



GOing Places

Technical Bulletin

The HHS travel community's monthly source for Government travel industry, travel profession and travel system information, news and tips.

December 2015 (Covering Dec. 1 to Dec. 31, 2015)

Travel Systems Operations:

UFMS is shut down from Dec. 8 to Dec. 21; will re-start Dec. 22

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's Unified Financial Management System (UFMS), one of the financial management systems that integrates with the Concur Government Edition travel management application, is being upgraded so that compatibility, functionality and security is maintained to the current Government-wide Information Technology architecture standards.

All UFMS financial processing is temporarily halted between Dec. 8 and Dec. 21, 2015.

Electronic file processing by UFMS will restart on Dec. 22, 2015, and will continue until all travel documents are processed.

During the shutdown, you will still be able to travel, and vouchers will be processed when UFMS returns to service on Dec. 22.

The upgrade is occurring during the period of the year when official Government travel is at its lowest, when many employees are on leave, and it will be the middle of the December travel credit card billing cycle. This enables the upgrade to occur with the least amount of impact upon traveling employees. At the same time, it's important for travelers, travel arrangers, certifying officials, and supervisors to be aware of the overall situation and plan accordingly using the following key points:

Key Points Regarding Travel Advances:

- Employees who require travel advances during the down time must obtain them through a manual process, if available. Travel advances cannot process through the financial management system during the down time.
- If a request for a travel advance is submitted between Dec. 8 and Dec. 21, but the travel advance isn't needed until after Dec. 22 to travel, then the request will process normally once the financial management system resumes operations.
 - Keep in mind that it takes a couple days for a travel advance to process through Treasury before it is deposited.

Key Points Regarding Travel Authorizations:

- Travel authorizations can still be created and routed.
 - Travelers will still be able to create and route travel authorizations for approval in the same way travel requests are processed for the End of Fiscal Year closeout activities.

Key Points Regarding Travel Vouchers:

- Vouchers can be submitted, but they will not be electronically processed through the financial management system until it returns to service.
 - The net effect is that the reimbursement will not happen as quickly as travelers might expect.

Key Points Regarding Travel Cards:

- The normal billing cycle is Dec. 5, 2015 through Jan. 6, 2016, so travelers who file their vouchers in a timely fashion should be reimbursed in sufficient time to pay their travel card bills.

Key Points Regarding Travel Data:

- Once the financial system shuts down, all document statuses will remain the same until the financial system comes back online, including those in "PENDING" status.
- Running the document status report in the travel management application might reflect an unusually large number of documents in a pending status while the financial system processing is paused. Don't be alarmed at this.

PSC's travel branch is testing new CGE user interface

Concur Government Edition (CGE) is releasing the next version of its travel management application, which will feature a new look and feel that is more user-friendly and easier to navigate.

The new CGE User Interface (UI) roll out will begin this month and continue through April 2016. PSC/TS will release more details about the new CGE travel management UI roll-out as they become available.

Root cause of Dec. 1 CGE system outage determined

PSC/TS has determined the root cause of the events regarding system errors and other application performance issues for users at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) within Concur Government Edition (CGE) on the morning of Dec. 1, 2015.

According to the Concur Root Cause Analysis (RCA) document, Concur determined that a set of database changes associated with the planned SU120 software release for CGE on the evening of Nov. 30 failed to execute properly in the HHS environment and left the database in a functionally inconsistent state.

To resolve this issue, database administrators created a fix script along with a full verification that the entire database schema was complete and consistent. After testing, the fix was applied to the live environment and the full verification ran indicating complete resolution.

These events were resolved on Dec. 1, 2015 at 12:27 p.m. EST.

Re-approval is needed for lodging amount changes greater than \$200

When the CGE travel management system has self-generated an amendment to the traveler's original authorization and the user's being blocked from submitting a voucher, check to see if the lodging amount has increased from what was on the authorization.

CGE enforces HHS policy that when a lodging amount change is greater than \$200 from what was originally approved, the change must be approved again, and the system creates an amendment.

The document just needs to be re-approved before it can be processed.

Travel Program & Account Management:

PSC's hosting a new bi-weekly forum for Lead FATAs

Beginning this month, PSC/TS is hosting a new bi-weekly forum for Lead Federal Agency Travel Administrators (Lead FATAs). These forums will provide Lead FATAs with the opportunity to discuss issues they're facing, get feedback, and share best practices for issues occurring with all OPDIVs.

The goal of the bi-weekly forums is to share solutions with Lead FATAs across other OPDIVs. Lead FATAs participating in the forums can then share down the information they've learned with FATAs within their operating divisions.

The first forum was held on Dec. 10, and the next one is scheduled for Jan. 7, 2016. PSC/TS staff will send an invite to all Lead FATAs with more information about the upcoming forums.

PSC's working with GSA on the ETS2 security working group

PSC/TS serves its customers by representing the Department as a member of the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) ETS2 Security Working Group to ensure travel systems are federal security compliant.

PSC/TS next meets with GSA and the Security Working Group in mid-January. PSC/TS will share updates on the Security Working Group's activities as they become available.

Traveler Information & Tips:

U.S. State Department issued worldwide travel alert Nov. 23

The U.S. State Department issued a Worldwide Travel Alert on Nov. 23, 2015. Travelers should exercise vigilance when in public places or using transportation. Travelers should monitor media and local information sources and factor updated information into travel plans and activities. Be prepared for additional security screening and unexpected disruptions while traveling. Ensure that your supervisor is aware of your travel plans and where you will be staying while on TDY travel.

Additionally, all persons who travel internationally while in a leave status are encouraged to keep their management team informed of their travel plans in case individual assistance should need to be coordinated or facilitated for U.S. citizens traveling abroad. For more information, please visit: <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/alertswarnings.html>.

Travelers can also enroll in the **Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)** to receive security messages and make it easier to locate you in an emergency. For more information about the STEP program or to enroll, please go to: <https://step.state.gov/step>.

For more information about travel advisories, Travel.State.gov issues timely **[Travel Alerts and Warnings](#)** on their web site. Other helpful travel advisories and alerts can be found at the following links:

International Travel Warnings & Advisories:

- [U.S. Department of State Office of American Citizens Services and Crisis Management \(ACS\)](#)

[U.S. Office of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Patrol \(CBP\)](#) provides updates with the

Airline Alerts:

- [Flight Stats](#) provides an interactive map of airline and airport delays.
[Smarter Travel](#) features an extensive list of phone numbers, including toll-free, reservations,

Airport Alerts:

- [Flight Delay Information](#) - Search by airport or region to check for flight delays.

'Tier Zero' is at travelers' fingertips around the clock

Access to answers on the most common travel questions are right at travelers' fingertips!

The HHS Travel Office (PSC/TS), in conjunction with the ONE DHHS Help Desk, developed "Tier Zero," an online, self-service travel knowledgebase which allows you to:

- View the Top 10 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's),
- View alerts and important updates,
- Search for information and troubleshooting tips,
- Live chat with a Help Desk Representative*
(*Available during normal Help Desk business hours)
- Access status updates on existing travel Help Desk Tickets

Did You Know?:

91%

...of user issues referred from the Tier 1 desk to Tier 2 are topics covered in the training courses available online via the HHS Learning Management System:
<http://hhsu.learning.hhs.gov>

To access the Tier Zero online knowledge base, go to: <https://egov-portal.psc.gov>.

Can't find what you're looking for or need further assistance? Submit a Help Desk ticket to the ONE DHHS Help Desk Tier 1 support directly from the same screen!

Knowing differences between '_CA' and 'YCA' air fares can save money

It's important for travelers to understand the difference between [City Pair](#) Program (CPP) contract air fares and off-contract government fares. In many City Pairs, there are two contract air fares, also known as Dual Fares: a highly discounted unrestricted fare (YCA), and a capacity controlled fare (_CA) with an even deeper discount.

The benefits of contract fares include fully refundable tickets, last seat availability, dual fare availability, and more! Travelers are encouraged to book the _CA or YCA contract fares when available. Both fares are economy class fares and are fully refundable. So what is the difference between the two types of fares?:

- **_CA Fares** = A limited number of seats, but no other restrictions. *Travelers should book the _CA when available*, unless a lower available fare is listed. As seats are limited, travelers must book early. _CA seat availability on a particular flight varies carrier-by-carrier and market-by-market.
- **YCA Fares** = Last seat availability – as long as a seat in economy is available, the YCA price will be available for a federal traveler to book.

To maximize possible savings, book early and consider the following:

- To achieve greater savings for the government, GSA encourages government travelers to book reservations as early as possible. Once a traveler decides that a trip is necessary, the reservation should be made.
- If travel plans are uncertain (e.g., last-minute ticket changes are likely), compare the differential between the YCA and _CA fares with the cost (if any) of the travel agent's transaction fee to make ticketing changes. If the differential is small, it may be more cost-effective to book a YCA fare from the start. If the differential is large, it may be more beneficial to book a _CA fare and make changes, if necessary.
- If travel plans are certain (e.g., attending a conference or training) or the travel schedule is flexible, this is a perfect opportunity to get additional savings by asking for and booking a _CA fare. The price differential between YCA and _CA fares varies market-by-market, but the cost savings can be significant.

Remember, with the _CA fares a traveler can enjoy all the benefits of the unrestricted YCA fares. The earlier the reservation is made, the greater the chances that an agency will receive the additional savings

_CA fares contain. To look up and book flights at the discounted CPP air fare rates, use the [City Pair Program search tool](#).

Travel Industry News:

JetBlue Airways flight booking discontinued in Travelport GDS

As of Dec. 1, 2015, JetBlue Airways will no longer be distributed through any Travelport Global Distribution Systems (GDS), which affects both HHS Travel Management Centers (TMC) Omega and DTI.

This is a contract situation within the industry, and is *not* a CGE issue. Concur and PSC/TS are in consultation with GSA looking at alternative solutions, and PSC/TS will continue to provide updates to our community.

As a result, JetBlue flights will no longer appear in searches in the booking tool. Users who wish to book JetBlue flights will need to contact the TMC, which will incur an Agent Assist Full Service Fee. In addition, Jet Blue charges a \$25 ticketing fee for non-City Pair fares. The City Pairs awarded to JetBlue are:

Origin City	Origin Airport	Destination City	Dest. Airport	Origin City	Origin Airport	Destination City	Dest. Airport
AUSTIN, TX	AUS	BOSTON, MA	BOS	WASHINGTON, DC	IAD	NEW YORK, NY	JFK
AUSTIN, TX	AUS	NEW YORK, NY	JFK	NEW YORK, NY	JFK	LOS ANGELES, CA	LAX
AUSTIN, TX	AUS	ORLANDO, FL	MCO	NEW YORK, NY	JFK	LOS ANGELES, CA	LGB
HARTFORD, CT	BDL	FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL	NEW YORK, NY	JFK	NEW ORLEANS, LA	MSY
BOSTON, MA	BOS	BUFFALO, NY	BUF	NEW YORK, NY	JFK	CHICAGO, IL	ORD
BOSTON, MA	BOS	WASHINGTON, DC	BWI	NEW YORK, NY	JFK	PORTLAND, ME	PWM
BOSTON, MA	BOS	CHARLESTON, SC	CHS	NEW YORK, NY	JFK	ROCHESTER, NY	ROC
BOSTON, MA	BOS	CLEVELAND, OH	CLE	NEW YORK, NY	JFK	FT. MYERS, FL	RSW
BOSTON, MA	BOS	CHARLOTTE, NC	CLT	NEW YORK, NY	JFK	SAVANNAH, GA	SAV
BOSTON, MA	BOS	DENVER, CO	DEN	NEW YORK, NY	JFK	SEATTLE-TACOMA, WA	SEA
BOSTON, MA	BOS	DALLAS-FT. WORTH, TX	DFW	NEW YORK, NY	JFK	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	SFO
BOSTON, MA	BOS	DETROIT, MI	DTW	NEW YORK, NY	JFK	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	SFO
BOSTON, MA	BOS	FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL	NEW YORK, NY	JFK	SALT LAKE CITY, UT	SLC
BOSTON, MA	BOS	HOUSTON, TX	HOU	NEW YORK, NY	JFK	SYRACUSE, NY	SYR
BOSTON, MA	BOS	WASHINGTON, DC	IAD	LAS VEGAS, NV	LAS	LOS ANGELES, CA	LGB
BOSTON, MA	BOS	JACKSONVILLE, FL	JAX	NEW YORK, NY	LGA	TAMPA, FL	TPA
BOSTON, MA	BOS	LASVEGAS, NV	LAS	LOS ANGELES, CA	LGB	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	OAK
BOSTON, MA	BOS	NEW ORLEANS, LA	MSY	LOS ANGELES, CA	LGB	PORTLAND, OR	PDX
BOSTON, MA	BOS	CHICAGO, IL	ORD	LOS ANGELES, CA	LGB	SEATTLE-TACOMA, WA	SEA
BOSTON, MA	BOS	WEST PALM BEACH, FL	PBI	LOS ANGELES, CA	LGB	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	SFO
BOSTON, MA	BOS	PHOENIX/SCOTTSDALE, AZ	PHX	LOS ANGELES, CA	LGB	SALT LAKE CITY, UT	SLC
BOSTON, MA	BOS	PITTSBURGH, PA	PIT	LOS ANGELES, CA	LGB	SACRAMENTO, CA	SMF
BOSTON, MA	BOS	RICHMOND, VA	RIC	ORLANDO, FL	MCO	PROVIDENCE, RI	PVD
BOSTON, MA	BOS	SAVANNAH, GA	SAV	ORLANDO, FL	MCO	NEWBURGH, NY	SWF
BOSTON, MA	BOS	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	SFO	ORLANDO, FL	MCO	SYRACUSE, NY	SYR
BOSTON, MA	BOS	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	SFO	CHICAGO, IL	ORD	SAN JUAN, PR	SJU
BOSTON, MA	BOS	SAN JUAN, PR	SJU	SAN JUAN, PR	SJU	ST. THOMAS, VI	STT
BOSTON, MA	BOS	TAMPA, FL	TPA	SAN JUAN, PR	SJU	ST. CROIX, VI	STX

AGUADILLA, PR	BQN	ORLANDO, FL	MCO		FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL	BOGOTA	BOG
BURLINGTON, VT	BTV	NEW YORK, NY	JFK		FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL	MEDELLIN	MDE
WASHINGTON, DC	DCA	FT. MYERS, FL	RSW		FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL	NASSAU	NAS
WASHINGTON, DC	DCA	SANJUAN, PR	SJU		FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL	SANTO DOMINGO	SDQ
DETROIT, MI	DTW	FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL		FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL	SAN JOSE	SJO
NEWARK, NJ	EWR	FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL		ORLANDO, FL	MCO	BOGOTA	BOG
NEWARK, NJ	EWR	ORLANDO, FL	MCO		ORLANDO, FL	MCO	MONTEGO BAY	MBJ
NEWARK, NJ	EWR	WEST PALM BEACH, FL	PBI		ORLANDO, FL	MCO	NASSAU	NAS
NEWARK, NJ	EWR	SANJUAN, PR	SJU		NEW YORK, NY	NYC	PORT-AU-PRINCE	PAP
FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL	JACKSONVILLE, FL	JAX		NEW YORK, NY	NYC	PORT OF SPAIN	POS
FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL	LAS VEGAS, NV	LAS		SAN JUAN, PR	SJU	PUNTA CANA	PUJ
FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL	LOS ANGELES, CA	LAX		SAN JUAN, PR	SJU	SANTO DOMINGO	SDQ
FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL	LOS ANGELES, CA	LAX		WASHINGTON, DC	WAS	DURBAN	DUR
FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL	PROVIDENCE, RI	PVD		FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL	RICHMOND, VA	RIC
FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	SFO		WHITE PLAINS, NY	HPN	TAMPA, FL	TPA
FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	SFO		ORLANDO, FL	MCO	RICHMOND, VA	RIC
FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL	SAN JUAN, PR	SJU		SEATTLE-TACOMA, WA	SEA	DUBAI	DXB
FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	FLL	NEWBURGH, NY	SWF					

Marriott buys Starwood, Sheraton; Impact on government travel not yet known

On Nov. 16, 2015, Marriott announced a \$12.2 billion deal in which the company will buy rival Starwood, whose brands include Westin and Sheraton. Marriott's acquisition of Starwood will make it the world's biggest hotelier, managing more than one million rooms – about 50% more than its closest rival, Hilton. The transaction is expected to close by mid-year 2016.

It is still unclear how the deal will impact the use of Starwood and Marriott properties by Federal government employees through the FedRooms hotel booking system. FedRooms® is the official GSA-managed government-wide lodging program that negotiates hotel rates on behalf of the federal government in markets where travelers need to stay.

The FedRooms rate is available at 9,000+ properties in 3,100 cities across the world and to all U.S. federal government personnel traveling on official business. Lodging options are also available for state, groups and meetings, and contractors.

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