

Reference No: E105/8/67; **Date:** 30/04/87

Circular 2/1987:- Travelling Abroad

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1. I am directed by the Minister for Finance to refer to Circular 36/71 and DPS Circular Letter 5/81 about travelling by air on official journeys.
2. I am to say that, in view of the pressing need for economy in public expenditure, the preference for the use of Aer Lingus as a booking agent and a carrier may be waived in circumstances where there are substantial savings to be achieved through using another airline. In this regard, your Department should be careful to take account of all aspects of the different options available from Irish and other carriers for a particular trip e.g. whether, for instance, a more flexible schedule offered by one airline would reduce the number of overnight stays abroad and thus achieve savings on subsistence. Depending on the circumstances, these may or may not offset a higher fare for the journey. Similarly, where an airline is prepared to offer a free night's accommodation in conjunction with the air flight, the subsistence savings should be taken into account in evaluating the choice of carrier.
3. In view of the high level of expenditure involved, Departments are expected to take an active role in identifying the most economical travel arrangements consistent with the requirements of any official journey. Consideration should be given to designating an officer who would acquire a special knowledge of the various options available and advise travelling officers of the most economical arrangements.
4. The services of Irish carriers should, of course, be used whenever the considerations at 2 above do not apply.

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William P Smith
Deputy Secretary