1. Statement

Official overseas travel undertaken on behalf of the Department of Health is appropriate, safe and advances the achievement of Queensland Government priorities and the department’s strategic intent.

2. Scope

Compliance with this standard is mandatory. This standard shall apply to all permanent, temporary and casual employees of Department of Health divisions and commercialised business units and non-employees including contractors, consultants, volunteers, patients, conference presenters and job applicants where:

- the individual is representing or seeking to represent the department or its business, or
- departmental funds are to be used for any travel related costs.

This policy does not apply to employees accessing Professional Development Leave (PDL) and Professional Development Allowance (PDA) entitlements in accordance with certified agreements and other human resource policies, unless agency funds (including trust funds or commonwealth grants) are used in conjunction with the PDA/PDL for the travel or the individual is representing the agency or its business.

3. Content

3.1. Travel approval

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.

The Director-General, Queensland Health, has authority to approve official overseas travel:

- to/from overseas locations within five hours flying time of Brisbane, relevant to the Department of Health and non-prescribed employer Hospital and Health Services where:
  - the acceptance of any external funding does not give rise to any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest, and
  - no personal leave/travel has been requested.

The Minister for Health has authority to approve official overseas travel:

- to/from overseas locations in excess of five hours flying time of Brisbane, or
- when personal leave/travel is requested in connection with official overseas travel, regardless of the destination or flight time (the Minister is the approving officers for such leave); or
- where the acceptance of any external funding gives rise to any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest, e.g. funding from pharmaceutical companies;
- of all Hospital and Health Board members.

Once approved, travel arrangements must not be changed without seeking approval of the amendment by the original approver.
3.2. **Overseas travel application form**

To seek approval for official overseas travel applicants must complete an Overseas Travel Application Form using the nominated template available from QHEPS. The application form must cover the entire period from departing Australia to returning to Australia.

3.3. **Travel diary/itinerary**

Persons travelling on official overseas travel shall prepare a detailed daily travel diary/itinerary on the nominated template (incorporated into Overseas Travel Application Form).

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

3.4. **Submission timeframes**

Completed Overseas Travel Application Forms and supporting documentation as required are to be submitted through correspondence coordination channels to reach the Executive Support Unit, Office of the Director-General, at least six weeks prior to the proposed departure date. Applications submitted less than six weeks prior to the proposed departure date must be accompanied by a memorandum to the Director-General providing the reason for the lateness. Applications may be rejected without further consideration due to their late submission.

3.5. **Combining official and private travel:**

Undertaking any personal/private travel (using recreation leave, long service leave, TOIL, flex time, week-ends, rostered days off etc.) in conjunction with official travel is not to be encouraged. Any personal/private travel 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. Undertaking un-approved personal/private travel in conjunction with official overseas travel is prohibited. The Department of Health shall only pay expenses associated with the official component of the travel. Employees shall self-fund any private travel.

3.6. **Assessment of security, safety and health risks:**

Appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure the health and safety of the traveller when 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/work unit (with follow up to occur if scheduled call-in does not occur). Provision of a portable first aid kit may also be considered.

All persons undertaking official overseas travel shall consult the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (www.smartraveller.gov.au) 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 or health risks exist and measures taken to mitigate identified risks. Approval for overseas travel may be withdrawn where there is an unacceptable or potential risk to the employee’s safety, security or health. Travellers shall ensure they are contactable by the Department of Health at all times during official overseas travel. Officers must ensure their travel is registered with the Queensland Government Global Assistance Program (provided by International SOS) via the appropriate travel coordinator. If they become aware of a safety or security risk while travelling, they must contact either their home office/work unit, the nearest Australian embassy, consulate or high commission or International SOS. Information on consular assistance is available from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

3.7. **Travel and medical insurance**

Persons travelling on official overseas travel shall have comprehensive travel insurance that includes adequate medical cover. International travel insurance for official overseas travel is provided...
automatically under the whole-of-government travel insurance policy where travel has been approved by the appropriately authorised approver. Travellers should familiarise themselves with the policy and product disclosure statement available via http://procurement.govnet.qld.gov.au/travel/Pages/Resource-library.aspx prior to departure.

3.8. Vaccinations

Persons travelling on official overseas travel shall obtain the relevant vaccinations and preventative medicines (e.g. anti-malaria tablets) as advised by the consular travel advisories or their medical practitioner. Such vaccinations for official overseas travel shall be paid for by the Department of Health.

3.9. Visas

Travellers shall ensure that appropriate visas are obtained for their destinations (including transit visas where they are required), before leaving Australia. The Department of Health shall pay the costs of visas required for official travel.

3.10. Individual Overseas Travel Report

Employees shall complete and submit an Individual Overseas Travel Report within 14 days of return to Australia. These reports are to be submitted on the nominated template available from QHEPS to the senior executive (deputy director-general/chief executive or equivalent) who endorsed the official travel. The relevant senior executive is to verify the content of the report. A copy of the verified report is to be emailed to Finance Branch (OverseasTravel@health.qld.gov.au). Failure to submit this report may adversely impact approval of future overseas travel.

3.11. Corporate Purchasing Card

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

4. Related legislation and documents

- Whole-of-government Air Travel Policy
- Queensland Public Service Code of Conduct
- Department of Health Travel Policy
- Public Service Commission Directive 10/11 – International Domestic Travelling, Relieving and Living Expenses
- Department of Health – Corporate Card Policy
- Department of Health – Seminar and Conference Leave – within and Outside Australia

5. Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Official overseas travel</td>
<td>Travel for agency or government business undertaken outside of Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal/private travel</td>
<td>Any activity not directly or necessarily related to agency or government</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>business undertaken during official overseas travel between departure</td>
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<td>from Australia and return.</td>
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Prescribed HHS

A Hospital and Health Service listed (prescribed) in the *Hospital and Health Boards Regulation 2012* as having the authority to employ health service employees as per section 20(4) of the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*.

QHEPS

Queensland Health Electronic Publishing Service – Queensland Health’s intranet service.

International roaming

A facility that enables the use of smart devices with SIM cards outside the range of the local service provider (Telstra/Optus) usually at significant cost.

**Version Control**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Comments</th>
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| 1       | 29 June 2015 | • Update to new standard template  
• addition of travel approvals  
• addition of international SOS reference  
• addition of WOG travel insurance  
• addition of application form as a requirement  
• addition of timeframes for submission  
• amendment to personal/private travel as per minister’s expectations  
• amendment of travel reports info  
• miscellaneous minor amendments to improve clarity  
• removal of content that can be found elsewhere |