

UNCLAS STATE 032126

E.O. 13526: N/A

TAGS: ATRN, AMGT

SUBJECT: PET TRAVEL: NEW OPTIONS FOR USING NON-CONTRACT CARRIERS

1. SUMMARY. Effective immediately, when pets cannot be checked as accompanied baggage, the traveler may use the government rates of a non-contract airline that will accept the pet as baggage. This exemption to mandatory use of a contract carrier outlined in 14 FAM 543 is in addition to exceptions allowing travelers to use excursion or other low fares offered by various carriers. If the airline does allow the pet to be checked as baggage, this exemption does not apply and the traveler must use the contract carrier. The new exemption applies to all airlines participating in the City Pair Program (CPP). **END SUMMARY.**

2. Travelers must still comply with the Fly America Act, and space available for pets is not an accepted exemption to that law. Travelers must use a U.S. carrier (including codeshares) if available. Some travelers may qualify for an exemption to Fly America under the Open Skies Agreement approved by the Department of Transportation (see FTR Bulletin 02, <http://www.gsa.gov/graphics/ogp/FTRBulletin11-02USEUOpenSkies.PDF>) when the travel originates, transits, or terminates in a European Union (EU) member country.

3. All exemptions to the CPP must be documented on the DS- 022 (<http://eforms.a.state.gov/editdocument.aspx?documentid=234>). If confirmed space for pets as checked baggage is required and unavailable, the full details of the contract carrier's inability to meet mission requirements should be noted on the form. Travelers must pay any difference in cost between the CPP fare and that of the non-contract carrier to include the cost of moving the pet, as there can be no increased travel cost to the U.S. government.

4. The change to 14 FAM 543 a. (1) reads as follows:

"a. The use of contract air carriers offering discount (city-pair) fares between certain cities, contracted for by the General Services Administration (GSA), are considered advantageous to the U.S. Government, and their use by travelers and procurement officials is mandatory for authorized air travel between the city-pair except when:

(1) Space on a scheduled contract flight (including a confirmed space for pets as checked baggage) is not available in time to accomplish the purpose of your travel, or use of contract service would require you to incur unnecessary overnight lodging costs which would increase the total cost of the trip;

NOTE: When pet movement is the determining factor for non-use of the contract carrier because there is no ability to move the pet as checked baggage on the same flight as the traveler under 14 FAM 543 exception a. (1) above, the traveler and not the USG is responsible for travel costs exceeding the most economical direct travel routing and for the airline cost of moving the pet."

5. Comments, questions or concerns regarding this telegram should be directed to Transportationquery@State.gov. You may also wish to review our list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on our web page at <http://almopsttm.a.state.gov/PetsFAQ.htm>.

6. Minimize considered.

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