Defense Travel Dispatch

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About the Publishing Entity:

The mission of the Defense Travel Management Office 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.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE:

In last fall's edition, I waxed poetic about the signs of autumn reminding me that change is constant. Over the past year, change has also been cataclysmic. We are still wrestling with the uncertainty of the pandemic, remaining cautiously optimistic of a vaccine coming soon. DoD travel is starting to make a comeback, but travel volume is still down 66 percent from this time last year. The pandemic has been devastating to the travel industry. In this issue, you will hear from some of our industry partners about how they are responding to the challenge. Like DTMO, the travel industry is customer-focused and the health and safety of our travelers is paramount. The changes they are making will be enduring, changing the travel landscape for years to come.

One way that DTMO monitors and manages change is through the implementation of performance-based management. I have embraced a business operations approach to the DoD Travel Enterprise. Performance-based management is a driving force for continuous improvement and a results-oriented culture. Inside, you will learn how we implement it and the progress we have made in this long journey. We highlight the DoD Travel Policy Compliance Program as an example of one of our many successes.

An important annual event for our stakeholders and industry partners, GovTravels, will be virtual this year. This is the best way to safely facilitate an exchange of information, ideas, and to further strengthen critical relationships between government and industry. Registration is open. Get the details inside.

In closing, DTMO continues to meet its mission during these trying times. Our TMC acquisition realignment has encouraged competition and created daunting virtual transition requirements. We are wrapping up Citi's transition to its new financial platform, setting the stage for travel card innovations like virtual card capability. Our policy team is collaborating with TRANSCOM and other stakeholders to increase Personally Procured Move allowances for our service members and families. We continue to improve functionality of the Defense Travel Modernization prototype, refining both our capability roadmap and adjusting our rollout timeline to meet DoD cybersecurity requirements. Onboarding new users will resume soon. We have accomplished much and have much more to do. Have a safe and healthy Thanksgiving!

- Bill Mansell, Director, Defense Travel Management Office

Performance Based Management: Our Method, Our Success, Our Vision

The Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO) uses a performance-based management approach to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the Defense Travel Enterprise. Performance management is a set of integrated processes, often supported by technology, which help improve strategic decision-making in organizations.

The performance management systematic approach entails an ongoing process of: (1) establishing goals, objectives, and metrics; (2) measuring and monitoring performance, (3) analyzing performance data to create business intelligence; and (4) leveraging those insights to drive accountability, management decisions, reporting, compliance, resource allocation, risk management, and continuous improvement. Data and visualization is vital to the performance management effort. For DTMO, performance management is instrumental in facilitating our ability to properly define key organizational measures and routinely monitor them to proactively enhance program effectiveness and efficiency. It provides our leadership and stakeholders with the confidence that DTMO decisions are evidence-based and aligned with our strategic plan.

The Method

The data intelligence process begins when program managers determine the types of decisions they need to make to proactively manage their commercial travel programs. This drives the types of information required to make those decisions and once that is determined, it prompts the question "what should we monitor/measure?" It is this answer that drives the development of the program metrics.

Once metrics are determined, metrics templates are created to describe key information pertaining to each metric (e.g., definition, formula, scoring criteria, target(s), filters, update frequency, data source, collection methodology and data elements). From there, we create Tableau dashboards to visually display metrics, facilitating business intelligence. It is from this business intelligence and data analysis, that decisions can be made to better manage and improve travel programs.

Comprehensive metric development requires the identification of one or more data elements necessary in the calculation of a metric. Our primary travel data repository, Commercial Travel Information Management (CTIM), is integral to our Performance Management Framework. CTIM includes data collection, integration, cleansing, validation, and storage. It centralizes nearly a dozen data sources across our programs.

CTIM, together with Tableau dashboards form the technology foundation of our performance management program. Data from CTIM is pushed to Tableau, which facilitates DTMO's visualization and analytic capabilities. Together, they enable a more comprehensive understanding of DoD travel processes and the development of business intelligence.

Monitoring Success through Dashboards

To make it easy to monitor and assess progress and performance of travel program metrics and key initiatives, DTMO uses dashboards to display decision-ready business intelligence in a visual format. Dashboards created through the Tableau platform provide leadership and program managers with a quick snapshot of the information they need to help manage their programs on a day-to day basis. DTMO functional area subject matter experts develop the dashboards, putting program managers and their teams in control of their data reporting. This approach takes advantage of Tableau best practices and serves as a force multiplier to further expand performance management/business intelligence across DTMO and the Defense Travel Enterprise.

Dashboards enhance accountability, management decisions, reporting, compliance, resource allocation, risk management, and continuous improvement. Over 100 dashboards have been built thus far and more are on the way as we continue to develop our performance management capability. We've had many, but a few success stories stand out:
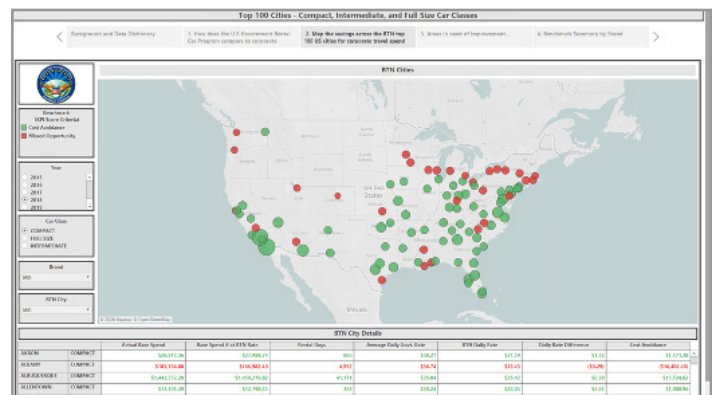
To date, DTMO has over 250 defined metrics, 80 of which are categorized as operational key performance indicators (KPIs).

Travel Policy Compliance. A dashboard was created to monitor information pulled from the Travel Policy Compliance Tool (CT), which uses automated queries to identify Defense Travel System improper payments and notify the responsible Service or Agency for action. Using new business intelligence reporting, DTMO is not only able to regularly report key performance indicators to the Services and Agencies, but the dashboards give compliance tool administrators in the field actionable insight to help them better track rates, and target their time and resources. Since implementation, the performance management framework has generated improvements in error correction and debt collection times. (See article page 9)

Non-Foreign Per Diem Rates. DTMO is responsible for setting per diem rates for non-foreign areas outside the continental United States. We use business intelligence reporting to drive decision-making in the rate setting process. Data extracted from the Government Travel Charge Card and Defense Travel System allow analysts to select hotels and restaurants most frequented by DoD travelers, monitor travel patterns, and assess the accuracy of updated per diem rates. These new capabilities ensure that DoD travelers are fairly compensated when traveling to locations such as Alaska, Puerto Rico, Guam or Hawaii.

U.S. Government Rental Car Program. One of the many rental car program dashboards was built to benchmark the Federal Government Rental Car Program against the Business Travel News Corporate Top 100 Cities. This dashboard serves multiple purposes as it enables us to monitor rates and assist the Department in calculating the program's quarterly Best in Class cost avoidance. Through this dashboard, we discovered that we were achieving almost double the annual cost avoidance than originally calculated by using the data to extrapolate the savings in the top 100 across all cities/car classes.

DoD Bus Program. With the implementation of the new DoD Bus Agreement #5, it was imperative that we monitor several different aspects of the program to ensure timely processing of applications, and monitor participation and vendor compliance. The DoD Bus program dashboards enable us to track the status of applications, compare carrier participation between Agreements, monitor participation in cities/states near military installations, and monitor carrier compliance for reporting, inspections, as well as other important program management details. As a result, we are able to manage the application process effectively and efficiently, reach out to carriers who participated under the previous agreement to ensure participation in the new agreement, fill gaps in service for cities/states where carrier participation is needed to support military moves, and ensure carriers are meeting the program requirements for reporting and safety.

Travel Assistance Center Metrics. We use the dashboards to monitor key metrics for providing customer support. Information leads to better resource allocation and allows us to better monitor and plan for fluctuation in support. This information was extremely valuable as we were recently able to demonstrate how increased staff and improved technology lead to improved performance in regards to call wait time and abandonment rates.
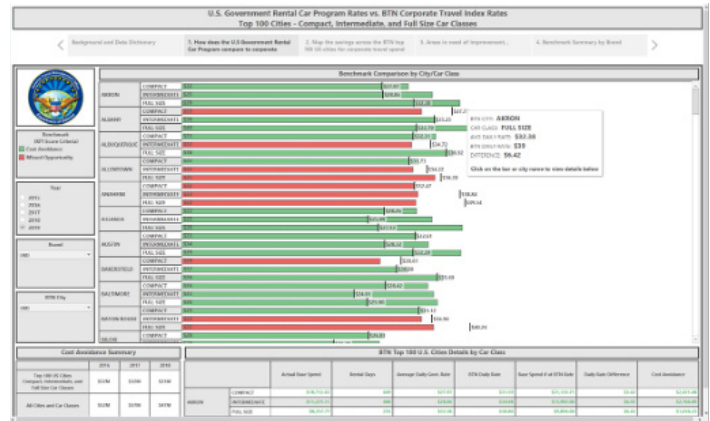
Government Travel Charge Card Program. We use key metrics and associated dashboards to monitor the program. Recently, we were able to identify an issue with declined authorizations. We were able to use the data to support a change in a key policy. Now DoD no longer requires restricted accounts to be deactivated. We also implemented a travel system change that improved messaging to remind cardholders to review and update their profile/GTCC information. With our dashboard we were able to show that these two changes had a positive effect on declined authorizations.

Travel Training. DTMO uses key metrics to measure the use of TraX training modules, which helps set priorities and manage resources.

The Role of the Data Scientist

Added performance management muscle comes from a team of data scientists that provide special analytical support to program managers. Using enterprise data, the scientists conduct analytical studies that include the level of in-depth analysis that assist the program manager with end-to-end problem solving and provide the analytical rigor that enhances confidence in their decisions. The resulting analytical products not only contribute key evidence used to support policy, program, and operational decisions but also:

- Increase accountability and transparency of expenditure of DoD travel funds
- Provide audit compliance with established policies
- Enhance consistency in the quality of supplier products and services
- Drive strategic sourcing decisions, usage of preferred vendors, and approved booking, expensing, and payment methods
- Increase visibility into customer behaviors and preferences to drive future requirements

Without these analytical studies, it would be a challenge to chart the cost effectiveness of the Defense Travel Enterprise and provide sound visibility into travel spend.

Importance of Customer Feedback

Customer satisfaction is a key metric in numerous travel program areas (e.g., air, lodging, rental car, Travel Management Company services, and the Government Travel Charge Card), thus it is prudent to mention the importance of customer feedback. We collect customer input to better assess and improve the overall traveler experience. The feedback provides insight into the gap between product/service delivery and customer expectations, facilitating an understanding of what drives customer satisfaction. This enables informed enterprise decision-making to more effectively source travel services, ensure quality service delivery from vendors, and improve travel programs and processes. These efforts significantly increase DTMO's ability to provide improved travel services by not only better understanding customer needs, but facilitating program enhancement by responding to these needs. A prime example of this is the DoD Preferred Commercial Lodging Program. The DoD Preferred Lodging customer satisfaction questionnaire dashboard helps support one of the DTMO's main objectives – providing duty of care for DoD travelers while on official travel. DTMO uses this business intelligence to assess traveler satisfaction with participating properties, allowing us to ensure hotels in the program continue to provide a high level of duty of care. Participating DoD Preferred hotel managers are eager to do what they can to ensure our travelers are comfortable and happy while away from home. We use this dashboard to provide hotel managers with valuable information on how their properties are being perceived by our travelers and identify areas the hotels can improve to better meet the needs and expectations of travelers.

Our Vision: Business Intelligence for External Stakeholders

One of DTMO's strategic initiatives is focused on expanding the provision of business intelligence to external stakeholders. As part of this, DTMO is working to:

- Identify external stakeholders' business intelligence needs
- Develop the most efficient and effective approach to implement external stakeholder reporting
- Develop and execute an external stakeholder communications plan to support sharing business intelligence

Our goal is to deploy applicable business intelligence to stakeholders on a quarterly basis, thereby providing the field with key information to help manage programs and drive change at the organization and local level.

Conclusion

Performance Based Management and Business Intelligence is instrumental in facilitating DTMO's ability to properly define key organizational measures and then routinely monitor them, providing key evidence used to support policy, program, and operational recommendations/decisions to improve travel services and optimize cost effective travel. More specifically, tracking and analyzing performance data provides credible, decision-ready business intelligence to leadership to assist in enhancing accountability, management decisions, reporting, compliance, resource allocation, risk management, and continuous improvement. In the future, this capability will be available to Service and agency leadership to help improve their business intelligence, providing support for local decision making.

The Impact of the Pandemic on the Travel Industry

The COVID pandemic has impacted daily routines of those across the world with a significant impact on the global economy. The travel industry was hit particularly hard as countries moved to shut down borders, issue travel restrictions, and traveler fears escalated. It has been hard to predict the impact on the travel industry and with the recent spike in cases world-wide, it is even more difficult to forecast the continued impact until a vaccine is widely available. We asked a few of our industry partners for their take on how the pandemic has impacted their industries, what the lasting impacts will be, and how their companies are working to ensure travelers feel safe when travel is required.

Across the board, industry representatives agree that the pandemic has significantly impacted the travel industry in ways no one thought possible. "If you were to go back to this time in 2019 and try to predict something – an event or circumstance or essential, universally shared experiences – that could abruptly stop all spending around travel and restaurants across the country at the same time, no one would have believed it possible; nothing could affect all restaurants; people have to be able to travel," said Janice McEachen, Director of Strategic Accounts at Dinova, the company that DTMO partnered with for the DoD Dine Smart preferred dining program.

Mr. Bryan Scott, Assistant Vice President of Government Business at Enterprise Holdings agreed, "The COVID-19 global pandemic has created significant and unprecedented challenges for us across all our brands. Like others across the travel industry, we witnessed an impact as corporate business and leisure travel came to a standstill."

Throughout the pandemic DTMO has monitored the amount of travel across DoD. In March, the Secretary of Defense issued a stop movement order that halted most temporary duty travel. As individual states took action against the virus and numbers improved, DoD shifted to a conditions-based phased approach for personnel movement and travel restrictions in May. Since that time, travel across DoD has steadily increased but it still remains 66 percent below what it was this time last year.

Industry, too, is starting to see an uptick in travel, albeit not to pre-pandemic levels. "We saw significant cancellations through 2020. The impact was felt globally, but we do see light at the end of the tunnel. "Defense Travel has been a foundational business around the US during this time. In some instances, it was due to this business that hotels were able to remain open and operating," said Bill Mckeand, Key Account Manager for Global Sales Americas at InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG).

"While our entire industry has a long road ahead, we are beginning to see some positive trends, including week over week upticks in demand for vehicle rentals," said Bryan Scott of Enterprise Holdings. "We saw less impact at our neighborhood locations than at airports as a result of some of our essential service support to Federal Government agencies. We also see our neighborhood business recovering quicker as states are starting to open back up and customers have felt comfortable to travel domestically again by car for both leisure and business."

Wyndham Hotels & Resorts is among the many hotel companies that have seen positive movement over the last few months.

"Leisure travel gained momentum in July and August and we are seeing steady demand in the business travel segment from the US government and companies in verticals such as construction, supply chain, logistics and energy," said Jill Hatfield, Vice President, Global Sales – North America for Wyndham Hotels & Resorts.

It is unclear what the impact of the recent surge in infection rates across Europe and in the US will have on the travel industry in the next few months, but companies are bracing for shifting travel restrictions and an ever-changing market. "The timeline of recovery for the pandemic and the ultimate economic impact on the consumer is still uncertain and continues to change. We expect that recovery will be sporadic and regional over the coming months," said Choice Hotels' Mark Cronin, Director of Specialty Sales Government.

In order to capture what they can of the current travel volume, companies are educating themselves on the best ways to combat the virus and put practices into place that protect and reassure the travelers that do have to travel. Early on in the pandemic, companies announced new COVID protocols which included their plans for enhanced cleaning and safety measures put in place to protect travelers (see page 8 for links). To help craft these plans, companies not only relied on the World Health Organization,

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, and local public health authorities for guidance, but reached out to leading experts in the Public Health field.

Amtrak, for one, engaged the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health at the George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health (GW Milken Institute SPH) to provide ongoing technical expertise and guidance to enhance its comprehensive coronavirus pandemic response. Avis Budget Group also took this route, "We turned to the experts to launch a coalition that will further enhance the cleanliness and disinfection procedures at our rental facilities and within our vehicles, with members including RB, the maker of Lysol, and a team of medical professionals from leading institutions including Columbia University," said Beth Schoeller, National Account Manager for Government at Avis Budget Group.

And, hotels followed suit. IHG Hotels added to their existing relationships with Ecolab and Diversey, world leaders in hygiene and cleaning technologies and services, by partnering with Cleveland Clinic to expand their "IHG Way of Clean" program with additional COVID-19 protocols and best practices. Hotels especially are reaching out to these types of organizations to ensure they are doing what they can to keep travelers and employees safe and provide piece of mind.

Another notable trend growing in the travel industry is connecting with the customer base and partners to see how companies could help even more. "We are also listening to what our customers need to help find ways to ensure travelers feel ready to travel, and safe," said IHG's Bill Mckeand.

Dinova hosted a series of roundtables with their restaurant and corporate/government partners to discuss their concerns around the pandemic and see how they could use their connections to help both sides. Based on feedback from those sessions, Dinova published, "Business Dining 2.0: A Guide for Empowering COVID-Conscious Diners" – a key Dine Safely resource which was created to educate individual diners on the safety changes emerging around restaurant dining experiences. Other companies including Amtrak and Choice Hotels took steps to open up lines of communication with travelers to gain a better understanding of what they needed to feel safe.

In December, when news first started to break about a new coronavirus in Asia, many did not anticipate the impact to be so dramatic and quick moving. Like most of the world, the travel industry had to move quickly to adapt to the changing environment. "I think above all, this crisis has taught us to quickly adapt – both how we operate as a business and how we serve customers," said Mr. Bryan Scott of Enterprise. For those in the travel industry, that meant taking the opportunity to relook key business processes and customer interactions.

Enterprise Rent-A-Car realized early on that there were key areas that will drive traveler trust in brands as they begin to travel again in the new normal. "For us, this required a review and investment in reshaping the rental process," said Mr. Scott, "which includes a reservation process that supports more low touch and self-service transactions, enhanced counter by-pass service, curb side check in – using technology to expand the offering, and implementing our Complete Clean Pledge." He continued, "Looking ahead, we'll explore new technologies, partnerships and investments that we believe will deliver on the changing needs and preferences of consumers as they continue to navigate this new normal."

Amtrak, too, says they are "re-imagining every part of the customer journey to make travel safe and secure as we lead the way by setting a new standard of travel with enhanced safety and cleaning measures. With a full-time medical director and public health and safety team who have been on the front lines throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, we have studied, analyzed and made improvements to the Amtrak travel experience – from beginning to end – for the safety and health of our people and

travelers," said Roger DeLucia, Federal and Corporate Sales Manager at of Amtrak.
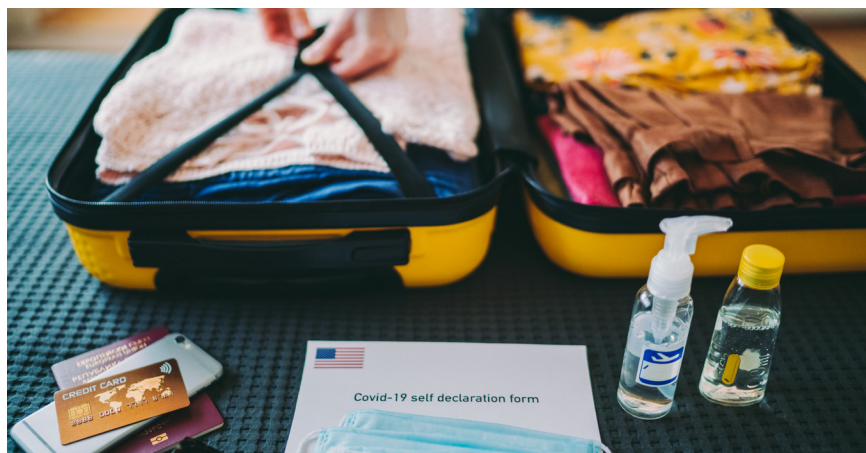
At Hertz Rental Car, as part of its Hertz Gold Standard Clean, an enhanced cleaning and sanitization process, they began sealing each vehicle after it was cleaned. "We believe [this] will give customers added peace of mind knowing they are the only person to enter the vehicle after it's been thoroughly cleaned and

sanitized," said Kevin Knorr, Director of Government Sales at The Hertz Corporation.

It doesn't stop at modifying customer interaction processes; companies are looking at the entire traveler experience. Many are turning to enhanced technology that streamlines, or in some cases, eliminates in-person interaction and allows travelers to interact with the company virtually.

In early summer, Dinova quickly moved to enhance its restaurant locator mobile app and desktop search tool to enable users to search its 18,000+ in-network restaurants and filter by the safety concerns that matter to them most—by curbside takeout, capacity restrictions, or diner mask requirements, for example. They continue to work with their restaurant partners to update their search information as they make changes and pandemic conditions fluctuate, so they can help everyone find restaurants that match their dining comfort levels.

The hotel and rental car industries have focused on reducing person-to-person interaction. Rental car companies like Hertz and Avis offer counter-bypass for those who sign up as part of their loyalty programs (go to www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/rentalCarFRP.cfm to sign up for these programs). As a member of Hertz Gold Plus Rewards loyalty program, members can skip the counter, go straight to their vehicle, and drop off their car and go when they return with their eReceipts and eReturn service. They, like many others, have made several upgrades to its Hertz mobile app to better facilitate a touchless or "low contact" rental experience.

At Avis Budget Group, the Avis mobile app allows Preferred members to control their rental from their mobile phone and skip the line for a seamless, touchless experience. They even introduced a new Digital Check-In feature for a touchless experience at the rental counter.

Rental car companies are not the only ones making improvements on the tech front. Hotels have also upgraded their apps. According to Jill Hatfield, Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, "Travelers today are increasingly looking for streamlined, low-contact experiences, and that includes when they stay at a hotel." In response, Wyndham recently unveiled an all-new mobile app, which among other features, will offer mobile check-in and checkout at nearly 6,000 of their hotels by end of this year.

Amtrak has also enhanced the functionality of their app to make contact-free travel easy. To reduce crowds at departure boards, the Amtrak app provides users with gate and track information via push notifications at select stations. "This will offer customers enhanced flexibility and convenience well past the pandemic as they board, check train status and access information from the convenience and safety of a mobile device," said Roger DeLucia.

Each of our travel industry partners that we spoke with agree that the pandemic will have lasting impacts. Most involve retaining enhanced cleaning practices, keeping the lines of communication open to ensure travelers are heard, and continuing to offer some of the new service offerings that were launched to lessen in-person interaction.

Chad Fletcher, Vice President of Global Sales at Choice Hotels International said, "We have an internal taskforce that arose early in the pandemic, meeting twice a week, to represent the best interests of guests across our brands and how to keep them best informed of changes in the company – including leisure guests, Choice Privileges loyalty members as well as corporate travel guests and travel buyers – and which will likely continue meeting long after the pandemic and recovery period is over."

Per IHG's Bill Mckeand, "Some of the lasting impacts we predict for our industry include a continued heightened focus on cleanliness. Also, food and beverage offerings will likely continue to evolve, especially in-room dining. He continued, "Meetings and events will also continue to change as the industry has now introduced hybrid meetings. We anticipate adding a hybrid component to a meeting or conference will become very popular as organizations begin to host events and programs again."

Dinova agrees on the dining front, "Food deliveries are no longer just for pizza chains. The way the public interacts with restaurants has fundamentally changed, and that's not going to go away anytime soon." Dinova also sees food safety as something that continues to receive a lot of attention. "Diner safety as a public concern has outgrown the confines of any general food prep

context – it's now about the entire experience, whether that meal takes place inside a restaurant dining room or is delivered to a hotel room or doorstep. We're digging into the new ways business dining is happening and are rethinking what those meals mean for everyone involved," said Dinova's Janice McEachen.

For the rental car industry, they see renting a car to travel as something that will continue. "The car rental industry has undoubtedly faced roadblocks since the onset of the pandemic, but we believe that car rental is one of the cleanest and safest forms of transportation because it puts customers in control of their own environment," said Beth Schoeller, National Account Manager, Government at Avis Budget Group. Kevin Knorr of Hertz agrees, "While it may take time for people to travel like they did before, we recognize that some people may feel more comfortable traveling by car right now and we can provide them with a safe, fast and easy rental experience."

Like many others in the industry, companies are not planning on resting on their laurels. "We also continue to refine our current modified offerings to move toward implementing more permanent low- and no-touch experiences for our customers across all our brands and lines of business," said Enterprise's Bryan Scott. "We

will plan to use the insights and best practices we've implemented from this pandemic to take an even deeper look at our operations and how we can continue to redefine the rental experience and build confidence for our customers."

Choice Hotels' Mark Cronin said the company is focused on its long-term strategy, "…our company operates with a long-term approach. We've been in business for over 80 years, and it's important to us to build a business that guests can continue to come to for the next 80 years."

As the pandemic wears on, travelers can expect to see a continued focus on cleaning and safety as companies continue to push to reassure travelers that their product or service is safe. Technology will increasingly play a key role in the travel journey as companies move to decrease in-person interactions relying on apps to complete transactions. After all, the travel industry wants nothing more than to keep travelers safe so they can focus on the task at hand. "Our role is to take the care and attention to ensure the wellbeing of our guests. We are working with our customers who are traveling to create environments that allow them to continue to focus on their mission at hand," said Bill Mckeand of IHG.

Industry Commitment to Traveler Safety

For additional information on COVID safety measures put in place at our other industry partners, go to www.defensetravel.dod.mil/coronavirus/.

Choice Hotels
- Commitment to Clean
  www.choicehotels.com/about/commitment-to-clean-hotels

IHG Hotels
- IHG Way of Clean
  www.ihg.com/clean

Wyndham Hotels
- Count on Us
  www.wyndhamhotels.com/en-us/about-us/count-on-us

Avis Rent-A-Car
- Avis Safety Pledge
  www.avis.com/en/safety-pledge?ICID=av-all-200910-op-s1-safetypledge

Budget
- Worry Free Promise
  www.budget.com/en/worry-free-promise?ICID=bg-all-200910-hp-s1-worryfreepromise.html&ICID=bg-all-200910-hp-s1-worryfreepromise

Enterprise Rent-A-Car
- Complete Clean Pledge
  www.enterprise.com/en/car-rental/on-call-for-all.html

Hertz
- Gold Standard Clean
  pub.emails.hertz.com/GoldStandardClean

Amtrak
- New Standard of Service
  www.amtrak.com/coronavirus?intcmp=wsp_hp-hero_link_service-updates_frame2

Better Performance Tracking and a Compliance Tool Recode on the Horizon

In 2012, the Defense Travel Management Office launched the DoD Travel Policy Compliance Program to minimize inaccurate, unauthorized, overstated, inflated or duplicate travel claims, and allow the Services and DoD Agencies to recover those improperly paid funds. We are continuing to take steps to advance the Travel Policy Compliance Program by improving data reporting that drives decision-making, and increasing the usability of the associated Compliance Tool to assist in that process.

The DoD Travel Policy Compliance Program uses the DoD Travel Policy Compliance Tool to review and analyze Defense Travel System (DTS) vouchers, supporting documentation, and other pertinent information to identify improper payments. The tool not only identifies errors, but also emails travelers with instructions for correcting errors, and supports DoD Services and Agencies efforts to track and recover those improperly paid funds. DTMO recently met with representatives of the Services and DoD Agencies to collect requirements for an upcoming "recode" of the Compliance Tool interface. Based on the feedback received, the recode will include several new improvements and enhancements that will provide Compliance Tool Administrators with improved usability and more detailed reporting capabilities.

DTMO also recently introduced the Services and DoD Agencies to three new key performance indicators – Error Correction Time, Debt Collection Time, and Age of Errors Pending Correction, which are based on thresholds set by a USD (Comptroller) memorandum, "Preventing and Enforcing Improper Payments,"

Did You Know?

The Defense Travel Management Office offers a monthly distance learning class for new Compliance Tool Administrators (CTAs) to get up to speed on how to navigate the CT, run reports, grant access to others, and manage debts? If you would like to participate, register for the virtual training session through TraX, available through DTMO's Passport portal, www.defensetravel.dod.mil/passport.

(www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/Memo_Preventing_Enforcing_Improper_Payments.pdf).

The new key performance indicators (KPI) and associated dashboards allow organizations to better track their own performance and chart their success with correcting and collecting improper payment errors identified by the Compliance Tool. These KPIs and associated dashboards also better support DTMO's ability to provide improper payment data to the Office of the Deputy Chief Financial Officer (ODCFO) for publication in the Agency Financial Report, which provides an overview of the Department's financial performance.

For more information on the Travel Policy Compliance Program, go to www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/compliance.cfm
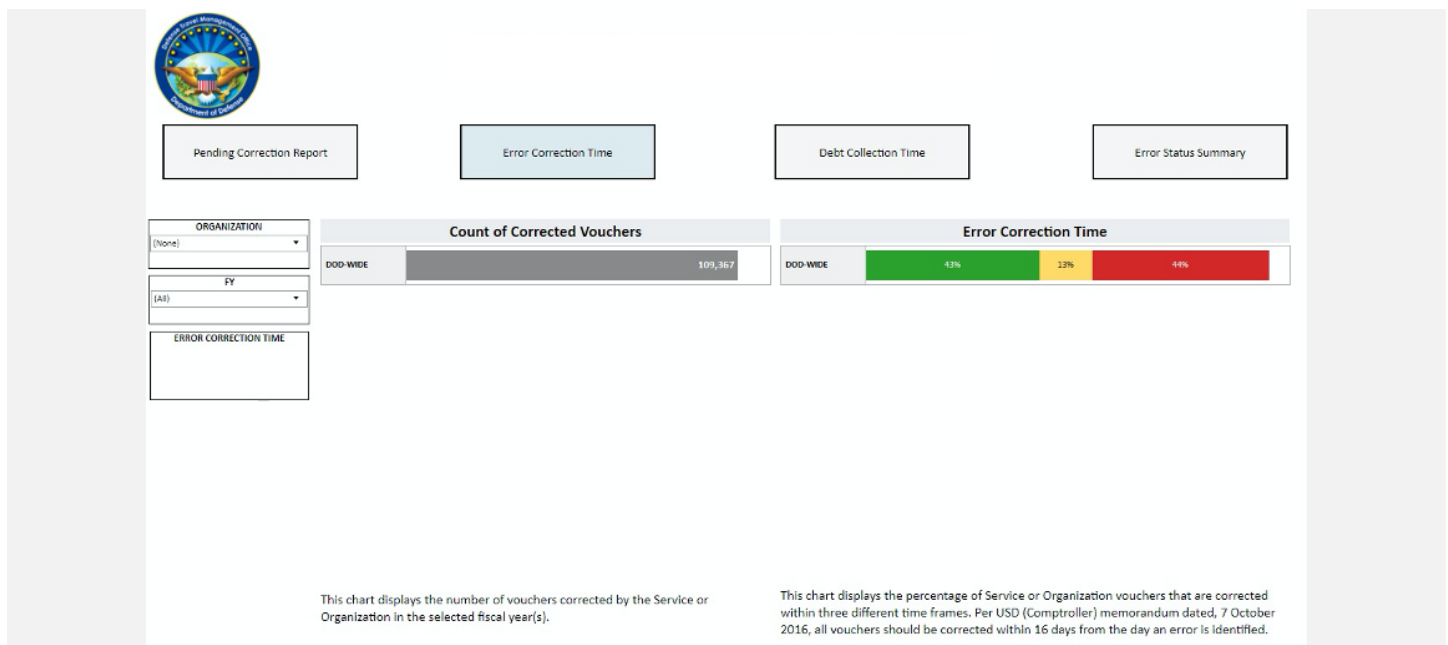

Figure 1: DTMO Compliance Tool Performance Dashboard Template

Travelers are Helping to Shape the DoD Travel System Prototype

In the digital data era safeguarding DoD travelers' information is a top priority for the Defense Travel Modernization (DTM) effort. That is the main driver behind the DTM prototype's transition from SAP Concur's commercial cloud environment to a new platform, the Concur Cloud Public Sector (CCPS). During this transition, use of the DTM prototype has paused while the new platform undergoes vigorous security assessments. In the meantime, our team continues to configure the prototype, adding new traveler-defined features, and refining current functionality. Once the transition is complete and travel resumes in the prototype, prototype users will see some changes including a new user interface that will change the overall look and feel of the tool and deliver functionality improvements.

Many of the functionality updates users will see are derived directly from customer feedback, which plays a vital role in the continuous improvement of the prototype. To better understand the customer's full experience, we send each traveler a questionnaire after they submit their expense report. Our team reviews every response, then categorizes and prioritizes traveler comments by topic. Based on this feedback, the team develops new requirements for the technical team that aim to improve the current functionality. For example, we received several comments about the air-sorting displays. Most comments had a constant theme, "unable to find a specific flight." After an in-depth analysis of the display criteria, the team re-configured the sorting conditions by policy, duration,

and price to produce a wider range of relevant flight selections, ensuring compliant flights with the least number of stops and the lowest fares will display at the top of the page. This will make it easier for travelers to find and book the flights they need. The expense report configuration was also improved as the direct result of user feedback. When travel resumes in the prototype, users will experience faster expense reporting and better navigation. A hyperlink will appear on all audit flags, providing the user with a detailed explanation for the root cause of the error and a path to resolution. Once the error is resolved, the red flag will disappear. These are two of the more prominent functionality improvements users will see when DTM prototype use resumes, all based on feedback from current users.

Due to the COVID-19 travel restrictions and the transition to the Concur Cloud Public Sector, the prototype period of performance was extended until April 2021 to allow for additional users and critical user feedback. The Defense Travel Management Office anticipates that travel will resume in the DTM prototype in January 2021. DTM prototype users will see a difference in the look and feel and we are confident they will embrace these new changes achieved through direct traveler feedback. Once the system is ready to go, additional DoD Agencies using the DAI accounting system will be brought online. So get ready to climb aboard with the new, continuously improving, DoD travel system of the future.

Lights, Camera, Action!

Defense Travel Management Office YouTube Channel:
www.youtube.com/defensetravelmanagementoffice

The Defense Travel Management Office is excited to announce that we are creating a new YouTube video series, called "Defense Travel Spotlight" to highlight each of our travel programs. The videos, designed with travelers in mind, feature interviews with program managers and subject matter experts that discuss their programs, benefits to the traveler, and provide tips and key points about each program.

The first Spotlight episode covering our new preferred dining rewards program, DoD Dine Smart, is now available on our Defense Travel Management Office YouTube channel. This winter, we plan to release episodes that cover the U.S. Government Rental Car and Government Travel Charge Card programs, followed by others this winter. Be sure to subscribe to our Defense Travel Management Office YouTube channel to receive a notification when we post new videos. Stay tuned!

GovTravels 2021 Goes Virtual

GovTravels presents an opportunity for passenger travel professionals from government and industry to learn about and collaborate on regulations, technology, challenges and best practices in government travel.

Mark your calendars for the 2021 GovTravels Symposium to be held Tuesday, February 23 through Thursday, February 25, 2021. To protect the health and safety of our community, the National Defense Transportation Association together with the Defense Travel Management Office and the General Services Administration have decided to transform the in-person GovTravels symposium to a virtual event this year. For the past four years, the Defense Travel Management Office has co-sponsored the National Defense Transportation Association's GovTravels symposium and the tradition continues again in 2021.

This year's event is centered around the theme **Respond, Adapt, Innovate – The Changing World of Government Travel**. "The pandemic has undoubtedly had a significantly impact on the travel industry and will arguably have a lasting impact in the years to come. We are excited to give our stakeholders a chance to hear from industry about where they see the travel industry headed and for us to talk about any shifts we see on the government's side," said Bill Mansell, the Director of the Defense Travel Management Office.

Those who have attended GovTravels in previous years may notice a change in the event schedule. In year's past, the first day was filled with government-industry meetings. This year, the bulk of those meetings will move to the last day of the event. The hours of the event will also shift slightly to accommodate those attending from the west coast.

We are working to finalize the agenda, but attendees can expect noteworthy keynote speakers from government and industry and general session government-industry panels. Attendees will also have the opportunity to attend:

- **Travel Academy** – breakout sessions aligned to several "themed" tracks that will accommodate a variety of interests.
- **Virtual Exhibit Hall** – visit with travel industry vendors to discuss their products and services. Attendees can scheduled

one-on-on sessions in advance, engage vendors through an online chat, or navigate to an open virtual booth.

- **Virtual Networking Sessions** – engage with other attendees, including government personnel and industry representatives through the online platform.
- **DoD Connect** – government stakeholders hear directly from the DTMO Director and his leadership team

Before the event, attendees can preview descriptions of each of the sessions, read presenter bios, and even build a personalized agenda for the entire event. All of this year's sessions, from keynote addresses to travel academy breakout sessions, will be recorded and made available for several months after the event so attendees can reference the sessions they attended or view any sessions they missed.

"It won't surprise me if we see more interest from folks that may not have been able to attend before due to schedules or limited travel budgets. We are already seeing a greater interest from presenters than we've seen in year's past," said Bill Mansell.

GovTravels looks to return to an in-person event held at the Hilton Mark Center in 2022.

Registration for GovTravels 2021 is now open. For more information and to register, go to www.ndtahq.com/events/gov-travels/

Check your Inbox. Defense Travel Enterprise Customer Satisfaction Survey Launches

In late October, the Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO) launched the Defense Travel Enterprise Customer Satisfaction Survey (DoD report control symbol DD-P&R-2712), to collect customer feedback on an array of DoD commercial travel programs and services including travel management company (TMC) services, contract commercial airlines, rental cars, and the Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC).

"This survey will allow us to gather input from customers about the quality of travel services that we manage which will assist us with improving travel programs and processes, ensuring vendors continue to provide quality services, and contribute to more effective sourcing of travel services," said Dr. Bill Crocoll, DTMO's lead data scientist.

On a biweekly basis, a random sample of DoD travelers with qualifying DTS travel vouchers will receive an email inviting them to participate in the survey. The email will contain a hyperlink that connects to a secure server containing a questionnaire customized to the specific traveler based on their recent DTS travel voucher.

Responses are reported in the aggregate and cannot be associated to any one specific individual.

"We have made every effort to fully optimize the survey by prepopulating it with the traveler's trip data and leveraging the survey tool's conditional logic capability so that only those questions relevant to the traveler's trip are displayed. Because of this streamlined approach, most questionnaires can be completed in no more than 10 minutes," said Dr. Crocoll.

Survey feedback will be shared with DoD leadership on a quarterly basis. DTMO will also share findings and related improvements with the greater DoD travel community through the DTMO's website and the Defense Travel Dispatch newsletter.

Participation in the survey is voluntary but travelers are encouraged to participate as their 10-minute investment will help us improve Defense travel enterprise products and services to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the DoD traveler.

We Want to Hear From You!

As editors of the Defense Travel Dispatch, we strive to provide you with a publication that meets your information needs. To help us understand how we can better serve you, we are interested in hearing what type of content you would like us to include in future editions. Please take a minute to complete the short Dispatch Subscriber Questionnaire at www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Community/se/2511374559286C56 to share your thoughts on how we can improve.