

**Memorandum Circular
No. 98 - 14
September 24, 1998**

SUBJECT : Guidelines on Foreign and Local Travels.

In compliance with Malacanang Administrative Order No. 372 dated December 27, 1997, otherwise known as the "Adoption of Economy Measures in Government for FY 1998", Commission on Audit Circular No. 96-004 dated April 19, 1996, and in order not to disrupt official transactions of all officials and employees in carrying out its targets, the following guidelines shall be promulgated/adopted:

A. Foreign Travel

1. International travel shall be restricted to highly necessary and urgent international activities. All travels shall be fully financed by funding foreign donors or counterparts except those authorized by the Office of the President;
2. No travel authority will be issued to officials who have not liquidated and submitted reports on their previous international travel;
3. Attendance to conferences/meetings/conventions shall be limited only to those essential to Philippine commitments in the international field and shall be represented by the Secretary and other officials/employees duly authorized by the Secretary;
4. Travel Authority of the Assistant Secretaries, Undersecretaries and Secretary shall be approved by the Office of the President while those of the Directors and below sponsored by donors/counterparts shall be approved by the

Secretary. Travels of officials/employees wherein expenses shall be borne by the Philippine Government shall be approved by the Office of the President;

5. Representation Allowances shall be paid only after the approval of the travel authority; and
6. Liquidation shall be within sixty (60) days after the completion for the travel and shall be supported by receipts, tickets and other evidences of actual expenditures. Certification or Affidavit of Loss shall not be considered.

B. Local Travel

1. Officials authorized to approve shall ensure the availability of funds allotted for traveling expenses in their respective travel plan;
2. Assignment of five (5) or more employees outside official stations for audit/examinations, investigation, inspections, evaluation and monitoring, verification, research studies installation, coverage and footages, shall be limited for five (5) days, covered by approved Special Orders issued by the respective Assistant Secretary;
3. To minimize travels, the use of communications such as e-mail, fax machine, radiogram, telephone long distance and speed mail is encouraged for purposes of collecting & validating data except on cases of confidential official business matters;
4. Liaison Officers/personnel can only claim actual transportation expenses;

5. Liquidation of travel shall be supported by receipts, tickets and other evidences of actual expenditures. Affidavit of Loss is not acceptable. Liquidation shall be as follows:
 - a. Travel shall be liquidated within thirty (30) days and supported by FMS Travel Order Form No. 34 hereby attached;
 - b. Travel by plane shall be liquidated after ten (10) days supported by used plane tickets, etc. to the Accounting Division, FMS; and
 - c. Unused plane ticket shall be returned to the Management Division, FMS after ten (10) days of the scheduled flight for refund and records purposes.
6. No travel order will be issued to officials who have not liquidated and submitted report on their previous travel;
7. When a trip is cancelled, the amount paid in advance if any, shall be refunded in full;
8. Any deviation in the travel itinerary, the transportation and traveling allowances shall be adjusted and the difference shall be refunded or be paid;
9. In normal situations, all officials/employees on official trips are required to travel by PAL or through its connections in support of the Philippine Air Lines (PAL), our flag carrier and in compliance with Office of the President's Memorandum Circular No. 98 dated August 5, 1994;
10. Travels shall be coordinated with the Undersecretary for Field Operations for travels within the regions and Undersecretary for environment and Programs Development for travels within the Bureaus for review of purposes in order to minimize the number of personnel to travel due to limited financial resources;

11. Granting of cash advance for traveling expenses is prohibited to contractual employees under other services (200-29);
12. Non-OSEC officials/employees and contractual charged to other services (200-29 except when stipulated on the contract) can claim traveling expenses on reimbursement only; and
13. The simplified travel order form (FMS Travel Order No. 34) shall be used in compliance with Memorandum dated July 31, 1998 and shall be coursed through the Personnel Division, HRMS for control/numbering.

This Circular shall take effect immediately and rescinds, amends all other previous issuance's inconsistent herewith.

(Sgd.) ANTONIO H. CERILLES
Secretary