

CHAPTER E.1	TRAVEL AND DISBURSEMENTS POLICY
1.1	Objective/Purpose
1.2	Applicability
1.3	Procedural Guidelines

E.1 TRAVEL AND DISBURSEMENTS POLICY

1.1 OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

This Policy is in addition to the Public Finance Management Act, No.1 of 1999 which governs unauthorised, irregular, fruitless or wasteful expenditure by AgriSETA designates. It does however intent to set clear guidelines to reimburse travelling costs.

The AgriSETA considers procuring subsistence and travel allowance for business related expenditure as a basic condition of employment. AgriSETA designates are reimbursed for authorised, unforeseen and incidental expenses whilst attending to official business. The AgriSETA Travel and Subsistence Policy is structured to prevent designated persons not take unfair advantage of this benefit.

1.2 RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of departmental managers to ensure that travel for staff is approved timeously;

AgriSETA will not be held accountable for staff misconduct on travel and staff will be held personally liable.

1.3 SCOPE

This policy is designed to address all travel for AgriSETA, including, but not limited to the following:

- * Domestic Air Travel;
- * Foreign Air Travel;
- * Car Hire;
- * Private vehicles;
- * Accommodation;
- * Allowances; and
- * Insurance.

The policy applies to:

- Designated staff that are by virtue of their contract of employment with the AgriSETA required to travel;
- Candidates that are shortlisted for interview in lieu of filling a vacancy at the AgriSETA;
- Delegates that are co-opted by the AgriSETA to perform special duties;
- Persons that are duly authorised that have to travel representing the AgriSETA;

- Board Members and Standing Committee's of the Authority that are required to travel on behalf of AgriSETA.

1.4 PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

Local Travel

Authorisation

The authorisation of journeys takes place within the Framework of the Delegation of Authority.

All journeys have to be authorised prior to finalising the travelling arrangements. Proper documentary evidence justifying the journey and specifying the period of travel, mode of transport, and accommodation is required upon authorisation.

This section of the Travel and Subsistence policy acknowledges that urgent or ad-hoc travelling may be necessary due to the nature of business which may aggravate prior authorisation. The proper AgriSETA Booking Procedure should be adhered to in the event that urgent or ad-hoc travelling imposes on the principle of prior approval. Authorisation of such journey and applicable expenditure will be adhered to upon return and in accordance with the Framework of the delegation of Authority and the prescribed accounting practices of the AgriSETA.

Authorised expenditure covers actual expenditure which includes accommodation, refuelling in case of car rental, cost of car rental, cost per kilometre in case of using personal car, parking costs, air ticket, meals, and per diem subject to the Prescribed Rates and Guidelines.

Any deviation from this policy shall require extraordinary motivation. Upon assessment the designate may be charged in accordance with the AgriSETA Disciplinary Guidelines and Procedures followed by appropriate action to remedy deviances.

Changes or cancellations to the travel request is the responsibility of the particular AgriSETA designate travelling and should be authorised as guided by this Policy.

Per Diem - Daily Subsistence & Travel (S & T) Allowance

This section applies to AgriSETA designates specified in this policy when having to leave their residence and stay overnight for official AgriSETA business purposes.

A fixed daily allowance applies to AgriSETA designates to defray costs during official business travel. The prescribed rates for expenditure are reflected in SARS Guidelines for Employers Allowances.

The same categories for expenditure applies when AgriSETA designates specified in this policy having to overnight during official business when it is unpractical to return their normal weekly place of residence the same day because of extended business.

Guidelines for application:

It is compulsory that designates attach original receipts when claiming for breakfast, lunch and supper.

Claims in lieu of the incidental costs (*per diem*) may include but are not limited to refreshments, telephone costs and ironing which should not exceed the specified rate. It is not compulsory to submit receipts when claiming for incidental costs.

Designates may not claim for expenses had it been included and paid with the accommodation.

Designates may not claim the cash amount or any balances of unused allowances.

Private Vehicle Usage

Travelling expenses in respect of private vehicles utilised by members or staff for official purposes, shall be reimbursed in accordance with the tariff structure approved by the Board regardless of the engine capacity of the vehicle

The tariff approved by the Board includes fuel consumption, capital, insurance and depreciation of vehicles. When staff proceeds on an official journey, the official mileage should be calculated from the place of work to the destination and back. Accuracy of the claims is the responsibility of the person who is approving the claim. Should it be more cost effective to hire a car than to use private vehicles, a cost comparison must be approved by the CEO.

In respect of members preferring not to fly but to travel by road to attend meetings, they should be reimbursed to a maximum of a local flight whichever is lesser.

Toll gate expenditure will be reimbursed on submission of proof.

Members should avoid double dipping in terms of claiming of travel allowance.

Any costs incurred in the form of fines, e.g. traffic fines, parking tickets for transgressing the traffic regulations, will be borne by the affected official.

Insurance for Domestic Business Travel

An employee using his/her own car for business is expected to ensure that his/her vehicle is comprehensively insured, and the insurance company make the relevant endorsement to the policy for business use. AgriSETA will accept no responsibility for any claim arising from damage or theft when personal vehicles are used for business purposes.

When carrying AgriSETA equipment, such as personal computers, staff members are expected to ensure that such equipment is locked in the boot of the car, and that the car is not left in locations where it is at risk. Appropriate remedial action which includes disciplinary action may be instituted when substantive evidence indicates that an individual was negligent.

Although AgriSETA does carry insurance on all its equipment, disciplinary action may be taken if it is of the opinion that an individual has been negligent with its equipment. The disciplinary action could result in the person being held financially liable for such losses.

Air Travel

The following class of travelling is applicable and any changes made by the relevant authority i.e. Minister of Finance or nominated authority shall immediately prevail upon pronouncement:

LEVEL	Class of Travel – Local & Africa
CEO	Business Class
Chairperson of the Board	Business Class
Board Members	Economy Class
Managers	Economy Class
All other staff	Economy Class
Non AgriSETA	Dependant on the seniority of the person

Staff	travelling as authorised by the CEO
-------	-------------------------------------

This class of travel is at the discretion of the CEO and may be adjusted for specific travel requests taking into consideration the following factors:

- The motivation and/or reason for the air travel request;
- The urgency of the travel requirement;
- The travel period, i.e. if the travel time is considerable without proper recovery time;
- The financial circumstances of the AgriSETA or Business Unit;
- The health of the traveller;
- The frequency of the person's travel.

The policy does not allow for the upgrading of tickets for any reason unless there is no cost implication for the AgriSETA.

Should a person wish to downgrade it's class of travel to enable a spouse to accompany him/her, this must be authorised in accordance with the Framework of the Delegation of Authority. Where such permission is granted, relevant perks tax will have to be paid on this fringe benefit. Any costs exceeding the original cost would be for the account of the person travelling.

Bookings must be made well in advance to ensure that AgriSETA receives the benefit of reduced tariff. Should the traveller's wishes to cancel the booking for any reason whatsoever, this must be done in advance to avoid AgriSETA incurring unnecessary expenses. Appropriate remedial action to recover such losses may include disciplinary action.

Road Transportation arrangements at the point of destination

Members of staff are entitled to make use of the AgriSETA's preferred supplier for car rentals at the point of destination, if it is economically justifiable.

When more than one person up to a maximum of 3 are travelling, only one vehicle may be rented unless there are separate agendas at the point of destination which necessitates the renting of separate vehicles.

Drivers are reminded that it is compulsory to carry their valid driving licences with them. The driving licence has to be checked by the car rental company upon taking receipt of the vehicle.

AgriSETA will "self insure" when renting cars and as such, travellers are not required to purchase:

Collision Damage Waiver Insurance, or
Personal Accident Insurance, or
Theft Waiver Insurance.

Train, Bus and Taxi

Employees using trains, buses, metered/minibus taxis, lifts, private drivers (friends etc) shall be reimbursed on presentation of receipts.

Note: By virtue of the fact that those travelling on mini bus taxis, with friends, family members and colleagues may not be in possession of receipts, travel claims shall be approved on presentation of a formal letter (affidavit) attesting to the costs incurred.

Parking at the Airport

Shuttle services from all major centres as well as from most accommodation suppliers are available and must be utilised wherever possible should it be more economical than parking at the airport. Shuttle services must be booked via the contracted agencies. Travelling to and from the airport will be for the designate's own account should such individual resolved not to use the pre-arranged shuttle service.

Insurance on local air travel

Employees and members of the authority travelling on air locally for AgriSETA business will be insured by AgriSETA. The insurance cover will include the following;

- Medical;
- Personal liability;
- Baggage.

Accommodation

The accommodation for all travel should not exceed R1 600.00 per night (bed & breakfast) or a three star hotel. Accommodation exceeding R1 600.00 should be approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

Accommodation should preferably be booked to include breakfast and dinner, however where it has been excluded meals should be claimed as per allowed meal allowance.

Where the AgriSETA designates wishes to make use of private accommodation instead of using approved accommodation no accommodation costs will be paid for, other than the daily S&T allowance and meal allowance.

The AgriSETA approved travel agent has been mandated to ensure compliance with these standards.

Laundry/Valet

If travelling for an extended period of time i.e. more than 7 days, the cost of reasonable laundry or dry cleaning services may be re-imbursed. AgriSETA reserves the right to change what it believes to be excessive against an employee's salary, unless justifiable reason is granted for such excessive use.

Theft from Hotel Rooms

When carrying valuables, employees are encouraged to use the hotel safe facility to safeguard their property. AgriSETA will accept no liability for personal property stolen from hotels.

AgriSETA staff, must at all times, officially check out from hotels or any other such establishments, to ensure all bills are settled.

Foreign Travel

Foreign travel must be approved in accordance with the Delegation of Authority. Overseas trips must be well planned to ensure that it is as cost effective as possible and bookings must be made well in advance to ensure that AgriSETA receives the benefit of reduced tariff.

Foreign Currency

Any foreign currency purchased must be exchanged for currency acceptable by South African currency dealers. The exchange rate will be translated on the ruling rate at the transaction date of obtaining the foreign currency.

Limitations

No claim for toll fees, parking, general transport will be paid unless the official concerned submits the original receipts together with his or her claim forms;

No claims for travel expenses shall be paid where any three of the following documents are not attached: trip authority, invitation, attendance register and log sheet;

Any costs incurred in the form of traffic fines, will be borne by affected official;

The authorisation of claims by a manager who is not responsible for the claimant is not permissible; and

Cancelled trips will be for the traveller's account, if no reasonable explanation is given to justify the cancellation. Such cancellation has to be authorised by the manager responsible for the traveller.

Advances

Request for advances will only be granted upon the Finance Department receiving an approved application for the following:

- To purchase traveller's cheques;
- To purchase foreign exchange;
- To cover subsistence and daily allowance;
- The daily allowance shall be approved by the Board.

All advances are to be cleared within 5 working days of returning from an official trip. If not cleared within the stipulated period, the advance will be recovered from the employee's salary without prior notification.

Proof of Expenditure

Upon Return from the trip, an employee or member of the authority must submit all documentary proof substantiating the advance that was received, so that it can be reconciled. All unused money must be refunded. Where no documentary proof exists, the person will be held accountable and will therefore have to refund the money.

END OF POLICY