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PRIME MINISTER. 1.

You asked for simpler travel instructions for ministers. Flag A is a Note to Ministers, Flag B guidance to their offices to be issued under your authority. These take account of your earlier comments, on version at Flag C. Agree? MAF 11/12  
11 May 1979

Dear Nick,

MINISTERIAL TRAVEL

We have discussed the Prime Minister's request for a reduced and simplified version of the draft memorandum to her colleagues which was submitted to her earlier.

... I hope that the attached redraft meets the Prime Minister's wishes by separating the general principles to be drawn to Ministers' attention from the more detailed guidance to be available for Private Secretaries. You will see we have considerably edited the material.

Perhaps I could add that the purpose of making detailed guidance available to Private Secretaries has been:

- a. to secure the maximum economy consistent with Ministerial convenience and the efficient despatch of Government business;
- b. to ensure reasonable consistency and public credibility in an area which has on occasions been the subject of Parliamentary Questions and newspaper articles.

In the absence of quite detailed guidance the task of those often junior civil servants whose job it is to try to meet the needs of Ministers within a predetermined, and strictly limited, number of cars and MOD aircraft is made much more difficult.

Yours sincerely,  
David.

DAVID LAUGHRIN  
Private Secretary

Excellent - it was worth while being 'difficult'.  
ant

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DRAFT

C(PR)(79)  
May 1979

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TRAVEL BY MINISTERS

Note by the Prime Minister

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Being a Minister increasingly involves a lot of travel. Travel is expensive in both Ministers' time and direct transport costs. As a Government we are committed to securing the greatest possible economy and efficiency. Since travel by Ministers is often very much in the public eye, we must all strive to make the most efficient and cost effective arrangements for our travel using commonsense about the means we adopt.

The guiding principles are:

a. propriety

Official transport should not normally be used for travel arrangements arising from Party or private business, except where this is justified on security grounds;

b. efficient use of resources

The availability of some services such as the Government Car Service and RAF aircraft has to be limited to ensure efficient use of resources;

c. cost consciousness

The cost of alternative arrangements should be considered before decisions involving substantial cost are made, especially where special flights are being considered as an alternative to scheduled services;

d. security

For certain Ministers, security factors make special arrangements necessary;

e. public presentation

Colleagues should be satisfied that their arrangements could be defended in public if challenged.

... I have approved guidance (contained in the attached Memorandum) which should enable Private Offices to make suitable travel arrangements. I have no doubt that my colleagues will at all times exercise good sense and judgement in these matters.



B

## GUIDANCE ON TRAVEL BY MINISTERS

I. The Use of Official Cars

1. Cabinet Ministers, Ministers in charge of major Departments and such other Ministers as the Prime Minister may indicate will have first call on cars in the Government Car Service pool. When the Minister concerned does not require the car it will be available for other use (see Paragraph 7).
2. On Mondays to Fridays Ministers may use a car in London (the Metropolitan Police District) for any purpose (other than Party business, see Paragraph 5) which will secure a saving of their time. They may also use it for the purpose of attending an official engagement outside the Metropolitan Police District if that is the most convenient way of travelling to their destination.
3. Ministers are permitted to use an official car for home to office journeys on the understanding that they would normally be carrying classified papers on which they would be working. Ministers may use official cars for journeys from London to a house in the country if they have been seriously delayed by their official duties and other means of transport are not conveniently available. Such journeys should not exceed 50 miles in either direction.
4. It is desirable, as far as possible, to keep the hours of duty of drivers within reasonable limits. Ministers must therefore be prepared to use any car at weekends (see also Paragraph 7). At these times cars may normally be used only for official purposes or for social occasions of an official character in London. Cabinet Ministers and Ministers specified by the Prime Minister may, however, use a car from a pool outside London at weekends for journeys of up to 50 miles between home and an airport or railway station conveniently placed in relation to a Government car pool.
5. Except for Ministers covered by the special arrangements in Paragraph 6, official cars should not be used for journeys on Party business, such as constituency visits or attendance at Party meetings. There is, however, no objection to using an official car if the meeting involving Party business takes place immediately between two official engagements in the course of the working week.
6. The Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for Defence, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Home Secretary, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, and any other Minister for whom the security authorities exceptionally consider it essential may use their official cars for all journeys by road, including those for private or Party purposes. A charge will be made for the use of the official car on journeys for private or Party purposes which are outside the provisions of Paragraph 2-5. The charges will be on the basis of the Civil Service Motor Mileage Allowance.
7. Car drivers are required to keep records in the form of log sheets. Journeys between points within five miles of Whitehall will not be recorded individually, but all other journeys outside this area will be detailed in full. Ministers will be responsible for ensuring that cars are used only for authorised journeys, and for identifying which journeys require repayments. Log sheets will



be sent weekly to Ministers' Private Secretaries for authorisation. Private Secretaries will be responsible for ensuring:

- a. the release of drivers and cars whenever possible to return to the Government Car Service pool and help out on other work.
- b. that first call cars are not used at weekends if other pool cars are available.
- c. that spot checks are made on log sheets to check the time when the driver is dismissed.

8. Other Ministers without first call on a car may use the cars in the Government Car Service pool for official purposes and to and from work when pressed for time. For short official journeys in Central London they may use taxis and claim repayment.

9. When travelling on official business, a Minister may use a private car instead of an official car, and claim a mileage allowance in the same circumstances and on the same terms as civil servants.

10. Subject to the general rules set out above, a Minister's spouse may use the car for official engagements. Official cars may not in any circumstances be used by the spouses of Ministers in connection with private or political functions or engagements.

## II. Rail Travel

11. Ministers qualify for First Class Travel.

## III. Air Travel

### Scheduled passenger services

12. All Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries on official visits have discretion to use civil scheduled flights in this country and abroad if they consider that this will save time. Wherever possible British airlines should be used, but if a Minister's routing or the time of the journey makes this impossible, subject to any security restraints which may apply, a scheduled flight on a foreign airline may be taken, preference to be given, for security reasons, to well established international airlines of Commonwealth or NATO countries.

### Non-Scheduled special flights

13. These are flights for official purposes, in this country and abroad, using aircraft belonging to the Ministry of Defence or commercial operators. They are much more expensive than scheduled passenger services and may only be authorised in the manner and circumstances described in paragraph 14 and 15 below. They must not be used or diverted for journeys to or from Party business, such as constituency visits or attendance at Party meetings. When the time factor is critical, diversions from direct routes may, however, be authorised to collect or deliver a Minister to an airfield near his or her home provided that the only extra costs result from the extra flying time needed to carry out the additional landing and take-off.



14. Members of the Cabinet and Ministers in charge of departments only have discretion to authorise these special flights either for themselves or for other Ministers within their Departments. Cabinet Ministers may authorise special flights when a scheduled service is not available, or when it is essential to travel by air, but the requirements of official or Parliamentary business or security considerations preclude the journey being made by a scheduled service. Special flights may also be authorised by members of the Cabinet if they or other Ministers are required urgently on unforeseen official business. Use of special flights by Parliamentary Secretaries should only be approved in exceptional circumstances.

15. The costs are borne on the Departmental Votes of the Minister arranging the flight who should ensure that the interests of his Accounting Officer are fully safeguarded.

16. In addition, all Defence Ministers travelling on Defence business and other Ministers engaged on business of the Defence Department or visiting a Service or Defence Establishment may use Ministry of Defence aircraft in accordance with rules and procedures approved by the Secretary of State for Defence. Those Ministers who are individually authorised to do so may use aircraft of The Queen's Flight.

17. There are separate arrangements for flights by the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and the Ministers of the Northern Ireland Office. Otherwise, special flights may be provided by the Ministry of Defence, using aircraft of The Queen's Flight or other RAF aircraft; or by private charter firms. Charges for Ministry of Defence aircraft are currently lower than charges for commercial charter flights in similar aircraft. The real resource cost is not necessarily lower, however, and since the number of aircraft available to the Ministry of Defence for these purposes is limited, they will always feel bound to give preference to Ministers whose needs relate to security, and to journeys for which reasonable alternative means of travel are not available. On occasions when the destination air-field is unsuitable for the types of aircraft used by Ministry of Defence or when there are problems in using Ministry of Defence aircraft to certain destinations abroad, private charter aircraft will have to be used. An estimate of the cost of a special flight should always be obtained for the information of the Minister concerned before final arrangements for it are confirmed.

18. Guidance for Private Offices on practical arrangements is set out in an Appendix to this note.



## AUTHORISATION AND ARRANGEMENT OF SPECIAL FLIGHTS

1. Private Secretaries of Ministers not in charge of departments should normally obtain authority through their Senior Minister's Private Secretary, giving details of the proposed journey and the reasons why a special flight is considered to be appropriate. These authorities are not required when a Minister who is personally authorised to do so wishes to use an aircraft of The Queen's Flight, or when a Minister travelling on Ministry of Defence business or visiting a Service or Defence Establishment wishes to use a Ministry of Defence aircraft. However, all flights in Ministry of Defence aircraft, including those of The Queen's Flight, require the authority of the Under Secretary of State (RAF).

2. Detailed procedures for arranging special flights are as follows:

A Flights in Ministry of Defence aircraft

- i. Private Offices should apply to the Personal Air Secretary to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Defence for the Royal Air Force (PAS/US of S(RAF)) (telephone numbers 01-218-6065 or Federal 1867) and give details of the journey, names of passengers and likely duration. Confirmation in writing should always be given on RAF Form 1815, supplies of which may be obtained from the Office of the PAS/US of S(RAF). As much advance notice as possible should be given especially for flights abroad as special diplomatic clearance is required in most countries for the use of military aircraft and this can in some cases take some time to obtain. It is not open to Private Offices to specify a preference between aircraft of The Queen's Flight or other RAF aircraft except where a Minister's request is based on his or her personal authorisation to use The Queen's Flight.
- ii. In those cases where a flight in a Ministry of Defence aircraft is requested, the Personal Air Secretary will try to give the speediest possible reply. The considerations will include:
  - a. availability of aircraft;
  - b. length of notice;
  - c. ability to secure diplomatic clearance, when necessary, within the timescale.

B Flights by private charter

- i. Private charter flights should be arranged by the most economical means.
- ii. Private Offices should contact an agent who will obtain quotations. Private Offices should select the quotation to be accepted (normally the lowest) and the agent will



then make all necessary arrangements. It is suggested that the following agents might be used:

- a. Hogg Robinson (Travel) Ltd  
Craven House  
119-123 Kingsway  
London WC2 6PT  
Tel: 01-242 1091
- b. Lep Chartering Ltd  
Sunlight Wharf  
Upper Thames Street  
London EC4P 4AD  
Tel: 01-236 5050
- c. Pickfords International  
International House  
Great South West Road  
Hatton Cross  
Feltham, Middlesex  
Tel: 01-751 0901
- d. London Air Taxi Centre  
18 Eldon Street  
London EC2M 7LA  
Tel: 01-588 3578

Departments are, of course, free to use other agents if they wish. Departments who have tested the charter market through agents in the previous 12 months and who have received satisfactory and economical service from a charter company as a result may continue to make use of that company's services.

#### EFFECT OF TRAVEL BY NON-COMMERCIAL AIR FLIGHTS ON PERSONAL INSURANCE POLICIES

3. Ministers who have occasion to travel by non-commercial air flights are advised to check whether their personal insurance policies are likely to be prejudiced thereby. Normally, life assurance contracts are "unconditional", that is to say there are no restrictive clauses in the contract and the sum assured is payable on death irrespective of the cause. The position in relation to other types of policy is more complex and Ministers should seek the advice of their insurers if they are in any doubt about the effect of travel by non-commercial flights.