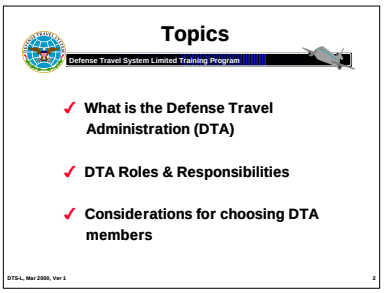
LESSON 3: DEFENSE TRAVEL ADMINISTRATION (DTA) OVERVIEW

LESSON TITLE	**DEFENSE TRAVEL ADMINISTRATION (DTA) OVERVIEW**
SUMMARY	This lesson will provide an overview of the Defense Travel Administration (DTA) and how it functions within the Defense Travel System.
DURATION	1.0 Hour
TOPICS	**TOPIC TITLE** **1: Defense Travel Administration Overview**
OBJECTIVES	At the end of this lesson, participants will understand and be able to explain: • What is the Defense Travel Administration (DTA) • Roles and Responsibilities of the DTA • Considerations for choosing DTA members • DTA Finance Functions/Responsibilities
MATERIALS	Instructor Guide, Briefing Material, Participant Guide

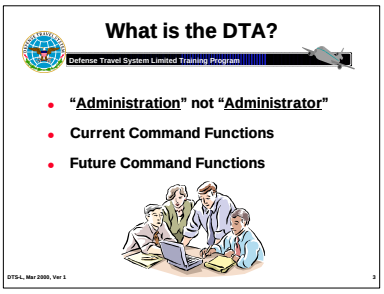


Slide 2

TOPICS

This slide outlines the topics we will be discussing during this overview of the Defense Travel Administration (DTA).

(READ AND EXPLAIN TOPICS FROM SLIDE)

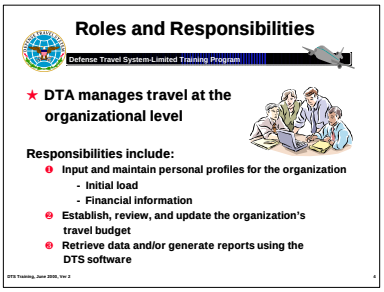


Slide 3

WHAT IS THE DEFENSE TRAVEL ADMINISTRATION (DTA)?

As you already know, the Defense Travel Administration (DTA) is the DOD function responsible for managing the administrative aspects of the travel process at an organizational level. DTA stands for Defense Travel "Administration" not Defense Travel "Administrator" because it is envisioned that a group of individuals, rather than just one person, will be responsible for performing the various functions of the DTA. This, however, will be left to the discretion of each Service/Agency as to how their DTA will be organized.

As we discuss the roles and responsibilities of the DTA, keep in mind that, with few exceptions, someone in your organization is currently performing these functions. These functions will still need to be performed, along with perhaps some slightly different ones under the new Defense Travel System.



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DTA ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As we have previously stated, the DTA is responsible for managing travel at the organizational level. However, how high or low within each Service or Agency organization the DTA functions are located and performed will be for each Service or Agency to decide.

Some of the functions that may be performed by the DTA are as follows:

1. Input and maintain personal profiles for their organization's personnel:

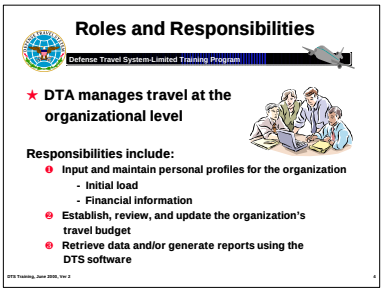
The DTA will be responsible for inputting their organization's personnel data into the DTS application. After they have made the initial inputs, the DTA will be responsible for updating the information as necessary and for creating and maintaining the personal profiles for the travelers within their respective organization(s). This also will include identifying the traveler's Authorizing Official (AO) and entering a traveler's appropriate financial data (Correct line of accounting, travel charge card information, bank routing information, etc.)

2. Establish, review, and update the organization's travel budget

The DTA may be responsible for establishing reviewing and updating the organization's travel budget. It may be the DTA's responsibility to insure that the information entered into the DTS software budget module is correct and properly updated as required.

As an accountable official, the individual (s) who will be performing finance functions of the DTA may be responsible for:

- Distributing funds to the appropriate travel budgets within their organization (s)



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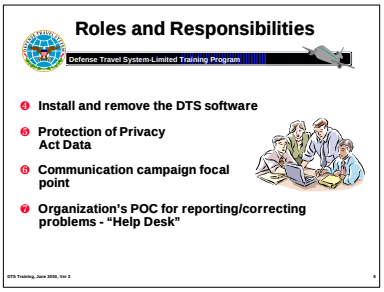
- Ensuring that the lines of accounting are properly established and labeled in the appropriate budgets in such a manner that is understandable by their Authorizing Official(s) (AO)

- Properly distributing funds and/or establishing lines of accounting in order to prevent a potential violation of the Antideficiency Act for which the funds control officer may be held accountable if funds distribution is not properly completed

(Because the finance function of the DTA is so critical additional information in this area will be presented later in this lesson.)

3) Retrieve data, generate reports, or review reports produced with the DTS software

Another responsibility and/or function the DTA may have to perform may be to retrieve data, generate reports and/or review reports that may be produced through the CUI.



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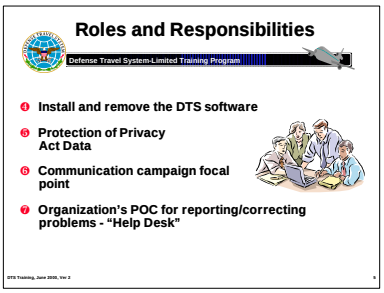
4) Install and remove the DTS software

The DTA may be called upon to install and, if necessary, remove the DTS software from their user workstations. The PMO, with the assistance of the DTS vendor (TRW) will be responsible for the initial "on-site" installation of the DTS software at selected locations. At other sites, installation will be accomplished with the assistance of PMO personnel, if required, through the use of the DTS software provided by the vender.



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5) Protect Privacy Act Data

Each organization's DTA will have to determine how to protect the Privacy Act Data that will be produced by DTS. The DTA must also ensure that all of their organization's computer security requirements are met IAW appropriate regulations and directives.

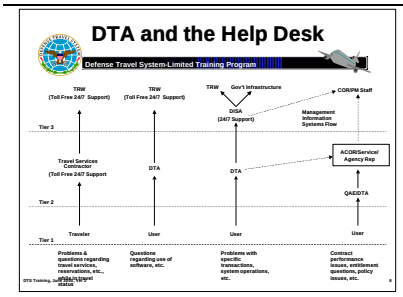
6) Communication campaign focal point

In order to better support the implementation of DTS, DOD has launched an extensive communications campaign.

Prior to, during, and after your organization has been brought on-line with the DTS information about DTS will be provided you through this campaign. It is envisioned that the DTA will serve as their organization's communication campaign focal point and assist in getting the word out to all their personnel on DTS.

7) Establish organizational "Help Desk"

The DTA should be the organizational point of contact for reporting any problems relating to use of the DTS and for reporting those problems, if necessary, to the appropriate government or vendor representative, as well as being the Point of Contact (POC) for receiving corrections to administration problems. This function of the DTA can best be described as the organizational help desk.



Slide 6

DTA AND THE HELP DESK

Let's take a little more in depth look at how the DTS Help Desk system is envisioned to work.

Having an effective, well-organized Help Desk is absolutely essential to the success of DTS at your location. Individuals using DTS will ask many questions and, if individuals are not in place to assist, the use of DTS could possibly break down causing much irritation and confusion.

While each Service/Agency will develop their own policies and procedures for tailoring the Help Desk for their mission, let's take a few minutes and review this slide while we discuss some recommendations as to how the DTS Help Desk is envisioned to be structured and function. Each organization will provide Help Desk instructions and phone numbers to both their Travelers and AOs. The key is to have the right people at the DTA/Help Desk to field and answer questions

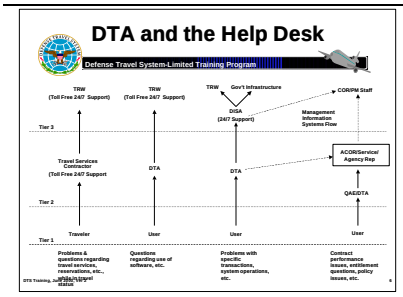
As the slide depicts, it is envisioned that there are three levels or Tiers of Help Desk support. Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3.

The bottom of this slide gives you sample problems and how the various levels of the Help Desk might solve them. Let's take a look at a few and see how they would be worked through the Help Desk process.

Questions regarding DTS software issues should go from the traveler/AO to their DTA (Tier 2) then, if necessary, to TRW for resolution.

Specific system problems should go to the DTA from the Traveler/AO, then from the DTA to TRW for resolution.

As you have seen with these examples, no Traveler/AO has called any organization at the Tier 3 level.



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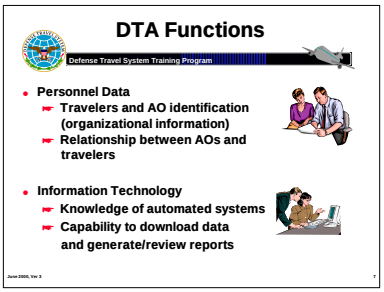
THE CHAIN OF COMMAND FOR THE HELP DESK SHOULD ALWAYS BE TRAVELER/AO TO DTA - THEN DTA, IF NECESSARY, TO THE APPROPRIATE TIER 3 ORGANIZATION.

The key to the Help Desk is to solve the problem at the lowest level. Again, no Traveler/AO (Tier 1) should ever call the Tier 3 organization. All Tier 3 inquiries for assistance should always be made by the DTA.

While this has been a brief description of how the DTA and the Help Desk should work, you should refer to specific Service/Agency policy for any unique requirements that may be necessary for the Help Desk based on the level of use your Service/Agency elects to employ. There is also a Help Desk Users Guide that is available to assist the DTA in organizing and their Help Desk.



Slide 7

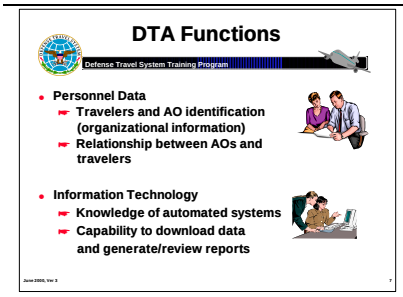
DTA FUNCTIONS

As we have previously discussed, DTA refers to an "Administration" as opposed to an "Administrator". This is primarily due to the variety of duties that the DTA may have to perform and/or be familiar with. It would be extremely difficult for one individual to have the breadth of knowledge required to perform all the DTA functions.

When you are considering who to select as part of your organization's DTA the following information may help in making your decision:

The DTA needs to be familiar with personnel data for their organization. This includes being able to identify who the travelers and AOs are as well as any additional personnel information that will be needed for input into specific DTS personal profiles.

Information Technology will be essential for the DTA.



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Therefore, an individual who has an understanding of automated systems and who will be able to create and review organizational data and reports may be an important part of the DTA.

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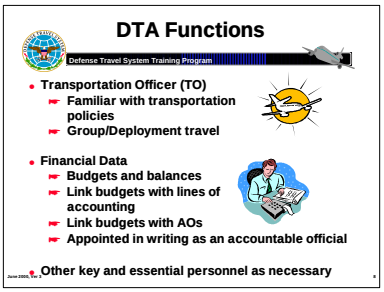


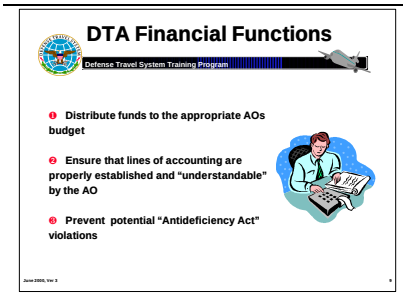
Slide 8

The Transportation Officer (TO) would certainly be an important member of the DTA as they are already involved in many aspects of travel for the organization

Someone with a financial background and expertise will certainly be needed in the DTA. The finance DTA should be familiar with their organization's financial processes so that they will be able to manage the organization's budgets and lines of accounting.

As you can see, it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for an organization to entrust all the duties and responsibilities of the DTA to one individual.

As we have previously said, there really is no limit as to who or how many personnel make up the DTA. Large organizations may have several individuals involved while a small organization could have one or two. It is up to the Services and Agencies to tailor the DTA to meet their travel requirements and the level of use that they have for DTS.



Slide 9

(NOTE: Additional information on organizational set-up, to include DTA financial functions, will be covered in detail during the block of instruction on set-u p)

DTA FINANCIAL FUNCTIONS

While all the components of the DTA are important, let's take a moment to look a little closer at the DTA Finance Functions.

As we previously discussed, one of the key functions of the DTA will be to perform and monitor all the financial aspects of travel for their organization. As such, they may be held accountable for their actions and must be so designated in writing as an accountable official.

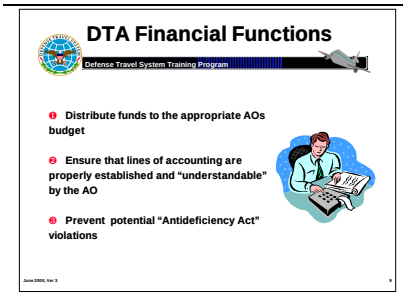
As we have previously discussed and as this slide indicates, some of the functions the finance DTA, based on level of DTS used may be:

1. Distributing funds to the appropriate travel budgets within their organization(s).

The DTA may be responsible for the distribution of funds to the appropriate AO's travel budget. For the purpose of this lesson, think of the budget as the electronic process for maintaining moneys needed to perform official travel. Each travel budget should be established based on the organization's current funding distribution procedures.

2. Ensuring that the lines of accounting are properly established and labeled in the appropriate budgets in such a manner that is understandable by their AOs and travelers.

The DTA must be very familiar with the lines of accounting format for their organization. The lines of accounting format structure will be different than the format used in financial systems. All DTAs must ensure that they use the correct format for setting up the lines of accounting for their organization.



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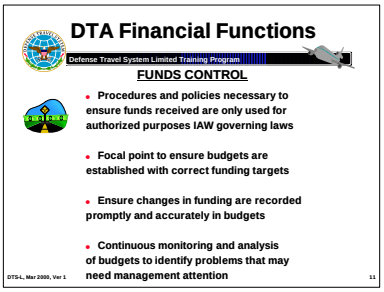
For each line of accounting, the DTA may create a separate travel budget for the AO or may associate multiple lines of accounting to a separate budget. AO's may be held responsible for multiple budgets depending on their organizational control.

3. Properly distributing funds and/or establishing lines of accounting in order to prevent a potential violation of the Antideficiency Act for which the funds control officer may be held accountable if fund distribution is not properly completed.

Financial DTAs must assure that funds have been properly distributed to prevent a potential violation of the Antideficiency Act (31 United States Code, Section 1517). Remember this Act "prohibits any officer or employee from making or authorizing an obligation under appropriation in excess of the amount available".

(**SEE FINANCE GUIDE FOR A DETAILED EXPLANATION OF THE ANTIDEFICIENCY ACT)**

(**COPY OF EACH SERVICE LOA FORMAT INCLUDED IN THE FINANCE GUIDE)**

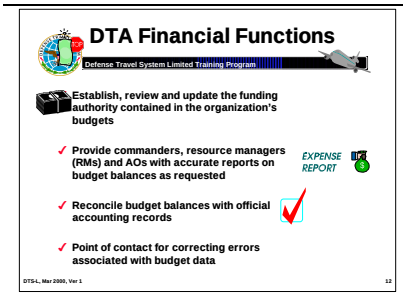


Slide 10

FUNDS CONTROL

As you have just seen, the Finance DTA may be intimately involved with funds control. This slide depicts some of those very important functions they could be involved with for their organization depending on how their organization uses DTS.

(HIGHLIGHT/DISCUSS SOME OF THE FUNCTIONS LISTED ON SLIDE)



Slide 11

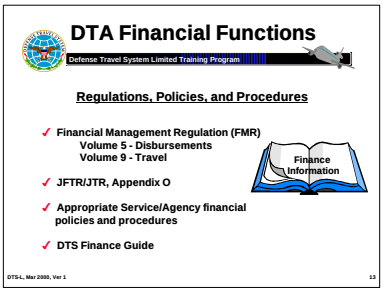
NOTE: Additional information will be presented on lines of accounting in the DTA administration training on how the lines of accounting will be entered and labeled in the system for use by the AOs and travelers.

OTHER DTA FINANCIAL FUNCTIONS

In addition to the functions we have just discussed, there are others that the Finance DTA may be called upon to perform.

(HIGHLIGHT/DISCUSS SOME OF THE FUNCTIONS LISTED ON SLIDE)

REMEMBER – NOT ALL OF THE FINANCE DTA FUNCTIONS WE HAVE JUST DISCUSSED WILL BE PERFORMED BY EVERY ORGANIZATION THAT IMPLEMENTS DTS. THE VARIOUS FUNCTIONS WILL BE BASED ON THE LEVEL OF USE FOR DTS THAT IS EMPLOYED BY THE SERVICE/AGENCY. IT IS A SERVICE/AGENCY DECISION ON WHICH FINANCIAL DUTIES THEY DESIRE BE PERFORMEND BY THE DTS FINANCE DTA.



Slide 12

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The DTA should be very familiar with the following finance regulations, policies and procedures. Most of these can be found electronically through links on the DTS WEB site.

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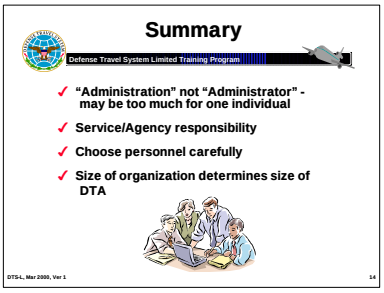
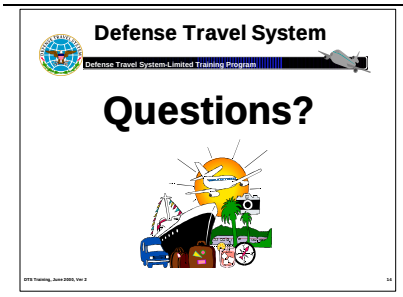


Slide 13

SUMMARY

We've covered a lot of information in this lesson so let's take a moment to summarize some of the key points we have discussed

(DISCUSS SLIDE INFORMATION)



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I hope that the preceding information has given you a better understanding of the DTA and the various functions and duties they may be required to perform.

While we have provided some guidance as to how best to organize and your DTA, it is up to each Service/Agency to determine what best meets their DTA needs. We will be getting into more specific details of the DTA organizational setup during the DTA Administration lesson for the DTS. Most of your questions on how the system will work will be answered at that time.

This concludes the DTA overview lesson. Are there any additional questions?