: What is one DTM feature you think the travel community will love?

Lisa: Travelers, Approvers and Auditors will love the e-receipt capability. With some airlines, lodging, and rental car companies that use e-receipt technology, DTM will have the power to automatically pull and upload those receipts and populate your expense report. You can also take a picture of a receipt and send it via email to DTM and it will pre-populate your expense report.

Lance: According to the New York Post, the average employee spends around 8-hours per week on their personal phones during the work day. So I'm proud to say that we've brought DTM to their fingertips, literally, with the SAP Concur Mobile and TripIt apps. They are available for use on both personal AND government phones. A traveler can build expense reports on the go and conveniently take pictures of those burdensome receipts. Approvers are thrilled once they learn they can review and approve requests and expense reports directly from the app.

Dispatch: What DTM-related "things" do you think about/try to solve when you wake up at 3 am?

Lisa: What wakes me up at 3 am is the integration of the financial systems with the new travel system. We recently integrated the Defense Agencies Initiative (DAI) accounting system, which took approximately 6 months. DAI supports the majority of the Defense Agencies but not the services. It's important that we begin on-boarding one of the Services in order to capture their unique types of Temporary Duty Travel (TDY) situations and further build out DTM.

Lance: I have travel on my mind all the time and have taken to heart a famous Captain's advice that "the problem is not the problem; the problem is your attitude about the problem." We don't have problems on DTM, we have opportunities for inspiration. One example would be the time the team we were stuck on how we wanted to configure Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) on Multi-Segment trips. The first design was clunky, but early the next morning I woke up hungry and made a sandwich. As I built the sandwich it came to me: location #1 travel day (bread), location #1 interim days (meat), location #2 interim days (cheese), and location #2 travel day (bread). And from then on the "M&IE Sandwich" was served and you can now find my midnight snack referenced in DTM training guides.

Dispatch: What does success look like to you (in regards to DTM/New travel system initiative)?

Lisa: Short term success is implementing the new travel system to one of the Services. Long-term success is having every DoD traveler with the DTM app on their mobile devices, drastically reduce travel improper payments and respectfully sunset the legacy system...it is a win-win for all!

Lance: As an agile project, we will continuously be iterating and improving the system, so there will never be some finite point when we're "done," however, success to me will be when every traveler in the Department is using DTM as their primary travel system.

Dispatch: When we achieve this success, how will you celebrate? What is the first thing you will do?

Lance: This is a TEAM effort and we don't wait to celebrate. Every milestone, we gather the team and order a lot of snacks to share and strong drinks...but never on the clock!

Lisa: I would thank each and every team member that worked on this project. It is an amazing ride and one of the best part in this journey is meeting and interacting with so many different people. I have met some of the hardest working, most passionate people and I am truly

A typical DTM team meeting can be very cozy.

humbled to have been a part of this project. Aside from the mushy stuff, I will pop a bottle of champagne — the expensive stuff— and drop my retirement papers!

Dispatch: An early congratulations! Okay, let's throw in something fun for our readers who made it this far; did you dress up for Halloween and if so, what was your costume?

Lisa: My favorite super hero, Domino a member of the mutant team X-Force in Deadpool 2. Her super power is "luck" so no matter what dangerous situation she gets into, she knows the outcome will always be good. As you can see I have a lot in common with Domino, success is the only outcome for the new travel system so get ready DoD travelers, it's coming your way!

Lance: I was Captain Kirk because I like to run my projects the same way he commands the USS Enterprise; using these four leadership mantras:

1. Never stop learning.
2. Have empowered advisors (with different perspectives).
3. Always be part of the away team (but don't micromanage it).
4. Play poker, not chess (because understanding stakeholders/travelers is a much greater advantage than just focusing on the cards I have in my hand to play.)

Obviously, nobody wears red shirts on this team, though!

Dispatch: Any last words of wisdom?

Lisa: As we embark on the deployment of the new travel system, we will have to face change. Change is hard for everyone, but for the travel managers it will be specifically challenging. They must learn and become the experts in the new system while still using DTS. Nevertheless, travelers are welcoming the modernization of features; from the cool advanced receipt technology that automatically builds itemized expense reports, to the ability to access the system on mobile devices. I leave only one thought for all the travel managers, a quote from the classical Greek philosopher, Socrates, "the secret of change is to focus all your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new."

Lance: Definitely what she just said.

2020 EXCELLENCE IN PRACTICE AWARDS

DTMO is pleased to announce the 2020 Excellence in Practice Awards, which recognizes the top performers in DoD travel for the value and the services they provided to their travel program during Fiscal Year 2019. Since the Excellence in Practice Award winners are nominated by their colleagues, we encourage you to submit nominations for individuals that make a difference in your travel program.

Awards are presented in the following categories:

- The Champion Award: A Lead Defense Travel Administrator (LDTA) who goes above and beyond in providing mentoring and training to their organization.
- The Elite Award: A local help desk team whose superior efforts result in continuous improvement and outstanding customer care.
- The Icon Award: A major command or agency whose strategies and tactics enhance their travel program capabilities for their subordinate sites.
- The Premier Award: An Agency Program Coordinator (APC) who demonstrates an extraordinary and exemplary commitment to cardholders and stakeholders through proactive education, effective communication, responsive customer service, and outstanding Program Coordination.

Recipients receive award certificates and are recognized on the DTMO website, in the Defense Travel Dispatch, and are also honored at the annual National Defense Transportation Association's GovTravels Symposium being held February 24-26, 2020 in Alexandria, VA.

Go to www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/award.cfm for more information, including nomination forms. All nominations must be received by November 15, 2019, so submit today!

HELP US REDESIGN THE DTMO WEBSITE

You may have noticed changes to the DTMO website already, including a reorganized top navigation menu. We are currently undergoing a website redesign that will require an overhaul of content, organization, and navigation over the next few months. While these changes may seem overwhelming, the goal will be to better serve you, the users of our site. Our goal in these efforts, is to create a better DoD travel experience.

As we move forward, we will also undergo an update of the look and feel of the site. We will be using the US Web Design System (USWDS) to inform website improvements and guide design choices to provide better, more accessible products. The USWDS is a library of code, tools, and guidance to help government teams design and build fast, accessible, mobile-friendly government websites. These tools are backed by user research and modern best practices.

Feel free to check out our redesign page at www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/redesign.cfm and give us feedback on our progress!

DTMO IS LOOKING FOR BETA TESTERS!

If you are interested in answering some questions and helping test DTMO site **changes, please fill out the form on** our redesign webpage. We will be doing testing in stages, so we will reach out if we need you. Sign up at *www.defensetravel.dod. mil/site/redesign.cfm*

Later this year, DTMO will roll out an updated version of Travel Explorer (TraX) and Passport, DTMO's single sign-on portal that provides access to TraX and other permission-based applications. While most of the improvements have occurred on the back end coding, users will notice an updated look and feel, as well as clearer navigation to applications and tools, and enhanced accessibility. Additionally, both Passport and TraX are being recoded to be mobile friendly. Users on phones or tablets will soon be able to more easily navigate through interfaces, and content will resize to fit the screen.

WHERE SHOULD I EAT ON TRAVEL? DoD DINE SMART POINTS YOU IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

In 2018 the DoD launched the DoD Dine Smart program, a pilot preferred dining program that earns rebates for the Department when travelers use their Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) to pay for meals at participating restaurants. Rebates go directly back to the Services to support travel budgets.

DoD Dine Smart operates through Dinova, a dining marketplace. Dinova is actively adding restaurant brands that DoD travelers use already, making it easier than ever for travelers to participate. Dinova is working closely with DTMO to identify the top 100 restaurant chains used by DoD travelers to leverage the DoD spend with our own program to increase the DoD rebates and steer more business to the restaurants that choose to participate. A few examples of popular restaurants recently added include Carolina Ale House, Red Robin, and Jersey Mike's. *(For a full list of participating restaurants, download the app!)*

Dinova is also working with hotels that participate in the DoD Preferred lodging program to provide DoD travelers with flyers at check-in that highlight nearby DoD Dine Smart restaurants. The hotels enjoy providing our travelers with more relevant, usable information and our travelers enjoy knowing where they can eat nearby.

There are no extra steps for travelers to participate in DoD Dine Smart; simply dine at participating restaurants when on TDY and pay with a GTCC. Because it is a seamless process, there is no need for the travelers to identify themselves as DoD, show the app or a dining card, or even mention the program. Simply using the GTCC ensures rebates are earned, and since DoD travel policy requires travelers to pay for their meals with their GTCC, there's nothing to think about! And everything on the tab —food, drink, tip (and no, the restaurant doesn't tell us about your second glass of wine!)— will count towards the rebate. It's as easy as that!
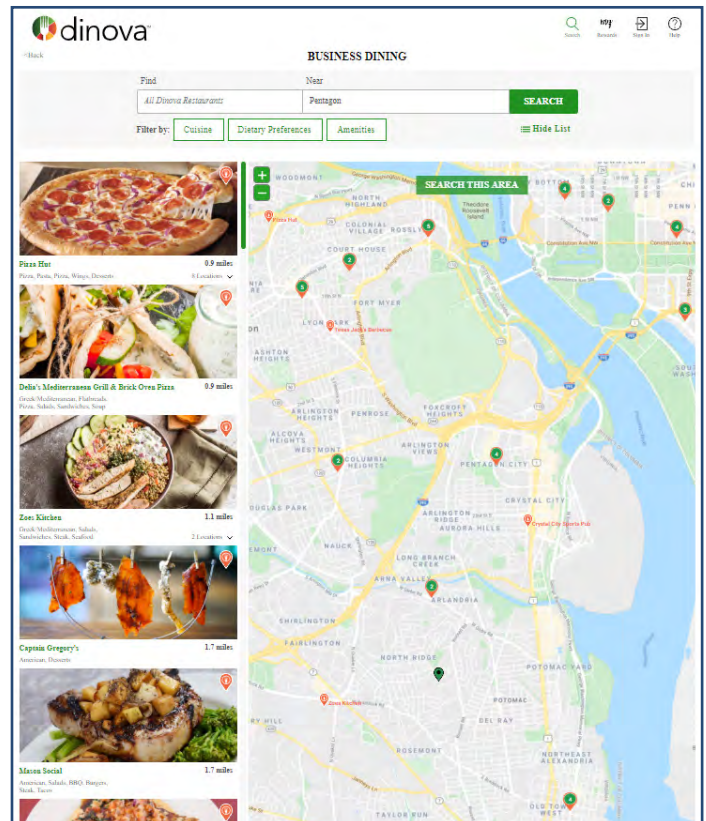
Download the Dinova app from the app store; the DoD-approved app will allow users to use location services to identify participating restaurants nearby.

"MILITARY BUS" WILL BE THE DoD BUS PROGRAM

Since the 1980s, the DoD Military Bus Program has ensured that chartered commercial bus and van companies that transport DoD personnel provide safe vehicles that consistently meet the DoD standards of service. Today, over 400 carriers participate in the program, offering service in support of group moves, recruit travel, and more.

This year, DTMO is completing a program-wide review of the bus program that incorporates years of feedback and input from military services, United States Transportation Command, federal agencies, and commercial bus carriers.

When program enhancements begin to be implemented later this year, they will include:

- Lifting the current moratorium on accepting new carriers into the program,
- Mandatory use of GOPAX for transportation coordinators arranging bus moves, and
- New processes to improve overall program alignment, management, operational efficiency, and enhance traveler safety and security.

In addition to these program improvements comes a rewritten Military Bus Agreement, which outlines the specific terms, conditions, and standards that carriers must meet when providing transportation for DoD passengers.

> In 2018, the DoD chartered over 1,850 group bus moves and transported an estimated 175,090 personnel through the Military Bus Program.

The existing Agreement was put into place over 20 years ago and has not had a comprehensive update to this extent since that time.

The updated DoD Bus Agreement #5, expected to be released before the end of this year, includes new and expanded carrier data requirements, improvements to the application process, as well as expanded service and security requirements.

With the roll out of the updated Bus Agreement also comes a program name change; going forward the program will be referred to as the "DoD Bus Program." Replacing the word "military" more accurately reflects the service the program provides to the Department which goes beyond just supporting movement of service members.

For more information, or if you have questions about booking a bus move, contact us at dodhra.mc-alex.dtmo.mbx.military-bus-program@mail.mil