

eTravel on the Move



An update on eTravel; Simplifying end-to-end travel for the federal employee. Additional information on the eTravel initiative can be found at: www.gsa.gov.

November, 2004

GSA eTravel Moves into Fiscal 2005, 'One-GSA-Travel' emerging

eTravel lifts off! Deployment of GSA's eTravel Service (eTS) began in September with both Departments of Treasury and Transportation processing transactions. Travelers are booking trips, processing vouchers and submitting reimbursement claims online. Tom Parks, Deputy CFO of Transportation sited "I have supported eTravel since the beginning but to actually sit down at my computer and use it to book my next trip was exciting."

Eleven other agencies have placed eTS task orders, including HHS, Agriculture, State, USAID, Labor and NSF. National Business Center, a cross servicing provider, has also selected an eTS provider. SBA and NARA have chosen to acquire eTS from a cross servicing agency. Rounding out the task order awards are US Holocaust Museum and FTC.

Tim Burke, eTravel Program Manager is quick to point out that eTravel is not just about managing travel. Instead it is about bringing all GSA travel programs together into one world-class travel solution, eTS, Federal Premier Lodging Program (FPLP), City Pairs, Per Diem, and travel policy. Emerging is One-GSA-Travel.

One-GSA-Travel was first introduced by Burke in a Federal Times article, September 1, 2003, *Creating a One-Stop Shop for Federal Travelers*. In the article Steve Losey, staff writer for the Federal Times asked Burke, **Is there a broader vision for all of the travel changes in the works?** Burke responded, "we're working toward what GSA calls One-GSA-Travel. Where we integrate all the different programs effectively and make it easier for our customers to concentrate on their mission, rather than worry about government travel systems."

A year later Federal travelers are experiencing One-GSA-Travel. With the recent revitalization of the Federal Premier Lodging Program and the deployment of eTS federal travelers are experiencing the difference.

GSA's Government-wide Lodging Program Turns to Industry

Turning to industry to manage the four-year-old Federal Premier Lodging Program (FPLP) is consistent with a July 2003 Government Per Diem Advisory Board recommendation to partner with industry on the management and marketing of the government-wide travel program. Under GSA management, FPLP has grown to include hotels in 90 cities that guarantee rooms to federal travelers.

CW Government Travel, Inc. (CWGT) of San Antonio was selected as the vendor for FPLP and will provide management and marketing/hospitality expertise to expand the program.

“This was a logical next step for such a successful government program,” said Rick Freda, FPLP Program Coordinator. “GSA still oversees the program, while participating hotels and federal travelers get the benefit of a world-class hospitality management company.”

FPLP preferred hotel reservations should be made through the agency’s travel management center (TMC), contracted travel office (CTO), eTravel Service (eTS), or Defense Travel Service (DTS). A list of FPLP preferred hotels can be found at http://www.gsa.gov/gsa/cm_attachments/GSA_DOCUMENT/FPLP_hotels_R2-o-dK_0Z5RDZ-i34K-pR.xls or an interactive list at <http://www.hotelsfplf.com/fpl/>.

“GSA’s partnership with industry is consistent with world-class travel management, adding value to the travel products and services we provide to federal agencies,” said Tim Burke, eTravel Program Manager. “This FPLP transformation plays an important role in the development of ‘One-GSA-Travel.’ ”

Looks what’s new! eTravel tools for federal travel professionals

WEB: Checkout our new Web site at www.gsa.gov, at the bottom of the home page click on travel and our new section is under eTravel. Now you can find background information, agency support documents, acquisition pricing, eTS vendor information, even current press coverage of eTravel in one location.

If you have an eTravel questions you can easily contact us through the site.

AMBASSADORS CLUB: This newly created Club has the sole mission of fostering open communication between eTS users and the eTravel Program Office. Over 600 National Travel Forum participants received the first Club correspondence this week. What a great response! Members have already provided excellent suggestions on how we can improve communications with federal travelers.

Look for the Ambassador’s Corner in December’s *eTravel on the Move*. This is where we will share feedback and recommendations from **you** our valued customers.

If you would like to join the Ambassadors Club simply email eTravel@gsa.gov. Each month 2-4 questions will be asked of Club members so the eTravel PMO can better assist agencies with eTS deployment. Be ready to share your opinions!