



## WoAG Travel Advice 2020/04

10 March 2020

### Leisure Offers and the Acceptance of Gifts and Benefits – WoAG Travel Arrangements

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Dear Entity Travel Managers

On 18 October 2019, the APSC released its revised guidance on the acceptance of [Gifts and Benefits by Australian Government officials](#) (guidelines). Among a range of measures, the guidelines articulate the minimum requirements that agency heads must establish to adhere to the requirements of the guidance.

Suppliers to the Whole of Australian Government travel arrangements periodically release exclusive leisure travel offers for employees of the Commonwealth and their travel companions. These can take the form of short-term offers (e.g. an airline discount for a finite period) or a perpetual offer such as from Hertz Australia. Leisure travel offers are approved by WoAG Travel prior to release.

Finance has previously consulted with the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) regarding such offers and the APSC has confirmed that where these types of offers are made to all Australian Government employees as part of a deal negotiated by the Commonwealth, these offers may be accepted.

The APSC has recently confirmed to WoAG Travel that its past advice endures i.e. that travel-related leisure offers may still be accepted. However, the APSC added that if a benefit is received by an official through the acceptance of a leisure travel offer exceeding the reporting threshold of \$100, then it would be the intention of the policy that it is reported, in accordance with an entity's decisions in relation to reporting for staff.

For clarity, the APSC summarised its advice as:

- The intention of the guidelines is to support transparency;
- The APSC guidelines relate to requirements for agency heads to report publically on gifts and benefits received, with a value in excess of \$100:
  - For example, if your agency head was to receive a benefit from discounted air travel with a value in excess of \$100, then it should be reported, in accordance with the guidelines.
- For other staff, it is up to each entity to determine what should be declared by staff, in accordance with your internal policies, i.e. whether it will report gifts and benefits received by staff, and how:
  - For example, an entity may decide to report gifts for SES officers by name, and non-SES officers by individual gift but not by name. These are decisions for the entity.

Please refer to the APSC's website for detailed guidance, or contact WoAG Travel if you have any questions about the contents of this Advice.

