

May 2002

## International Travel

Effective immediately, the State of Louisiana is implementing a pilot program for the purchase of international airfares by employees of the LSU System. International airfares available from other sources may be less expensive than fares available from the contract travel agency. Therefore, the State is implementing a pilot program, for international airfares only, to allow LSU employees the option to purchase international airfares outside the contract agency.

Once an employee has been granted approval to travel internationally, the employee is free to either (1) book their airfare through the State contracted travel agency or (2) utilize one of the options below:

**Option 1:** If an employee decides to seek and finds a lower fare available from a source other than the State-contracted travel agency, the employee may purchase that ticket without any State approvals **if the cost is at least 30% cheaper than the State-contracted airfare to the destination city** (see fares on the State Travel web site). The cost of the transaction fee charged by the travel agency **is not** to be used in the calculation.

**Option 2:** If an employee seeks and finds a lower fare available from a source other than the State-contracted travel agency and there is no contract fare for the destination city, the employee must obtain from the outside source a copy of the proposed itinerary and the complete cost. This information must be faxed to the Navigant office at (225) 930-6666 for review. Navigant will determine if they can match or beat the airfare and, within 24 hours, fax back a response. If they can match or beat the fare, the ticket must be purchased from Navigant and the exception request will not be approved. If they cannot match the price, Navigant will stamp the itinerary “approved” for outside purchase using a special stamp. Attached to the travel voucher, this approval will be acceptable to obtain reimbursement of the cost of the ticket not purchased through Navigant.

Employees must use caution when purchasing tickets from sources other than the State-contracted travel agency, particularly penalty fares, many of which cannot be changed. Navigant will no longer be available to help with changes, cancellations, or other needs when a ticket has not been purchased through their office. It will be the responsibility of the employee to ensure the ticket meets their needs and to make changes, cancellations, etc. after the ticket is purchased. Any fees associated with changes/cancellations are also the responsibility of the employee and will not be reimbursed.

The pilot program will operate until further notice—until such time as a proper assessment of the impact of the pilot program has been made.