



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350-1000

SECNAVINST 4650.16C  
OLA  
18 October 1996

SECNAV INSTRUCTION 4650.16C

From: Secretary of the Navy

Subj: CONGRESSIONAL TRAVEL SUPPORT

- Ref: (a) DoD Directive 4515.12 of 12 Dec 64, Department of Defense Support for Travel of Members and Employees of the Congress (NOTAL)  
(b) DoD Regulation 4515.13-R of Nov 95, Air Transportation Eligibility (NOTAL)  
(c) SECNAVINST 5720.44A, Department of the Navy Public Affairs Policy and Regulations, Section 0411  
(d) Joint Federal Travel Regulations (Volumes 1 and 2)  
(e) SECNAVINST 5031.1A, Ship Naming, Christening and Commissionings (NOTAL)  
(f) SECNAVINST 5730.5G, Procedures for the Handling of Naval Legislative Affairs and Congressional Relations

Encl: (1) Accounting Procedures

1. **Purpose.** To prescribe Department of the Navy (DoN) policy and procedures to support travel of Members of Congress, Congressional employees, and dependents of Members of Congress. This instruction is a substantial revision and should be read in its entirety.

2. **Cancellation.** SECNAVINST 4650.16B.

3. **Discussion.** References (a) and (b) prescribe Department of Defense (DoD) policy and procedures regarding travel support of Members and employees of Congress. This instruction updates previous policy and establishes certain revised procedures for Congressional travel requests. The Chief of Legislative Affairs (OLA) and the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Financial Management and Comptroller (ASN FM&C) are responsible for implementing the Congressional travel program within DoN, in strict compliance with policy and procedures established by references (a) through (f). ASN(FM&C) Appropriations Matters Office (FMBE) is responsible for all travel by the Congressional members and staff of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on

(R)



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Defense (SAC-D), House Appropriations Subcommittee on National Security (HAC-NS) and the House Appropriations Surveys and Investigative Staff (HAC S&I). OLA is responsible for Congressional travel with all other members, staff and Committees of the Congress. Local ground transportation may be provided without reference to higher authority when the purpose of the travel is of primary interest to, and bears a substantial relationship to programs or activities of the DoD, or as deemed appropriate by the senior officer concerned.

R) 4. General Policy Guidance and Information

A) a. Travel Requested by Congress. When a Leadership or a Committee Chairman request for travel is approved by the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) for DoD support, the justification remains the responsibility of the requester, not DoD. On Congressional request, the policy on spouse and other dependent travel aboard DoD aircraft is the responsibility of the requester (Leadership/Committee Chairman). SECDEF will normally approve such travel when requested in writing with appropriate justification (reasons of protocol or for the health of the individuals concerned). SECDEF may approve such travel on a reimbursable or non-reimbursable basis.

b. Authorization Letters Required. Committee Members and/or Committee Staff Members require a Committee Chairman, Speaker, or Leadership letter authorizing the travel unless the trip is by SECDEF or Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) invitation. House of Representatives personal staff requires a Speaker letter to travel unless it is by SECDEF or SECNAV invitation. Personal staff of the Senate will not be authorized travel by the Leadership on Committee sponsored trips. This authorization must come from the Committee Chairman and the staff must accompany the Senator. Personal staff may travel by SECDEF or SECNAV invitation when it is in the best interest of DoD. Foreign nationals/non-congressional personnel require a Leadership letter from the Senate or Speaker letter from the House to travel on DoD assets when part of an official Congressional or staff trip.

A) c. SECDEF. SECDEF, through the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, may approve DoD support for travel outside the United States or travel of newly elected Members of Congress. A House Member is considered newly elected until the expiration of the Congress in which he or she first takes his or her seat, and a Senate Member for a maximum of two years.

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d. **SECNAV Invitational Travel.** SECNAV may extend invitations for sponsored (non-reimbursable) travel within the 50 United States to Members (other than newly-elected) and employees of Congress. Such travel is conducted in the interest of the Secretary and is consistent with the policies stated in reference (a) and those as SECDEF may from time-to-time prescribe. Examples of this travel include carrier embarks, orientation visits, ship launchings, christenings, or commissionings. All travel under this instruction shall be conducted so as not to compete with United States commercial sea, air, or land transportation, when that transportation exists and is adequate and capable of achieving mission requirements.

(A)

e. **Invitational Procedures: Requirements for SECNAV Authorization.** As noted in paragraph VB3 of reference (a), the authority to extend invitations for sponsored (non-reimbursable) Congressional travel rests with SECNAV and **may not be delegated**. Invitations involving sponsored (non-reimbursable) travel outside the limitations prescribed in paragraph VB3 require approval by SECDEF (see paragraph VB4). In either of the above cases, however, any individual or command within the DoN must obtain authorization from SECNAV prior to inviting a Member of Congress or a staff member to any activity for orientation or for a ceremony, dedication, or other special event when transportation (other than by local military sedan) is to be provided by DoN. The request for authorization will be directed to SECNAV, via the Chief of Legislative Affairs or the ASN (FM&C) Appropriations Matters Office (FMBE) when the travel is with SAC-D, HAC-NS, or HAC S&I and will contain the following information:

(A)

- (1) Identification of event.
- (2) Proposed invitee(s).
- (3) Date(s) and time(s).
- (4) Location.
- (5) Desired means of travel.
- (6) Purpose.

If approved by SECNAV, the Office of Legislative Affairs (OLA) and ASN(FM&C) Appropriations Matters Office will assist as

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required in making arrangements, obtaining transportation, providing escorts, and handling other necessary details such as official orders and funding for the trip.

f. **First/Business Class Travel**. It is Federal Government policy to use only the most economical means of air transportation. Therefore, normally all SECNAV invitational travel on commercial air for Members of Congress will be in coach class. If specifically requested by a Member, or if in accordance with the guidance in paragraph C2204 of reference (d), SECNAV may approve a higher class of air accommodation for Members. Congressional employees accompanying a Member may travel in the same class as the Member; otherwise, Congressional employees will travel coach class. Higher class of commercial air for Congressional employees must be authorized in writing by the Committee Chairman, Speaker, or Leadership addressed to SECDEF. Reference (d) authorizes escorts accompanying Members of Congress to travel in the same class as the Member. Escorts accompanying employees of Congress will travel coach class.

g. **Orientation Flights in Navy Aircraft**. Orientation flight requests in Navy/Marine Corps aircraft are limited to Members and employees of Congress and may be approved by SECNAV under Chapter 4 of reference (b). Prior to Secretarial action, any such request will be coordinated with the appropriate command to ensure the requested flight is within the command's capability and will be conducted on a non-interference basis with mission requirements. If events subsequent to approval prevent accomplishment of the requested orientation flight, the command will immediately notify the Chief of Legislative Affairs.

h. **"Quicklook" Congressional Travel**. SECNAV may periodically approve a program for travel of Members of Congress in conjunction with Navy/Marine Corps command orientation. All command orientation Congressional travel will be:

- (1) limited to Members of Congress;
- (2) accomplished at minimum cost by using available military aircraft resources, lodging and meals;
- (3) regularly scheduled for maximum utilization of established, standard itineraries; and
- (4) limited to an approved number of Members for each regularly scheduled orientation, considering available transportation resources.

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i. House Appropriation Committee (HAC) Staff Travel. At the request of the Committee Chairman, DoD is prohibited from issuing invitational travel orders to staff members of the HAC. Their travel can only be supported when authorized by a letter from the Chairman, HAC to SECDEF or verbally approved by the Staff Director to Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs) (ASD(LA)). (A)

j. House National Security Committee (HNSC) Staff Travel. House National Security Committee staff members travel under a blanket Chairman authorization letter and ASD(LA) approval for in-CONUS only. (A)

k. Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) Staff Travel. Senate Armed Services Committee staff members may travel only when authorized by a Chairman letter to SECDEF. (A)

l. Travel to/from Home District for Members. Public Law 96-628 states "no appropriated funds shall be made available to support expenses between district/state and District of Columbia." Exceptions are: (A)

(1) Those official trips specifically authorized by law for transportation expenses.

(2) Official participation in the funeral of a deceased Member of Congress.

(3) Official trip originating in district when Congress is not in session.

m. Space Available Travel for Members of Congress/staff. Congressional Members and employees of Congress are not authorized space available status for military air flights. Space available travel for Members of Congress/staff is limited to those individuals possessing current reserve/retired status (they qualify because they are military retired/reserve, not because they are Member/staff). In accordance with reference (b), space available travel shall not be used for personal gain, for a business enterprise or outside employment.

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n. Travel by the Personal and District Staff of Members of Congress. The personal (Washington, DC) staff of Members of Congress are more restricted in travel than their Committee counterparts. As with any other employee of Congress, personal staff must have proper authorization and approval. Specific requirements are as follows:

(1) Out-CONUS travel by Senate personal staff requires a full Chairman letter, and the staffer must travel with the Member. Out-CONUS travel by House personal staff requires a Speaker letter.

(2) In-CONUS travel may be authorized by SECDEF invitation, or

(3) SECNAV invitation for in-CONUS travel that pertains to DoN-only issues.

Approval for district staff travel outside the district requires solid justification and a direct written request from the Member of Congress to SECDEF. District staff can be authorized for local travel by SECDEF or SECNAV when there is no cost involved.

o. Spouses/Dependents of Congressional Members. SECNAV may approve invitational travel within the 50 United States for spouses of Members of Congress. Travel of spouses will be approved only when the spouse accompanies the Member and:

(1) spouse travel is essential to the proper accomplishment of the mission;

(2) spouse travel is desirable because of protocol or national public relations; or

(3) spouse travel is necessary for the health of the individuals concerned.

Medical personnel may accompany a Member of Congress when necessary for the health of the Member. When spouse/dependents are authorized to travel "at no expense to the Government," they may travel space available on military air at no cost, but all other expenses (in-flight meals, food, and the difference between single and double cost for lodging) will not be paid by the government. Reimbursement for spouse travel, if applicable, will be made at the same rate applicable to the Member or employee, as

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determined by the Secretary of Defense. Except as provided in paragraph 4p, travel of dependents other than spouses will not be authorized.

p. **Ship Ceremonies.** Applicable general guidance may be found in reference (c), Section 0411 and Navy Comptroller Manual, Volume 3 and reference (e). The Chief of Naval Information is designated the coordinator of all ship ceremonies. Per reference (e), Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command will forward accounting data to Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Conversion and Repair (SUPSHIP) and Commanding Officer Pre-Commissioning Unit (CO PRECOMUNIT), or Fleet Introduction Team (FIT) as appropriate to be used for Invitational Travel Orders. In accordance with the NAVCOMPT Manual the following applies:

(1) **Keel Laying.** No entertainment costs, such as personal expenses of the official speaker and guests, will be charged either directly or indirectly to shipbuilding funds or to any Navy appropriations. The contractor controls the expenditures and bears the cost of all expenses. However, SECNAV, upon advice of the OLA, may authorize Members of Congress to attend this important and significant ceremony.

(2) **Launching/Christening/Commissioning.** Travel expenses of sponsors authorized by reference (d), Volume 2 are allowable. However, there is no authority to pay the travel expenses of the children of sponsors because they travel voluntarily and do not perform an official function. Travel expenses of sponsors will be included as part of the construction cost of the ship. In the case of contracts at private shipbuilding yards, sponsors' travel expenses which are to be reimbursed directly to the sponsors by the Navy will be paid from the Shipbuilding and Conversion, Navy (SCN) appropriation.

(3) Designation by SECNAV of a **Member of Congress only** as sponsor or official speaker in a ship ceremony constitutes Secretarial approval for OLA to schedule DoN assets for necessary travel only. Expenses for the trip will be paid for by SUPSHIPS and/or CO PRECOMUNIT as appropriate and as stated in reference (e). If there are seats available on DoN assets, travel only (not room/meal or incidental expenses) will be provided to the following persons when they accompany the Congressional Member to the ceremony:

- a. The Congressional Member's spouse and dependents;
- b. Up to two staff of the Congressional Member; and

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c. Up to two other invited guests of the Congressional Member.

Again, the above applies only if the Congressional Member is the official speaker or sponsor and should be clarified prior to the trip. Travel of other persons, not specifically authorized by this paragraph, will be considered for approval only by SECNAV upon written request by the Member.

q. **Reporting Requirements.** OLA is required, under section VI of reference (a), to forward travel reports to the ASD(LA) on a weekly basis. Accordingly, addressees who have conducted or have been in charge of Congressional travel will forward the information listed below to OLA within 1 week after travel:

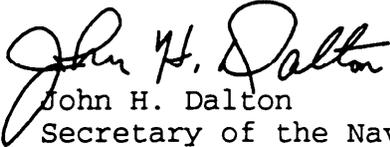
- (1) Name, title, and function of participants.
- (2) Purpose and complete itinerary.
- (3) Mode of transportation.
- (4) Approving authority. Include a copy of the approval letter.

r. **Reporting of Travel Utilizing In-theater Aircraft.** SECDEC, via ASD(LA), is the only approving official for in-theater military air for Congressional Members and employees of Congress. On overseas trips, when a field commander provides air travel as described and authorized in paragraph VA4 of reference (a), the required report of travel will be forwarded expeditiously to SECNAV, via OLA.

s. **Financial Management.** Enclosure (1) prescribes policy regarding authorized/unauthorized expenditures and financial responsibilities relevant to the Congressional travel program.

5. **Reports.** The reporting requirements contained in paragraphs 4q and 4r are exempt from reports control by SECNAVINST 5214.2B.

6. **Forms.** NAVCOMPT 2277 (8-88), Voucher for Disbursement and/or Collection, S/N 0104-LF-003-0800 may be ordered through the Naval Supply System per CD-ROM NAVSUP P-600. NAVCOMPT 0-139 (11-77) is stocked by the Assistant for Administration, Office of the Under Secretary of the Navy.

  
John H. Dalton  
Secretary of the Navy

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ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

1. Discussion. Within the Department of the Navy's Congressional Travel Program:

a. The Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Financial Management & Comptroller (PDASN(FM&C)) sponsors and provides coordination for travel pertaining to Navy/Marine Corps programs by Members and staffs of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees and Defense Subcommittees.

b. The Chief of Legislative Affairs sponsors and provides coordination for travel with regard to Navy/Marine Corps programs by Members and staffs of all other Senate and House Committees.

c. The responsibilities of the Office of Legislative Affairs (OLA) and the Office of the PDASN(FM&C) include providing an escort officer, processing travel orders, making travel arrangements, and coordinating Congressional travel between the traveler and the appropriate Navy/Marine Corps activity.

d. OLA and PDASN(FM&C) will provide advance travel funds, and upon completion of the trip, approve the settlement and liquidation of claims.

2. Authorized Expenditures (regardless of travel authority). The following is a list of authorized expenditures for the official party. The escort officer must determine when an expenditure is both official and necessary and must be prepared to explain expenses upon completion of travel.

a. Lodging (hotel, motel, government quarters) when the official travelers do not receive per diem.

b. Meals and refreshments when the official travelers do not receive per diem. For meals paid as a group, including in-flight expenses, a pro-rata share must be collected from each official traveler and military escort on per diem, and all non-official participants (spouses, guests).

c. Official communications (telephone/telegraph) when made by a Member or staffer. In cases where the escort makes official calls, or the calls are reported on his/her hotel receipt, the escort should claim reimbursement on his/her travel voucher.

Enclosure (1)

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d. Purchase of in-flight supplies (for official guests only).

e. Gratuities (tips on baggage, meals and hotel service, porters, taxis, etc.). Tipping should be consistent with local custom, wages and exchange rates; your Embassy control officer can give you guidance on appropriate tips. Tips should not exceed **15 percent** for meals or other pertinent services. Tips for hotel services (baggage in/out, concierge, etc.) will be billed to hotel charges whenever possible.

f. Valet services (laundry, dry cleaning) which would not have been encountered except for the travel.

g. Official commercial ground transportation. On overseas trips, the State Department congressional account funds this transportation.

h. Control room supplies for the official party.

i. Fees for travelers checks.

j. Photographic supplies for the purpose of documenting the official portion of the trip (One copy only for the senior Member/staff).

3. Unauthorized Expenditures (on all trips, unless specifically authorized by SECDEF, SECNAV, or by the Committee Chairman/Leadership for public law/Leadership sponsored travel):

a. Smoking material.

b. Personal convenience articles, (i.e., toilet articles, razor blades, etc) except items of necessity purchased for use on special air mission or Military Airlift Command team travel aircraft.

c. Personal services (haircuts, sauna, health clubs, shoe-shines).

d. Personal communications (telephone/telegraph).

e. Souvenirs, gifts, flowers, birthday cakes, etc.

f. Commercial transportation beyond official use (shopping trips, sight-seeing).

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g. Gratuities to federal employees.

h. Entertainment expenses (movies, in-room/in-air movies, theater/stage shows, **bar expenses not associated with a meal**, etc.).

4. Financial Responsibilities. As the major claimant for the Navy Secretariat and Staff offices, the Assistant for Administration, Office of the Under Secretary of the Navy (AAUSN) budgets for all travel performed by Congressional Members and their staff which is the responsibility of and charged to the Department of the Navy. Funding is provided to PDASN(FM&C) and OLA by AAUSN via operating targets. When travel is performed by Congressional Members and their staff at Navy expense:

a. A NAVCOMPT 0-139 should be prepared by the applicable Navy coordinating office for each trip and if a travel advance is required, a NAVCOMPT 2277 will be prepared. Both forms will be approved and signed by the holder of the Congressional travel funds being charged.

b. A copy of each NAVCOMPT 2277 and travel order will be forwarded to and retained by AAUSN for use in obligating expenditures against Congressional travel.

c. The settlement or liquidation of travel expenses is to be made within 10 days upon completion of the travel. The escort officer or the Navy Congressional Liaison Officer will utilize a Summary of Expenses Worksheet to account for all Congressional expenses with receipts attached on letter-size paper (one receipt per sheet).

d. OLA and PDASN(FM&C) shall submit to AAUSN a Summary of Expenses Worksheet along with any unused advanced funds, copies of airline ticket charges and/or copies of airline ticket refunds/credits processed; or, if applicable, an approved NAVCOMPT 2277 requesting reimbursement for expenses in excess of the authorized travel advance.

AAUSN will provide the applicable holders of Congressional travel funds with a monthly status of funds report and will provide any necessary assistance in the preparation of travel documents for which the Navy coordinating office is responsible.