



Ministry of Defence

Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB
United Kingdom

Our Reference: FOI2017/05735



13 July 2017

Dear ,

Thank you for your e-mail to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) dated 13 June 2017 in which you requested the following information:

1. Does your department have any specific rules in place when it comes to booking staff travel?
2. Does your department have software in place that allows staff to book trips, or are they expected to book it by their own means?
3. Does your department have a specific person or team that is dedicated to booking travel for staff?
4. How many people are required to sign off staff travel expenses?
5. Is there a cap on the amount staff can claim for certain trips (e.g. national train travel, European air travel or intercontinental travel further abroad)

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. A review of our data holdings has been completed, and I can confirm that the MOD does hold some information within the scope of your request; this is provided in the annex at the end of this letter.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, 1st Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.org.uk>

Yours sincerely,

Defence People

Question	Answer
<p>1. Does your department have any specific rules in place when it comes to booking staff travel?</p>	<p>For grades up to Executive Officer and equivalent, employees must obtain line manager approval for all UK travel. For Executive Officer and above and equivalent, employees may self-authorise travel in the UK up to a total estimated cost of £400, to include one night's accommodation within MOD capped hotel rates. Senior Civil Servants and military 1* and above, can self-authorise as above, plus an additional 2 nights' accommodation within capped rates. For all grades, a greater cost or number of nights would require line manager approval.</p> <p>For all overseas travel, staff below the Senior Civil Service/military 1* will require Grade 7 or equivalent or line manager agreement, whatever is the senior. Senior Civil Service and military 1* can self-authorise overseas visits, at economy class, with an estimated travel cost of up to £500, and up to 2 nights' accommodation within rate limits. For all grades, a greater travel cost or number of nights away would require line manager approval.</p> <p>All travel bookings made are available for scrutiny by line management and business areas.</p>
<p>2. Does your department have software in place that allows staff to book trips, or are they expected to book it by their own means?</p>	<p>Employees have access to an on-line web-based programme provided by Hogg Robinson Group. This is a mandated requirement for air or rail travel, and hotel accommodation bookings, unless staff use other travel methods [e.g. RAF Trooper, own vehicle etc.] or accommodation [e.g. military messes].</p>
<p>3. Does your department have a specific person or team that is dedicated to booking travel for staff?</p>	<p>Most employees book their own travel requirements. However some areas have unit travel cells or a local group booker, to facilitate travel bookings.</p>
<p>4. How many people are required to sign off staff travel expenses?</p>	<p>Employees requiring travel approval have to complete a "Business Travel Pre-Authorisation Form" detailing the business need and estimated cost of the trip for approval. Service personnel, where required, would complete a locally produced pre-authorisation form as advised by the local budget manager.</p>
<p>5. Is there a cap on the amount staff can claim for certain trips (e.g. national train travel, European air travel or intercontinental travel further abroad)</p>	<p>As noted in Q1, employees have set ceilings for pre-travel approval. There are also ceilings on subsistence levels; UK national rail travel is normally standard class and overseas air travel normally economy.</p>

