



**Government  
of South Australia**

**Premier's Guideline:**

**Air Travel by Ministers and Their Staff**

***14 March 2016***

## Purpose

Air travel is an important element to the function of many portfolios and can provide significant benefits to the State. However, care should be taken to use public resources prudently.

This guideline aims to maximise the value of air travel to South Australia by ensuring:

- ministerial air travel aligns with South Australia's strategic priorities and is coordinated effectively across government;
- air travel is designed to deliver benefits to South Australia;
- approved air travel will achieve value for money; and
- Ministers are accountable for public expenditure on air travel.

## Scope

This guideline applies to Ministers and members of a Minister's personal staff as employed under s 71 of the *Public Sector Act 2009*.

Overseas air travel includes travel outside of Australia, New Zealand and Australian Territories. Where air travel to these destinations forms part of a more extensive itinerary encompassing other overseas destinations, the principles for overseas travel apply.

This Guideline should be used in conjunction with the Determination of the Remuneration Tribunal of South Australia: *Travelling and Accommodation Allowances for Ministers of the Crown and Officers and Members of Parliament (No 8 of 2014)*; noting that the Determination applies only when a reimbursement is required.

This Guideline should also be used in conjunction with:

- Determination of the Remuneration Tribunal of South Australia: *Members of Parliament Travel Entitlement and Rules (No 1 of 2012)*
- Treasurer's Instruction 13: *Expenditure incurred by Ministers and Ministerial Staff*
- Parliament of South Australia House of Assembly Members Handbook
- Cabinet Guide No 4: *Cabinet Business*
- Department of the Premier and Cabinet Circular 035: *Proactive Disclosure of Regularly Requested Information*
- Department of the Premier and Cabinet Circular 040: *Air Travel*
- Commissioner's Determination 3.2: *Employment Conditions – Remuneration – Allowances and Reimbursements*
- Code of Ethics for South Australian Public Sector

## Principles

### Booking Air Travel

1. State Government travel arrangements can only be used by travellers on government business. Travellers must purchase travel (air and accommodation) in accordance with the State Government's travel arrangements and associated services.
2. Domestic air travel and accommodation must be booked with the travel arrangement provider's online booking tool in all but exceptional circumstances, for example where an airline is not available through the tool.
3. Travellers must book the lowest logical fare<sup>1</sup> compatible with their business needs.
4. Where cost effective and compatible with the Traveller's business needs, Travellers should consider selecting international flights with airlines offering a direct route to and from Adelaide.
5. Offers of funded air travel or accommodation by other governments or private organisations should be considered on a case by case basis and only approved where benefits to the State can be identified and no conflicts of interest are identified.
6. Accommodation must be of an appropriate standard and reasonable cost. Government discount rates available through the online booking tool should be used wherever practical.
7. When air travel is altered and results in airfare credits, these must be used as soon as is feasible.
8. Any frequent flyer points (or similar) accumulated while travelling on official business should be redeemed for official business use. Membership of a loyalty program should not determine airline selection.
9. The Department of the Premier and Cabinet's International and Commercial Directorate should be consulted prior to finalising overseas travel arrangements to maximise value of the mission to the State. (Email: [DPCOIE@sa.gov.au](mailto:DPCOIE@sa.gov.au) )
10. Ministers travelling overseas are to undertake whole-of-government representation in addition to their portfolio responsibilities to maximise the value of the mission to the State.

### Standard of air travel

11. Ministers are entitled to Business Class air travel. First Class is not permitted unless the airline does not provide Business Class or an upgrade is available at no cost to the Government.
12. Ministerial staff are to travel Economy Class unless the airline provides an upgrade at no cost to the Government or otherwise as approved by the Premier's Chief of Staff.

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<sup>1</sup> The lowest fare available at the time the travel is booked that is compatible with the business needs of the Traveller.

13. The Premier's Chief of Staff may approve Business Class air travel for ministerial staff in appropriate circumstances.

### **Seeking approval for overseas travel**

14. Ministers approve overseas travel for Chief Executives and agency heads.

15. Ministers must seek approval for overseas travel before booking travel by writing to the Premier.

16. Ministerial requests for travel should outline the purpose of the trip and the explicit and measurable benefits to be delivered. Overseas travel solely for the purposes of information gathering will not be approved.

17. When seeking approval, Ministers are to provide:

- a. a draft itinerary, including details of planned meetings
- b. the names of the persons travelling with the Minister (ministerial staff, spouse/domestic partner and public servants)
- c. estimated cost of the trip (travel, accommodation and incidental expenses for the Minister and each person travelling with the Minister)
- d. source of funding for all elements of the trip.

18. All overseas travel must provide value for money. Realistic estimates should be included as to the cost of the overseas trip. Related costs should be accounted for separately, for example, the cost of hosting a major business or trade function.

19. Leave while on official overseas travel is not encouraged and will only be approved in the case of ministerial staff at the discretion of the Premier's Chief of Staff. In the case of Ministers, Chief Executives or agency heads, leave while on official overseas travel will only be approved at the discretion of the Premier. Any request should be included in the application for final travel approval.

20. Leave while on official overseas travel may result in Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) being payable. Any FBT payable should be included as part of estimated costs in the application for final travel approval. Ministers are responsible for ensuring they comply with FBT requirements.

### **Informing Cabinet of ministerial intention to travel overseas**

21. Following the Premier's written approval, a Cabinet subcommittee submission should be prepared at least two weeks prior to the proposed date of travel overseas.

22. The Cabinet subcommittee submission should include:

- a. The request for approval submitted to the Premier
- b. Acting arrangements during the absence of the Minister for approval by Executive Council, including a recommendation for the Governor in Executive Council to appoint an acting Minister for the period the Minister is away, and
- c. Premier's approval.

### **Ministerial overseas travel reports**

23. Ministerial overseas travel reports must be lodged for Cabinet to note within 28 days of returning from overseas travel. These reports should include a statement of the travel objectives and regions and cities visited, names of organisations or parliaments visited, reference to any documents or publications obtained or considered to be of interest as a Minister, brief summaries of meetings held and expected outcomes and how these will be followed up, and any recommendations arising from the travel.
24. The Department of the Premier and Cabinet's Implementation and International Directorate will maintain a database of overseas ministerial travel, monitor outcomes and report to Cabinet twice a year on progress against the outcomes.
25. In accordance with the revised DPC Circular 35 (Proactive Disclosure of Regularly Requested Information), overseas travel reports that include: overseas travel arrangements, outcomes of overseas travel (where not commercial in confidence), the costs of all Ministers and public sector employees travelling with the Minister, must be proactively disclosed to the public via departmental websites.

### **Security for travel overseas**

26. In recognition that the South Australian Government has information of significant value, a risk assessment must be conducted with agency security staff prior to any overseas departure.<sup>2</sup> The risk assessment should consider: the sensitivity and value of information being taken, the country being visited, the nature and purpose of the visit and what mobile communications equipment to take (if any).
27. The latest travel advice should be considered when planning overseas travel. Advice can be sought from [www.smarttraveller.gov.au](http://www.smarttraveller.gov.au).

For further advice or assistance, please contact:

Manager, Cabinet Coordination  
Department of the Premier and Cabinet

Telephone: 8226 3661  
Email: [brougham.michael@dpc.sa.gov.au](mailto:brougham.michael@dpc.sa.gov.au)

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<sup>2</sup> Agency Security Executive, Agency Security Adviser or IT Security Adviser