

TRAVERSING THE GLOBE

Volume 4, Issue 2

by Debbie Gulliver, University Travel Manager

March 2007

Bad Weather...

Canceled flights...

This winter, we have seen a record number of flights canceled or delayed due to weather. Although we have not seen the brunt of these storms here in mid-Michigan, cancellations and delays at a major airport in the United States disrupts service at other airports across our nation.

If you are checked into a flight or have boarded a flight that is canceled, you must have your airline ticket "re-opened". After the flight is canceled, travel agents recommend that you go back to that airline's counter at the airport and have your ticket "re-opened" by the airline agent. Why? Once you check-in for a flight, that portion of your airline ticket shows "Used" and you have lost the full value of the unused portion of your airline ticket. If weather keeps you from traveling, you may wish to ask immediately for a refund. Visiting the airline counter will ensure that this happens in a more expedient manner.

Airlines do not always document your individual reservation; therefore, looking back the airline may not be able to determine whether or not your flight was truly canceled. While it may be inconvenient to wait in line to have your airline ticket "re-opened", it will be worth it in the long run.

FlyLansing.com...

Benefits...

As a member of the Lansing Regional Business Travel Trust, Michigan State University employees are entitled to a 50% discount on long-term parking at Capital City Airport. By registering on flylansing.com, employees may request and print discount parking vouchers. The savings adds up when you consider that the discount reduces your parking fee to \$4.00 per day. Also, flylansing.com has resources on its website for travelers and travel arrangers to utilize. For example, you can check flight status, current weather conditions and advisories, and obtain a listing of airport services contact information.

Direct Bill Airfares...

Update...

The Direct Bill Application was recently modified to exclude the applicant's Social Security Number. **Please begin using this updated form as soon as possible.**

By taking the Social Security Number off of the application, we are helping to protect personal information from identity theft.

Reminders...

If you wish to use our Cluster Travel Agencies (CTAs) and wish to direct bill airfare to a University account, whether you are a traveler or a travel arranger, you must have a direct bill authorization or direct bill profile in place prior to booking travel with one of the CTAs.

Regular faculty and staff are eligible to use direct billing. Temporary and On-Call employees, Retirees, and graduate and undergraduate students are not eligible to make their own reservations and utilize direct billing.

Direct bill authorization permits you to book airfare and authorize the charge to an MSU account number. A direct bill profile permits you to book airfare; however, you may not charge an MSU account number.

Original direct bill applications are kept on file within the originating department. Applications should be faxed to 432-4656 for approval by the University Travel Manager.

For further information regarding Direct Billing and to obtain an application, please visit the Travel Office website at <http://ctrl.msu.edu/travel>.

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International Travel...

Preparations have begun.

Winter is waning and our minds are beginning to think of summer. While for some of us this brings to mind warm weather, green grass, and songbirds, for many on campus, thoughts of **traveling abroad** are foremost on our minds. Whatever is leading you to travel outside of the United States, whether it is for the purpose of research, a Study Abroad program, or other University business, there are a number of important considerations.

First, do you have **written authorization** to travel on Michigan State University business for the dates prescribed to your chosen location? Anyone traveling on University business, employee or not, must have written approval.

Second, are you registered in the **International Traveler database**? If you are traveling on MSU business, you should be. If there were an emergency of any sort, this would allow University officials to verify that you are alive and well.

Third, is your passport current and is it valid for at least 6 months after your foreign travel is complete? Do you need a Visa? The **U.S. State Department**'s website can provide you with the proper information you need to make sure that you are able to travel. Did you know... effective January 2007; travelers flying into Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, or Central America, a passport is required to have fly into these countries?

The U.S. State Department can also advise travelers of countries that should be avoided. Information on each country regarding health conditions, crime, unusual currency or entry requirements, areas of instability, and the locations of the embassy or consulate in-country is available on the their website: <http://www.travel.state.gov>.

Fourth, are you taking MSU property, including research-related materials, software, data, biological materials and equipment, with you? If that is your plan, it would be advisable to talk with Ronald Russell, Director, **Export Controls & Trade Sanctions**, Office of Regulatory Affairs, to be sure that you are in compliance with federal laws. Director Russell may be reached by telephone or e-mail: 432-4500, russe292@ores.msu.edu.

Information is available on the MSU Export Control and Trade Sanctions website: <http://www.msu.edu/unit/vprgs/expregs/overview.htm>.

Fifth, do you know what you are permitted to carry with you on your flights? For an up to date listing, please visit the **Transportation Security Administration's** (TSA) website at:

<http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted-prohibited-items.shtm>.

These are just a few things to think about before you travel abroad...even before you begin planning your trip. For a more complete list, please visit the Travel Office website at <http://ctrl.msu.edu/travel> and right click on the "**International – Know Before You Go**" sub-topic.

If you are traveling in this summer, **be safe**.

Washington, DC...

New negotiated hotel rates...

Michigan State University now has contracts with three hotels in the Washington, DC area and another soon to be announced. The Virginian Suites, located in Arlington, Virginia, is convenient to the Metro system which goes into the heart of Washington, DC. Within the District, The Capitol Hill Suites and the Quincy Suites Hotel both offer Michigan State University travelers discounted rates throughout the year. An announcement will come out very soon regarding negotiated Big 10 rates at another hotel within the District.

Hotel information, rates, and booking instructions are available on the Travel Office website under Hotel and Housing Accommodations, Major City Hotel Information or at <http://ctrl.msu.edu/travel/MajorCityHotels.htm#washDC>

Your Assistance...

Please...

Last fiscal year, our top destinations included Washington, DC, San Francisco, New York City, Los Angeles, Boston, and Atlanta, to name a few. I am in the process of negotiating MSU discounts with hotels in large metropolitan areas so that University travelers may benefit from the cost savings.

If you have suggestions of hotels in large metropolitan areas which you would recommend I approach about negotiated rates, please e-mail me at gullive5@ctrl.msu.edu and provide the name of the hotel, address, telephone and fax numbers, and a contact at that hotel, if known. I look forward to hearing from you.