



SERVICE ORDER 13/14

CONDITIONS GOVERNING OFFICIAL TRAVEL

**(This service order abrogates and supersedes
Service Order 02/17 of 22 November 2002)**

I Background

1.1 Further to a decision of the ITU Council, special conditions have been available since 2002 for official air travel on official business or upon appointment, change of official duty station or separation from service, authorizing such travel at the class immediately below first class for any specific official travel lasting longer than nine (9) hours. The conditions were promulgated by Service Order 02/17 and brought into effect as from 22 November 2002.

1.2 In the light of Resolution 67/254 of the United Nations General Assembly on the new travel policy (see also United Nations Administrative Instruction ST/AI/2013/3), and after consultation within the Management Coordination Group (MCG)¹, the standard practice for official travel shall be as follows.

1.3 Unless otherwise specified in the present service order, it shall apply, **with effect from 1 January 2014**, to any travel on official business or upon appointment, change of official duty station or separation from service undertaken as from that date by all ITU staff members on all types of contract, as well as their eligible dependants, or by any person recruited by the Union and any person whose travel expenses are paid by the Union.

1.4 However, this service order shall not apply to air travel for training, which shall be exclusively in economy class, irrespective of the distance, destination or type of training.

1.5 Furthermore, elected officials are not governed by this service order, but rather by the travel conditions set out in the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules applying to those officials.

¹ Comprising the elected officials, D.2 grade officials and the chiefs of the Human Resources Management Department and Financial Resources Management Department

II Special travel conditions

2.1 a) Staff members and, where applicable, eligible dependants may travel by air at the class immediately below first class whenever:

- the duration of the single-leg journey (direct flight) is nine (9) hours or longer;
- for multi-leg journeys (connecting flights), if the combined travel time of the journey is eleven (11) hours or more, including a maximum of two (2) hours per connection/waiting time. However, the duration of the different legs can be combined only if the connection time does not exceed 12 hours.

b) For round-trip travel, the outward and return journeys may be considered separately for the purposes of determining the applicable class of travel.

2.2 The duration of a particular journey shall be determined on the basis of the combined flying time of all legs of the journey to a given destination by the most economical route that is possible and available, provided that the total additional time of the whole journey does not exceed the most direct route by four hours or more. The flying time shall exclude travel time to and from airports. Up to a maximum of two (2) hours per scheduled connection/waiting times are included in the duration of a particular journey.

2.3 Staff Rule 7.1.9 b) 3 does not apply when travel¹ is undertaken at the class immediately below first class.

2.4 Travel reservations shall be made on the basis of the most economical appropriate rate, including discounted airfares. The Union shall assume responsibility for any additional charges that may be imposed as a result of changes in the travel arrangements introduced by ITU or for other compelling reasons.

2.5 No subsistence allowance shall be payable for night flights (see Staff Rules 7.1.16 a) i) and 7.1.16 b) i) and ii)).

2.6 The allowance for official travel by private automobile shall be calculated solely on the basis of the total mileage (see Staff Rule 7.1.10 a)).

2.7 Rest periods or rest days in connection with travel in economy class shall be determined in accordance with Staff Rule 7.1.9.4.

2.8 When a staff member travels in a class other than economy class, he will not normally be required to commence duty within four (4) hours of arriving at his destination

2.9 Travel at a standard higher than that normally authorized may be approved exceptionally:

- a) where, in the opinion of the Secretary-General, special circumstances warrant it, e.g. for duly certified medical reasons, in which case the request, accompanied by supporting documents, must be made when the travel authorization is being drawn up;
- b) where it is shown that, as a result of specific arrangements pertaining to the route in question, the rates available for travel at a higher class are lower than those available for travel at the class ordinarily used for a given journey under the terms of 2.4 above, on condition that the Union does not incur any additional costs thereby.

2.10 The special conditions set forth in this service order do not apply when the Union makes group or special tariff travel arrangements for missions or conferences.

2.11 In view of the foregoing, the staff rules contained in the annex to this service order are amended **with effect from 1 January 2014**.

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Secretary-General

Annex

General distribution

ANNEX

Amendments to the ITU Staff Rules

STAFF RULES

[CHAPTER VII: TRAVEL AND REMOVAL EXPENSES]

Rule 7.1.8 Route and mode of transportation

- a) The normal route for all official travel shall be the most ~~direct and~~ economical route possible, provided that the total additional time of the whole journey does not exceed the most direct route by four hours or more. An alternative route may be approved when, in the opinion of the Secretary-General, it is in the best interest of the Union.
- b) The normal mode of transportation for all official travel shall be by air. An alternative mode of transportation may be approved when, in the opinion of the Secretary-General, its use is in the best interest of the Union.
- c) Unless the Secretary-General should decide otherwise, if a staff member or any eligible dependents travels by a more economical mode of transportation than the approved mode, the Union shall pay only for the mode of transportation actually used.
- d) Unless such a mode of transportation has been approved, any extra time needed for surface travel on home leave is treated as annual leave.

Rule 7.1.9 Standard of accommodation and rest days during travel

- a) All official travel shall be by air in economy class, unless specifically authorized otherwise. Children under two years of age travelling by air shall be provided with a ticket giving entitlement to a seat.
- b)
 - 1) Payment by the Union of travel expenses shall be limited to the cost of economy class travel by air or its equivalent by recognized public transportation;
 - 2) when circumstances warrant it, the Secretary-General may, at his discretion, allow staff members to travel first in a class above economy class;
 - 3) the Union shall reimburse excess baggage up to a maximum of 10 kg;
 - 4) a) When a staff member travels at the Union's expense, by air or mainly by air:
 - i) if the scheduled or actual flight time for the journey is between 6 and 10 hours, he will not normally be required to commence duty within 12 hours of arriving at his destination;
 - ii) if the scheduled or actual flight time is more than 10 hours but not more than 16 hours, he will not normally be required to commence duty within 24 hours of arriving at his destination. Alternatively, the Union may decide to grant a stopover not exceeding 24 hours. If the final stage of the journey exceeds 6 hours, the official will not normally be required to commence duty within 12 hours of arrival;
 - iii) if the scheduled or actual flight time of the journey exceeds 16 hours, the Union may allow either two stopovers, neither of which shall exceed 24 hours

or one stopover with a rest period not exceeding 24 hours on arrival at the destination.

- b) In the computation of the travel time described above, scheduled or actual connection/waiting periods not exceeding 4 two (2) hours shall be included.
- c) For travel on home leave and travel to visit eligible dependants by air or mainly by air;
 - i) if the scheduled or actual flight time of the outward journey from the duty station is more than 10 hours, a stopover period not exceeding 24 hours may be granted;
 - ii) for the return journey to the duty station, the rules specified in paragraphs 4) a) and b) above shall apply. In the computation of the travel time described above, scheduled waiting periods, except where these involve an overnight stopover, shall be included.

c) In the case of all official travel by train, staff members and their eligible dependants shall be provided with appropriate accommodation including, where necessary, suitable sleeper or other facilities.

d) For all official travel by sea approved under Rule 7.1.8 b), staff members and their eligible dependants shall be provided with the standard of accommodation which is, in the opinion of the Secretary-General, appropriate in the circumstances.

e) Unless the Secretary-General should decide otherwise, if a staff member or any eligible dependant travels by more economical accommodation than the approved standard, the Union shall pay only for accommodation actually used at the rate paid by the traveller.

Rule 7.1.10 Travel by automobile

1. *Travel by automobile (other than travel on home leave or visit to eligible dependants)*

a) Staff members who are authorized to travel by automobile shall be reimbursed by the Union at rates and under conditions established by the Secretary-General on the basis of the cost of using an automobile in the area in which the travel is undertaken, ~~and an appropriate minimum distance established in accordance with common system practice for the calculation of the daily subsistence allowance.~~

b) Reimbursement for travel within a radius of 56 km (35 miles) of the official duty station shall be based on actual mileage, and for travel beyond a 56 km (35 miles) radius, on the mileage as shown on official road guides. Commuting between residence and place of business shall not be reimbursable.

c) The mileage rate established by the Secretary-General shall be payable to only one of two or more persons travelling together on the same trip and in the same automobile.

d) The total of mileage rate reimbursement and travel subsistence allowance which a staff member may claim in respect of a particular journey shall be limited to the maximum travel expenses to which he would have been entitled had he and his eligible dependants travelled by the most economical route.

2. *Home leave travel by automobile*

Staff members who are authorized to travel by automobile on home leave shall be reimbursed by the Union at rates and under conditions established by the Secretary-General. These same conditions shall apply to *travel on visit to eligible dependants*.

Rule 7.1.16 Computation of the travel subsistence allowance

The full rate of travel subsistence allowance shall only be payable when the staff member, while in official travel status, has to spend a night away from his residence; in such a case the appropriate full rate shall be the rate applicable to the place where he spends the night. An eligible dependant travelling in the same circumstances shall be entitled to one half of that rate.

Except during travel by sea, subsistence allowance shall be paid under the conditions prescribed as follows:

- a) for a journey of less than 24 hours:
 - i) if it involves an overnight stay away from the staff member's residence (unless the night is spent on a plane), the full rate of travel subsistence allowance shall be payable, unless the cost of lodging is not borne by the staff member, in which case the 50% reduction shall be made in accordance with these Rules;
 - ii) if it does not involve an overnight stay away from the staff member's residence:
 - no allowance shall be paid for a journey of less than 10 hours;
 - 40% shall be paid for a journey of 10 hours or more.
- b) for journeys exceeding 24 hours:
 - i) one full day's allowance shall be paid for the day of ~~departure~~arrival, the applicable rate being that for the place of arrival;
 - ii) for each successive period of 24 hours ~~from midnight to midnight~~ (measured by local times, ignoring time-zone differences), one full day's allowance shall be paid, except that:
 - 1) no allowance shall be payable for the day on which travel is ended; and
 - 2) where the cost of meals or lodging is not borne by the staff member, the percentage deductions shall be made in accordance with these Rules.
- c) The rate applicable for each 24-hour period shall be that for the place at which the official spends the night. ~~If the official is travelling for all or part of a night, the appropriate rate shall be the rate for his place of arrival.~~ If the traveller completes his travel on the same day as he commenced it, the rate applicable for the area of destination shall be paid for that day, except that no travel subsistence allowance shall be paid if his destination is his home or official duty station. No allowance shall be paid when a traveller returns to his official duty station within 10 hours after departure.
- d) Where travel is by sea, a full day's allowance at the appropriate rate shall be paid for the day of arrival at the port of disembarkation, provided the traveller remains in official travel status for more than 12 hours thereafter. No allowance shall be paid for the day on which embarkation takes place.

e) When it is necessary, for the purpose of computing the amount of travel subsistence allowance payable, to specify the "*hour of departure*" and the "*hour of arrival*", these shall be considered as the time when the means of public transportation used by the traveller actually departs from or arrives at its terminal.
