

NASA Travel Waiver Request

SECTION I – GENERAL INFORMATION	
Traveler Information	
Date: 3/7/2016	Center: ARC
Name of Traveler: Michael S Craig, Jennifer L. Dungan, Warren Gore, Mathew Johnson, Dave Jordan, Bernadette Luna, James Podolske, Jens Redemann, Kent Shiffer, Marilyn Vasques, Johny Zavaleta	Travel Authorization #: N/A
Agency Points-of-Contact (POC)	
<i>Center Travel POC:</i>	<i>NASA Shared Services Center POC</i>
Name: Farzana Moreno	Name:
Email Address: Farzana.moreno@nasa.gov	Email Address:
SECTION II - DESCRIPTION OF WAIVER REQUEST	
<p>Please describe the requested item or travel claim and reasons the request was denied, include cites to the applicable FTR and/or NASA policy requirements.</p> <p>Ames Research Center is requesting the approval of a waiver of the extended TDY per diem rates for travelers listed above. They are traveling or may be called to travel to support Ames' airborne science missions.</p> <p>This waiver is consistent with the annual request that Armstrong Flight Research Center and Ames Research Center combine for staff traveling in support of airborne science mission deployments. NPR for Reference:</p> <p>§ 301-11.203 What will NASA authorize for TDY and extended TDY assignments?</p> <p>NASA will authorize the following:</p> <p>B. Short Term Extended TDY Assignments Duration of 120 Days or Less: For TDY assignments of more than 30 days and not more than 120 days, the traveler will be reimbursed 65 percent of the maximum per diem rate established by GSA for that location, rounded up to the nearest dollar.</p>	
<p>Provide a detailed justification (factors supporting) the waiver request. Include any additional accommodations required, if any. Attach additional sheet(s) and supporting documents as considered necessary or desirable by the POC(s) or traveler for complete review and determination of the waiver request.</p>	
<p>Background:</p> <p>The Ames Research Center (ARC) staff participates in worldwide airborne science campaigns, as principal investigators, flight scientists, project managers or science instrument operators. The campaigns are typically from five weeks to two months in length, depending on the phenomenon to be studied. This year, for example, the timeframe for deployment support in Namibia for ORACLES is August 5 through September 30, approximately 57 days. These deployments frequently involve 12 to 14 hour days and</p>	

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nights for the deployed workforce, to handle tasks such as shipments, payments, hotel reservation changes, rental car swaps, coordination with local science colleagues, facility repairs, instrument maintenance needs, data processing, flight planning, forecasting and modeling, and the like, around flight activities. In FY16, the ARC Earth Science Project Office will support five missions (with approximate dates, inclusive of integration support and return shipment receipt):

1. Korea - U.S. Air Quality Study (KORUS-AQ) in Korea; March 23 - June 18
2. Atmospheric Tomography (ATom) in Alaska, Hawaii, American Samoa, New Zealand, Chile, Ascension Island, Azores, Greenland; June 19 - August 31
3. ObseRvations of Aerosols above CLouds and their intEractionS (ORACLES) in Africa; June 6 - October 3
4. Operation Ice Bridge (OIB) Antarctica in Punta Arenas, Chile; September 26 - November 22.
5. North Atlantic Aerosols and Marine Ecosystems Study (NAAMES) in St John's, Newfoundland

This request is pertinent to instrument (4STAR, SSFR and COMA) support and PI support for the ORACLES mission, and ESPO support of all five missions above. The other missions are listed to illustrate the scope of the entire FY16 travel requirement for these employees. Significant effort has been devoted to establish a travel plan that minimizes trips longer than 30 days. However, with so much travel required of this group, there is little depth for swapping staff. Also, the long travel time and fare expense to/from Africa makes swapping less practical in the case of ORACLES. Lastly, if personal emergency occurs for one intended traveler, it is another traveler from this group who is most capable of replacing them. This could result in an extended stay for one of the travelers.

Discussion:

There are difficulties that arise when the 30-day reduced per diem travel policy is applied to airborne science deployments:

- Different rules for persons on travel for less than 30 days versus persons on travel for more than 30 days can cause separation of the deployed team, reducing cohesion and complicating communication when separate lodging facilities are driven by the reduced lodging allowance.
 - Should some personnel be separated from the main body of the team by 10 miles or 30 minutes it is then necessary for these individuals to get separate transportation. This may negate any savings from lower cost lodging, lower per diem or group shuttle buses.
 - In addition, in many remote countries, automatic transmission rental cars are in short supply. Greater need for rental cars may mean remote staff is forced to obtain a manual transmission car in a country where traffic customs and auto configurations are not familiar, creating a potential safety hazard for the traveler.
- Long duty hours preclude time for setting up kitchen for food preparation for those required to do so
 - Hotels have to be contacted to ensure the facilities provide the necessary equipment and/or utensils, etc., to meet basic food preparation needs.
 - After working for 12-14 hours on a science flight, having to grocery shop and cook a meal is an unreasonable requirement
 - A good deal of mission-related communication occurs over post-mission meals, which help to develop team cohesion

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- Reduction of per diem can be a morale issue with employees who must deploy for longer than 30 days on a non-voluntary basis
- When possible Ames tries to limit deployment time to 30 continuous days with a swap-out of personnel, whenever staffing allows, and to separate deployments by 30 days when possible.
 - Reduces stress on deployed workers due to the high tempo of deployed operations
 - Reduces stress on workers families due to excessive time away from home
 - During CONUS missions, critical staff often deploy at the start and end of the mission window, with relief in the middle. However, long transits to some deployment locations (e.g., 30-35 hours to Walvis Bay, Namibia) makes one longer stay desirable over a state-side 'break' with subsequent re-deployment.
 - For the 31-day ORACLES flight window (August 23 - September 22, 2016), science team members must be in the field for approximately 35 days. Limiting travel duration to 30-days means the team must be twice as large, in order to swap out all team members once. It is difficult to sustain funding for a team inflated for deployment purposes only.
- Teams must maintain easy termination of lodging agreements when deployment plans change because a) the objectives are met, b) aircraft maintenance issues preclude flights, c) science instrument operational status precludes meeting science objectives, d) personal illness occurs or e) family issues require some employees to leave early, etc.
 - This need for flexibility may preclude longer term agreements with lodging facilities to realize significant cost savings

It is important that stresses inherent in deployed operations be controlled so that they do not interfere with mission accomplishment (to the maximum degree possible). These include:

- Lodging
 - Reasonable proximity to the airport being used for the deployment, but not so close as to interfere with crew rest
 - Able to provide a good sleeping environment to facilitate rest
 - This must be able to accommodate sleep during the day if night operations are required to accomplish mission objectives
 - Clean and healthy environment with facilities for rest and relaxation
 - Accommodations at the same hotel (or closely located hotels) for all personnel to facilitate good communication. In many of these locations, particularly Africa, reliability of internet and phone service is not the standard to which we are accustomed.
- Food
 - Reasonable proximity to lodging (within walking distance, if possible)
 - Limited or no time may be available for shopping, preparation, and safe storage of food.
 - Able to accommodate the operations schedule
 - Operations with pre- or post-flight instrument activities need to be able to access meals at most any time of day
 - Able to provide box meals or equivalent for staff on long duration flights, if applicable
- Local Transportation
 - Sufficient transportation to allow personnel to meet mission requirements
 - ESPO personnel must be able to arrive at the aircraft prior to the first science team member to prepare for pre-flight operations
 - ESPO personnel must be able to stay after the aircraft landing to survey instrument performance and issues, and provide support to science team members
 - ESPO must be able to obtain transportation independently of the aircraft crew and science team to prep for each day's activities
 - Sufficient to accommodate all meal requirements, including staggered meals if meals must be eaten during ongoing operations

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Guidelines that NASA Ames has implemented to control travel expenses include:

- Use of government vehicles or other transportation when feasible
- Use of government lodging, when available, within the requirements mentioned above that enhance safe mission accomplishment
- Making block room reservations, when feasible, to reduce lodging costs
- Choice of lower cost per diem locations for deployments, when feasible, that will still meet mission and science requirements
- An emphasis on reducing lodging and transportation costs while not impacting per diem for meals
- A minimum of three persons per rental vehicle, when mission considerations allow.

For the reasons mentioned above, ARC requests that the current NASA travel policy be modified such that deployments in support of airborne science are allowed the full per diem rate for up to 60 days.

Supporting Documentation (check all that apply)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 1. Travel Authorization (always required, including original and amendments) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 2. Post-trip voucher (always required if already approved; draft request if still pending) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 3. Receipts supporting amounts claimed that are in dispute |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 4. Other (describe): |

CONFIRMATION: By submitting this waiver request, the submitter confirms that he/she is sharing this waiver request and all supporting documentation with all persons identified in section 1—the traveler, the Center POC, and NSSC POC (for ETDY & PCS authorizations and claims, and all audited vouchers)

Name of Submitter:

Note: Signature is not required if submitted by NASA email to OCFO's Director for Policy at kevin.buford@nasa.gov. Concurrence as to the submission is presumed by the traveler and other POC(s) when they are cc'd on the email forwarding this request without objection. Anyone disagreeing with the submission should promptly notify all, and OCFO will reject and return the request for correction and resubmission. Any traveler or POC wanting to supplement a submission should do so promptly by further email to OCFO's Director for Policy and the traveler and POC(s).

SECTION III – OCFO DETERMINATION

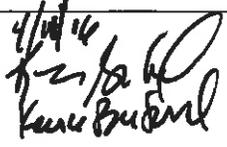
Determination by Director for Policy, NASA OCFO

Request No.:

Decision: [The request is approved/denied; rationale]

Approved,

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Date:	4/14/16
Signature:	
(Name):	Kenneth Brubaker