



## SOUTHEAST REGION OPERATING INSTRUCTION 173-1

3 APRIL 2018

APPROVED/A. FARRIS/CAP/GM

Financial Management

### TRAVEL FUNDING

This instruction prescribes procedures for managing Region funds allocated to members of the Region Staff.

1. Purpose. This Instruction is intended to provide guidelines for Region Staff members to ensure effective use of time and to minimize expenses. Staff members must be aware of the responsibility of the Region Finance Committee to question and/or deny a travel voucher or travel request that does not include the correct documentation. Staff members should also be aware that an over budget situation may result in a travel request being partially or fully denied.

#### 2. Travel Funds.

2.1. Recommended allocation of travel funds to functional areas on the Region Staff are made annually by a budget development committee appointed by the Commander. When the annual budget is approved by the Finance Committee, the Director of Finance notifies Directors of the amount allocated to their respective departments. Following procedures in this OI, the Command Staff, Deputy Chiefs of Staff, and Directors are responsible for proper management of funds allocated to them. Staff members who are Assistant Deputy Chiefs of Staff or Assistant Directors are not allocated travel funds but may request funding through their respective supervisors. Only the Deputy Chiefs of Staff and Directors may submit a travel request on behalf of subordinates.

2.2. Staff members who have been allocated travel funds must request use of such funds by submitting SER Form 173 to the Director of Finance at least 30 days in advance of the travel dates for the activity. This form will ask for exact cost (or good faith estimate) of each type of reimbursable expense the staff member expects to incur, the name of the event and reason for travel.

2.3 Acceptable expenses include lodging, air transportation (including reasonable luggage fees), vehicle fuel, taxi fare, vehicle mileage, parking, tolls, conference registration, and purpose-related communication expenses.

2.4 The Director of Finance will send travel requests to the Finance Committee electronically using [www.Sertifi.com](http://www.Sertifi.com). Committee members review the requests to determine if member costs for travel, fuel, lodging, and conference registration are reasonable and in accordance with CAP regulations. The general criteria for a reimbursable expense are (1) Reasonableness of the expense, (2) Region-related business purpose. The staff member requesting travel funding must make a contribution to the event in some manner.

2.5 Upon approval by the Finance Committee, travel reservations and other travel arrangements can be made.

2.5.1 Airline reservations and ticket purchases will be made only after approval of the travel request by the Finance Committee. Members who make airline reservations prior to Finance

Committee approval are responsible for any cancellation fees and ticket changes. The travel itinerary with cost of airfare will be attached to the travel voucher for reimbursement.

2.5.2 Flights should be booked as far in advance as possible to obtain the best purchase prices on airfares. When making reservations, members should research the various travel websites in order to obtain the best fare available. The member should be reasonably flexible regarding flight times in order to obtain the best rate. Nonrefundable tickets are to be used for ticketed flights.

2.5.3 Coach class should be used by all members. Business and first class fares are not authorized. Free airline upgrades are acceptable.

2.5.4 Members are encouraged to rely on CAP vehicles, taxies, metro/subways, and hotel courtesy vans for transportation during approved travel events. If a rental car is required, members will select the lowest cost rental vehicles that meet purpose requirements. Luxury size sedans or SUVs are not allowable without prior approval of the Finance Committee. It is acceptable to receive free upgrades from car rental agencies.

2.5.5 When using a personally owned vehicle (POV), members may request reimbursement at the mileage rate (IRS rate per mile) as indicated on the SER Form XV. However, an analysis should be made between the cost of driving a POV versus the cost of airfare to the destination. If the airfare would be less expensive, members will be reimbursed at that rate unless there is justification for driving a POV. Members may not ask for mileage reimbursement and fuel. Members can also request reimbursement for fuel only and donate to Southeast Region the cost of wear and tear on a POV used.

2.6 In special circumstances, an immediate travel request may be approved by the Region Commander.

2.7 Failure to submit a request/budget within these guidelines will most likely result in partial or no reimbursement.

2.8 Members with approved travel funding must submit a National Headquarters Travel Voucher, to the Director of Finance following completion of travel. A current-year SER travel voucher is the only form that may be used to document travel and obtain reimbursement. A Travel Voucher must be emailed to the Director of Finance not later than 30 days after completion of travel to allow sufficient processing time to meet NHQ's 60-day policy. By regulation, a travel voucher will not be paid if submitted to NHQ after 60 days. Members must retain and attach legible receipts for all travel regardless of dollar value. These receipts must be attached electronically to the Travel Voucher for reimbursement. If air travel has been approved, the travel itinerary with cost of airfare will be attached to the travel voucher for reimbursement.

2.9 Southeast Region does not reimburse for meals unless a conference banquet meal cost is included in conference registration fee.

2.10 Alcoholic beverages and room service will not be reimbursed.

2.11 Standard lodging accommodation fees and taxes will be considered reasonable and customary expenses. Suites, oversized rooms, entertainment, dry cleaning, and incidentals will not be reimbursed. Staff members should take full advantage of early registration discounts and provide tax-exempt certificates, when applicable, to the hotel staff in order to reduce the costs to the greatest extent possible.

2.12 In cases where ground travel to wing or unit award presentations is used, members may submit miscellaneous fuel receipts for repayment without prior approval of the finance committee as long as the receipts are not over 60 days old. Such travel is non-overnight travel.

2.13 An over-budget situation may result in a travel request being partially or fully denied. When travel which is deemed necessary by the Finance Committee causes an over-budget situation, the Committee will attempt to locate other funding sources, but approval of the request is not guaranteed. Notification of the committee's decision will be communicated to the requestor by the Director of Finance via email.

### 3. Credit Cards

3.1 Credit cards may be issued to the Region command staff. If using these cards, travel approval will be based upon the following priorities:

#### 3.1.1 Priority One

- July Commanders Call
- Region Conference
- Vice Region Commander and travel to oversight-specific Wing Conferences
- Commander and Vice Commanders' fuel to travel to Wing/ Unit award presentations

#### 3.1.2 Priority Two

- Other Region-level CAP activities subject to available funds in the member's travel allocation
- Non-oversight Wing Conferences
- National Conference
- Operations Conference

#### 3.1.2 Priority Three

- Purchase Awards ,Plaques, End of term eagles
- Bereavement flowers
- GoToMeeting monthly payment

3.2 If using the Region credit card, expenses should be submitted to the Director of Finance on the Region travel voucher within 15 days after travel completion, for consolidation by the Director of Finance and forwarded to National Headquarters.

3.3 Any expense incurred through use of the credit card which is considered non-reimbursable must be paid for by the individual to whom the credit card is issued. Continued misuse of the credit card (three incidents per year) will result in the member's card being locked and rendered unusable.

BARRY MELTON, Colonel, CAP  
Commander

**Attachment 1****COMPLIANCE ELEMENTS**

<b>OPR</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>Compliance Question</b>	<b>How to Verify Compliance</b>	<b>Discrepancy Write-up</b>	<b>How to Clear Discrepancy</b>
FM	1	Except for special circumstances as in paragraph 2-6, are Requests for Travel submitted IAW paragraph 2.2?	Check dates on travel request with date of event for which funding is requested.	Unit did not always enforce the 30-day advance request requirement.	Provide a Plan of Action signed by the Commander to detail how this discrepancy will be precluded in the future.
FM	2	Are all receipts for travel submitted the FM prior to providing reimbursement?	Compare reimbursements against receipts.	Unit did not always receive receipts for travel expenses before approving reimbursements	Provide a Plan of Action signed by the Commander to detail how this discrepancy will be precluded in the future.
FM	3	Is credit card use IAW paragraph 3?	Examine credit card statements	Unit did not always follow procedures for credit card use specified in paragraph 3.	Provide a Plan of Action signed by the Commander to detail how this discrepancy will be precluded in the future.