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Guidelines on Air Travel

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African National Congress

The Problem: In January 1992, ANC staff spent a total of R466 000 on air travel alone.

None of our donors are prepared to put money into air travel. Therefore, we have no choice but to impose new regulations to limit the amount of air travel expenses incurred throughout the organisation.

The problem arises primarily because members of departments assume they can get any ticket that they want within the country and the Southern African region, with no financial

constraints. They use full-fare tickets automatically. Some staff members even book their tickets directly with a travel agent, without going through the Transport Department.

A second factor has been the number of booked but unused tickets. On the whole, ten per cent of tickets purchased by the ANC are never used. This no-show rate has reached a point of causing concern among some of the smaller airlines, such as Swazi Air. For every "no-show" ticket, even if reclaimed, the ANC must pay a penalty; on some airlines this can be as high as 50% of the ticket price. Often the Transport Department is not even informed that

the tickets have not been used; and when the invoice arrives the Department does not know which tickets were actually used and which were not.

The Guidelines: The purpose of these guidelines, therefore, is to regularise and reduce air travel expenditure, through putting into place an effective authorisation procedure.

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Responsibility of the Transport Department: It is the responsibility of the Transport Department to purchase ALL tickets for members of the organisation, through an authorised travel agent. Tickets procured by individual members of staff or Departments on their own without prior consultation with the Transport Department will not in future be paid by the ANC.

In future, the Transport Department will quote an order number for each ticket with the travel

agency. If the travel agency submits any invoice without such a number, the ANC will not pay; and payment will be exacted from the individual staff member involved. If the Transport

Department makes an order by telephone, the order number must be quoted; and the written order must follow.

(In case of emergencies, Cde. Mlangeni must be contacted at home for authorisation.)

Responsibility of the Finance Department: The Finance Department has the responsibility to establish air travel budgets, based upon our organisation's financial capability.

Target: It is proposed that the first target should be to reduce air travel expenses paid by

the organisation to a total of R150 000 per month, with immediate effect. (This sum does not include any air travel by staff members funded outside the ANC.)

In consultation with the departments, the Treasury proposes splitting this sum amongst the departments as indicated on attached list. These will not include any extra-ordinary air travel.

Extra-ordinary air travel is identified as:

1. N.E.C. meetings

2. National workshops, seminars, and briefing meetings, funded directly

These proposed departmental air travel budgets will be followed for two months, after which they will be reviewed.

Responsibilities of Departments and individual staff members:

General Guidelines for Authorisation of Air Travel:

1. Air tickets will be issued for travel to and from the following regions only, due to the distances involved: Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Border and the Transkei. Comrades travelling from or to any other region must use buses, taxis, or cars. Even for the distant regions, air travel will only be used if the need is urgent; otherwise road

transport must be given preference (e.g. overnight luxury buses).

2. Where ever possible, late night flights and APEX tickets must be used (costing up to half the normal flight fares). Note that often these must be booked well i n

advance. Only under exceptional cases will the Transport Department authorise the purchase of full fare tickets.

3. If a staff member must use air travel, the authorisation must be given in writing by the NWC member responsible for that department. This will occur even where the funds are available within the allotted budget of the department.

We note that the financial guidelines adopted by the National Conference in July 1991 agreed that a request for travel should be accompanied by a written motivation for the political need for this expenditure.

4. If members of staff must travel by air to special workshops and seminars, these expenses must come from the normal department air travel budget or from separate funds allocated to the workshop.

5. Aides for officials and senior leadership: The committee of officials shall from time to time identify those officials entitled to aides who will accompany them when travelling, both within the country and overseas. The committee must specify the number of aides assigned to the official.

If an official is to take more than the assigned number of aides on a trip, special approval

must be obtained from the Treasurer General for additional tickets.

6. Air Charters: All air charter must be authorised by the Treasurer General. Air charters may be resorted to only where a group of people will travel to the same destination;

and the unit cost of travel by regular airlines to that destination will cost more than the unit

cost of air charter.

THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SHOULD NOTE THAT THE ANC WILL NOT PAY FOR ANY TICKETS BOUGHT WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION AND WITHOUT A CORRECT ORDER NUMBER.

Failure to Show:

Because some ten per cent of the tickets purchased by the ANC have not been used, the following measures will be instituted.

1. If the ANC purchases a ticket for an individual member of staff, the traveller must return the ticket voucher to the organisation as proof of travel.

2. If the department organises a workshop and tickets are purchased, the department must submit a report indicating who attended the workshop, who used the tickets, and which tickets were not used.

3. If a traveller cannot use a booked ticket, he or she must inform the Transport Department at least twenty-four hours before the planned trip that they will not travel. Failure to do this

will result in the money being deducted from the individual traveller or the department's air travel budget. If the cancellation is beyond the traveller's control, penalties will

rest with the ANC. However, a decision that the ANC will cover the penalty must be made by the NWC member responsible for the department, who must write to Transport on behalf of the individual.

Penalties:

a. For airlines outside SAA, such as trips from Johannesburg to Richards Bay and Maputo, cancellation penalties are half of the fare.

b. For SAA late night and APEX type flights, failure to show penalties are 25% of the value of the fare.

0. Ordinary SAA tickets are refunded, but SAA takes a R44 administration fee for the refund.

Car Hire:

We note that cars have been hired by Departments through Transport but not returned by the due date. In future, Departments will be expected to do this only with prior consultation

and a request for an extension with the Transport Department. Where such prior consultation does not take place, the individual staff member involved will be held liable for excess charges.

The Treasury notes that the Transport Department has on occasion hired cars on behalf of individual members of staff for private use. Transport has not always been able to recover

the costs from these individuals. We see this as a convenient service to staff. It has been

agreed that our Transport Department will in future facilitate hiring of cars by staff members

through a travel agent, but that the account will in these cases be in that staff member's

name, and will not come through the ANC.

Departmental Monthly Budget for Air Travel

Proposed Amount

Departments per Month (Hands)

1. President's Office 30 000
2. Deputy President's Office 10 000
3. Chairman's Office 10 000
4. S.G.O. 10 000
5. T.G.O. 6 000
6. Negotiations Commission 10 000
7. DIP 5 000
8. DIA 10 000
9. Organising 2 500
10. DPE 2 500
11. Finance 2 500
12. B.T.S. 2 500
13. Information Systems 2 500
14. Projects 1 500
15. DAC ' 7 000
16. DEP 5 000
17. Education Dept. 5 000
18. MK. 5 000
19. NAT. 5 000
20. Land Commission 2 500
21. Social Welfare 5 000
22. Legal Department 2 500
23. Health Department 2 500
24. Human Resources 2 500
25. Public Relations 2 500

Total Budget: 148 000

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