

Facilities Management from A to Z

Based on The FM Lexicon by Martin Pickard
published monthly in Facilities by Lexis Nexis between 2008 and 2016

T

ravel

Many facility managers are responsible for the provision of corporate travel management services to their organisation. The scale and scope of this depends entirely on the nature of the business and the extent of travel both domestic and international involved. In smaller organisations

The FM themselves may be responsible for creating a travel budget, establishing policies for employees to follow, and act as a liaison with outside travel agencies to handle the arrangements. Larger organisations may employ specialists or even whole teams that function like commercial travel agents. Some facility managers outsource the whole operation to a commercial travel agency may set up an implant office onsite.

The travel team are often responsible for arranging hotel accommodation, hospitality dining and event management as well as making arrangements for trains, planes and taxi services. This can be quite a challenge as the pressure to procure bulk arrangements at discount prices can run contrary to the personal taste of executives who develop individual preferences for particular hotel chains, restaurants or airlines.

The adoption of Corporate Social Responsibility policies by increasing numbers of organisations coupled with the Carbon Reduction agenda has created new pressures on corporate travel. Finding less carbon intensive travel options may be possible for some while the promotion of alternatives such as video and audio conferencing is preferred by others. Offsetting carbon consumption can be managed in a number of ways and may be the only way to address essential international travel.

Activities around travel and accommodation are closely linked to the organisations expenses policies and procedures which can involve laborious paper based systems. On-line expense systems are increasingly used which can be connected directly to travel service providers allowing an element of self service to be introduced as well as providing valuable management controls and information.

An effective travel policy must not only ensure that travellers will arrive at the right place on time and as cost effectively as possible but must also ensure that the organisation properly discharges its duty of care towards employees travelling on official business. The health, security and safety of staff may be compromised by travel in unsocial hours or to locations with particular security issues. Guidance should be given on appropriate vaccinations and infection precautions.

Foreign Office advice should be followed on travel to certain countries where the risk to UK travellers is considered high. Insurance policies need to be checked and if necessary the insurance company may need to be informed. The duty of care is not limited to international travel. Certain employees such as young workers or females travelling alone may need particular risk based advice and guidance when travelling on business even when closer to home.

The Institute of Travel Management is the leading professional body for buyers, managers and suppliers of business travel in the UK and Ireland. www.itm.org.uk

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office provides advice on travel to countries throughout the world. www.fco.gov.uk