Queensland Health Travel and Accommodation Policy

Implementation Standard for Overseas Travel and Accommodation

1. Purpose

This Implementation Standard identifies the minimum requirements that evidence the implementation of the Queensland Health Travel and Accommodation Policy in relation to overseas travel and accommodation for official purposes, and identifies individual positions, accountabilities and responsibilities in relation to these requirements.

2. Scope

This standard applies to all Queensland Health employees and non-employees where there is a justifiable claim to travel, where Queensland Health incurs related expenses.

This standard does not apply to travel undertaken in respect of Certified Agreements e.g. Senior Medical Officers’ Study and Conference Leave unless Queensland Health funds (including trust funds or Commonwealth Grants) are used in conjunction with the Professional Development Allowance for the travel.

This Implementation Standard applies to all Queensland Health employees (permanent, temporary and casual) and all organisations and individuals acting as its agents (including Visiting Medical Officers and other partners, contractors, consultants and volunteers).

3. Supporting documents

Authorising Policy:

- Queensland Health Travel and Accommodation Policy.

Protocols, Procedures, Guidelines

- Queensland Health Overseas Travel and Accommodation Procedure.
Queensland Health: Implementation Standard for Overseas Travel and Accommodation

Forms and templates

- Overseas Travel application (approval document).
- Brief to Director-General to accompany Overseas Travel application.
- Overseas Travel report (Form A).
- Recall to Duty application (if required).

4. Related documents

- Whole-of-Government Air Travel Policy.
- International Travelling, Relieving and Living Expenses Directive issued by the Public Service Commission and The Department of Justice and Attorney-General (JAG).

5. Requirements

5.1 Approval to travel

All overseas travel for official purposes shall be approved by the Minister or Director-General (as appropriate) prior to travel being undertaken. No retrospective approvals will be granted.

5.2 Airtrain

All persons travelling shall use the Airtrain service when travelling to and from the Brisbane CBD and Brisbane’s domestic and international airport terminals during the operating hours of the service. Any exception from this requirement shall be approved by the appropriate delegate (District Chief Finance Officers and Corporate and Divisional Officer Manager, A08 and above), supported by appropriate documentation and be based on one or more of the following grounds:

- value for money (e.g. where there are a number of people to be transported and the cost of a taxi service is less than that of the Airtrain service);
- a significant quantity of goods is being transported in addition to personal luggage; or
- the traveler is physically unable to use the train service.

5.3 Assessment of security, safety and health risks

All persons undertaking overseas travel shall consult the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) for travel alerts on security and safety of the country to which they are travelling. In seeking approval for overseas travel, officers shall advise the Minister or Director-General (as appropriate) of any travel proposed to areas where significant safety, security and/or health risks exist. and measures taken to mitigate identified risks.
5.4 Baggage
All persons travelling shall take reasonable steps to ensure there are no excess baggage charges levied, specifically in relation to transporting brochures or other material and equipment. For example, persons travelling shall consider alternatives to paying excess baggage such as couriering or posting material prior to departure. Personal excess baggage shall be paid for by the traveller when not directly related to official travel.

5.5 Charter Transport
Persons travelling shall only use commercial charter transport (aircraft or vessels) – refer definition section – where commercial passenger transport services are not available and where there are no alternatives to the travel.

Where air charter is required, agencies are to ensure that the charter service has a current Air Operator’s Certificate issued by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority or the equivalent national standard where charter services are used for travel within a country overseas. – As per the whole-of-Government Air Travel Policy.

5.6 Class of Travel
All persons travelling shall travel best value fare economy class when travelling overseas. Prior approval from the Minister or Director-General (as appropriate) for officers shall be obtained for upgrades to economy class travel where:

- the officer is accompanying the Minister or Director-General; or
- there are health and safety issues.

5.7 Corporate Purchasing Card
Where a Queensland Government Corporate Purchasing Card has been issued it shall be used for the payment of associated meals, official entertainment and incidental procurement whilst on official overseas travel. The use of this card shall be managed in accordance with relevant legislation and Queensland Health policies, standards and procedures. For requirements on use of the Corporate Card, see Financial Management Practice Manual (FMPM).

5.8 Entitlements
Employee entitlements and related financial accounting matters shall be managed in accordance with relevant legislation, Queensland Health policies and procedures and the Financial Management Practice Manual.

5.9 Fringe Benefits Tax
Aifares may be subject to Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) when approved leave and/or private travel is taken in conjunction with official travel and is based on proportion of private travel relative to official travel. All FBT liability incurred by Queensland Health in relation to travel undertaken in this manner is to be refunded to the department by the travelling officer. For further information on FBT please contact Finance Branch, FBT team via: FBT@health.qld.gov.au
5.10 Health and Safety

Appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure the health and safety of the officer when travelling overseas, particularly when travelling alone and/or in remote areas. This may include the supply of mobile phone (with international roaming facility), and where necessary arrangements for regular scheduled call-in to their home office (with follow up to occur if scheduled call-in does not occur). Provision of a portable first aid kit may also be considered.

The Minister or Director-General (as appropriate) shall be advised of any travel proposed to areas where significant safety, security and/or health risks exist. Approval for overseas travel may be withdrawn where there is an unacceptable or potential risk to the employee’s safety, security or health.

Persons travelling shall ensure they are contactable by Queensland Health at all times where possible during official overseas travel. If they become aware of a safety or security risk while travelling, they should contact their agency in the first instance or the nearest Australian embassy, consulate or high commission. Information on consular assistance is available from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) - As per the whole-of-Government Air Travel Policy.

5.11 Individual travel reports

Employees shall complete and submit an Individual Overseas Travel Report following official overseas travel no later than 14 days after travel. Reports are to be submitted to the relevant Executive Management Team member or District Chief Executive Officer.

Individual Overseas Travel Reports must detail:
- Name of traveller;
- Dates of travel;
- Objectives of travel;
- Recommendations and/or action plans arising from the overseas travel; and
- Suitability of the report for inter-agency sharing.

Failure to submit this report will adversely impact approval of future overseas travel submissions.

5.12 Leave taken in conjunction with overseas travel

Any leave undertaken in conjunction with official overseas travel shall be noted by the Director-General and approved by the Minister as part of the approval process. This leave shall not exceed five working days. Queensland Health shall only pay expenses associated with the official component of the travel. Employees shall self fund any private travel.

5.13 Loyalty programs

Frequent flyer points or other loyalty program benefits accrued in the course of official travel are not for the traveller’s personal use. Where appropriate, frequent flyer points or other loyalty program benefits accrued for official travel may be used by the agency to redeem further official travel.
5.14 Recall to duty

The Director-General may recall an employee to duty while on personal leave as part of official overseas travel.

5.15 Travel diary

Persons travelling on official overseas travel shall maintain a daily Travel Diary. The contents of the diary shall include:

- the place where the activity was undertaken;
- the date and approximate time when the activity commenced;
- the duration of the activity; and
- the nature of the activity.

This diary shall be prepared in advance – e.g. itinerary – and shall be endorsed by the traveller, signed and dated after the trip is made. The diary is to be presented when submitting a claim for expenses.

5.16 Travel and medical insurance

Persons travelling on official overseas travel shall have comprehensive travel insurance that includes adequate medical cover. Wherever possible this insurance should be purchased through Queensland Health travel officers. Where insurance has not been purchased through QH travel officers, a certificate of insurance should be provided to travel officers.

*Costs associated with travel and medical insurance for overseas travel for official purposes will be met by the agency* – As per the whole-of-Government Air Travel Policy.

5.17 Vaccinations

Persons travelling overseas shall obtain the relevant vaccinations and preventative medicines (e.g. anti-malaria tablets) advised by the consular travel advisories or their medical practitioner. There is a list of travel advisories available on the DFAT website: [http://www.dfat.gov.au/](http://www.dfat.gov.au/)

Such vaccinations for official overseas travel shall be paid for by Queensland Health.

5.18 Valet parking

Use of valet parking shall receive prior approval by the Director-General.

5.19 Visas

Persons travelling shall ensure that appropriate visa/s are obtained for their overseas destination/s (including transit visas where they are required), before leaving Australia. Queensland Health shall pay costs of visas required for official travel.

5.20 Workers’ compensation

Persons travelling for official purposes whose principal place of employment is in Queensland, are entitled to workers’ compensation cover (excluding periods of personal
5.21 Airline club corporate membership

Airline club corporate membership may be considered an operational requirement for the Director-General. Other officers who travel 36 flights or more per year and who are Executive Contract Officers may be eligible for corporate membership if determined by the Director-General.

5.22 Approvals for Director-General

The Premier’s approval and the relevant Minister’s support is required for overseas travel by the Director-General. A Premier’s Briefing Note is to be sent from the Minister for Health to the Premier, as a cover for the completed overseas travel approval form, providing sufficient prior notice for consideration by the Premier. Relevant documents (briefing note and approval form) are located at: [www.qgm.qld.gov.au/09_travel/policy.htm](http://www.qgm.qld.gov.au/09_travel/policy.htm)

5.23 Air travel indemnity


6. Review

This Standard will be reviewed on October 2013 or when the legislation that impacts on official travel is changed or updated or when whole-of-Government Air Travel Policy is changed or updated.

**Date of Last Review:** October 2011

**Supersedes:** Overseas Travel and Accommodation Standard v04 – June 2009

7. Business Area Contact

Reporting Integrity and Policy Services.
## 8. Responsibilities

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minister for Health</strong></td>
<td>&lt;ul&gt;&lt;li&gt;Approves official overseas travel to locations in excess of five hours flying time from Brisbane.&lt;/li&gt;&lt;li&gt;Approves overseas travel where official travel is combined with personal travel.&lt;/li&gt;&lt;li&gt;Approves any period of leave taken in conjunction with official overseas travel.&lt;/li&gt;&lt;li&gt;Approves official overseas travel where travel costs are fully or partially funded externally and where such funding gives rise to a potential or real conflict of interest, e.g. pharmaceutical companies..&lt;/li&gt;&lt;/ul&gt;</td>
<td>Operational audit of Overseas Travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Director-General</strong></td>
<td>&lt;ul&gt;&lt;li&gt;Approves official overseas travel to New Zealand or locations within five hours flying time from Brisbane e.g. Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu. This approval includes travel fully or partially funded by an external source which does not give rise to a potential or real conflict of interest, e.g. funding from hospital foundations; State/ Commonwealth; World Health Organisation; international aid agencies.&lt;/li&gt;&lt;li&gt;Can approve upgrades to class of travel, if special circumstances exist.&lt;/li&gt;&lt;li&gt;Notes any period of leave taken in conjunction with official overseas travel&lt;/li&gt;&lt;li&gt;Endorses official overseas travel to be approved by the Minister.&lt;/li&gt;&lt;/ul&gt;</td>
<td>Operational audit of overseas travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EMT member; District Chief Executive Officer</strong></td>
<td>Supports official overseas travel and accommodation.</td>
<td>Operational audit of overseas travel</td>
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<td><strong>District Chief Finance Officers and Corporate and Divisional Officer Manager (A08 and above)</strong></td>
<td>Approve exceptions to use of airtrain prior to travel.</td>
<td>Operational audit of overseas travel</td>
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<td><strong>Managers and supervisors</strong></td>
<td>Provide all staff with awareness of and access to the related policy and procedures.</td>
<td>Workplace Induction Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All employees</strong></td>
<td>Comply with requirements of the policy, standard and procedure.</td>
<td>Operational audit of overseas travel</td>
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9. Definitions of terms used in this policy and supporting documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition / Explanation / Details</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tr>
<td>Best Value Fare</td>
<td>The lowest fare available at time of booking to suit the agency’s business needs and traveller’s entitlements. The person who holds the appropriate delegation to approve travel makes the decision on these considerations when they exercise that delegation. Best value is calculated having regard not only to air fares but also to other relevant costs such as accommodation, taxi fares and waiting time. Travellers are not expected to undertake circuitous itineraries or to travel in circumstances where there are unacceptable safety or security concerns in order to access lower fares.</td>
<td>whole-of-Government Air Travel Policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Delegated Officer  | The officer nominated as being responsible for approving official travel under particular circumstances. For example:  

**The Minister:**  
- Approves overseas travel to locations in excess of five hours flying time from Brisbane;  
- Approves overseas travel when official travel is incorporated with private travel, regardless of the destination;  
- Approves any period of leave taken in conjunction with overseas travel;  
- Approves overseas travel where travel costs are fully or partially funded externally and where such funding gives rise to a potential or real conflict of interest, e.g. pharmaceutical companies.  

**The Director-General:**  
- Approves overseas travel to New Zealand or a location within five hours flying time from Brisbane, e.g. Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu. This approval includes travel fully or partially funded by an external source which does not give rise to a potential or real conflict of interest, e.g. funding from Hospital Foundations; the State/Commonwealth; World Health Organisation; international aid agencies. | whole-of-Government Air Travel Policy       |
| Official Travel    | Agency approved travel for agency and/or government business.                                                                                                                                                                      | whole-of-Government Air Travel Policy       |
| Domestic travel    | Official travel within Australia including Australian territories.                                                                                                                                                               | whole-of-Government Air Travel Policy       |
| Overseas travel    | Official travel between Australia and an overseas country, including New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.                                                                                                                                 | whole-of-Government Air Travel Policy       |
| Employee travel    | Official travel by an employee where:  

- The employee’s travel costs, including expenses and allowances, are either fully or partially met from an agency’s funds; or  
- travel costs are funded from other sources, eg fee-for-service activities, full costs covered by a conference organiser, trusts, grants and other funds. | whole-of-Government Air Travel Policy       |
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| Non-Employee travel          | Where travel costs are fully or partially met by Queensland Health such as:  
• Agencies’ clients eg. Patients;  
• Consultants and contractors;  
• International job candidates; and  
• Members of official delegations.                                                                                                                   | Whole-of-Government Air Travel Policy.                                   |
| Persons travelling           | Any persons undertaking official travel as identified in Employee and Non-Employee travel definitions above.  
For example, all Queensland Health employees (permanent, temporary and casual) and all organisations and individuals acting as its agents, including Visiting Medical Officers and other partners, contractors, consultants, volunteers, patients, international presenters at Queensland Health forums and international job candidates attending interviews and/or site visits in Queensland. | Queensland Health Travel and Accommodation Policy.                      |
| Executive Contract Employees | Executives employed on Contract, including Senior Executive Service (SES), other contract employees employed under Section 122 (formerly Section 70) of the Public Service Act 2008, Health Executive Service (HES), District Executive Service (DES) and other contract employees employed under Section 24 and Section 28E of the Health Services Act 1991. | Queensland Health Human Resources Branch.                                |
| Flight                       | For the purposes of the Travel and Accommodation policy and associated documents refer return flights.                                                                                                                         | Queensland Health Travel and Accommodation Policy.                      |
| Fringe Benefits Tax          | The Australian Tax Office’s tax charged to employers on benefits provided to employees or an associate of an employee, in a form other than salary and wages (e.g. hospitality/entertainment expenses, either in part or in whole) i.e. a benefit involving an employer-employee relationship. | Queensland Health Finance Branch.                                       |
| Minister                     | Means the minister of the agency.                                                                                                                                                                                               | whole-of-Government Air Travel Policy.                                  |
| Queensland Health Travel Officers | A Queensland Health employee designated to coordinate, perform and record the details of travel bookings.                                                                                                                     | Queensland Health Travel and Accommodation Policy.                      |
| Commercial charter transport | Operators that have and maintain registration, licence, or survey subject to the relevant national laws for the country where travel is undertaken and as appropriate to country of aircraft or vessel registration | Queensland Health Travel and Accommodation Policy.                      |
10. Approval and Implementation

Policy Custodian
Executive Director, Performance Improvement and Policy Services

Responsible Executive Team Member:
Deputy, Director-General, Performance and Accountability

Approving Officer:
Mr Terry Mehan
Deputy Director-General,
Performance and Accountability

Approval date: 05 December 2011
Effective from: 05 December 2011