

**IMMEDIATE  
ATTENTION**

EBAP/10/49

June 2, 2010

To: Members of the Executive Board

From: The Secretary

Subject: **Streamlining Rule N-16 Procedures for Business Travel**

At its meeting on May 13, 2010, the Agenda and Procedures Committee agreed to recommend to the Executive Board the adoption of revised procedures on the consultation process under Rule N-16, which appear in EB/APC/10/4, Revision 1 (6/2/10).

It is not proposed to bring this matter to the agenda of the Executive Board for discussion unless an Executive Director so requests by the **close of business on Friday, June 11, 2010**. In the absence of such a request, the proposed decision on page 4 will be deemed approved by the Executive Board and it will be so recorded in the minutes of the next meeting thereafter.

Questions may be referred to Mr. Conway, OBP (ext. 38461) and Mr. Cirillo, SEC (ext. 36710).

This document will shortly be posted on the extranet, a secure website for Executive Directors and member country authorities.

Att: (1)

Other Distribution:  
Department Heads



INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

**Streamlining Rule N-16 Procedures for Business Travel**

June 2, 2010

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. This paper discusses new procedures for the consideration of the Executive Directors that aim to streamline the consultation process under Staff Regulation Rule N-16(c)(i), which requires that official travel by persons on the staff of the Fund to a member's territory be undertaken only after consultation with the Executive Director appointed, elected, or designated by the member.<sup>1</sup>

## II. BACKGROUND

2. Subsequent to the Agenda and Procedures Committee meetings in February 2010 on streamlining the N-16 procedures for business travel, the new Travel Portal was implemented on March 8.<sup>2</sup> Consistent with the Committee's guidance, the lapse of time N-16 approach was not implemented at that time. The Committee requested that the N-16 proposal be considered again after the Portal had been in operation for two months.

3. Implementation of the new Travel Portal was accompanied by a Fundall message from Management, an intranet article, the release of a training video, and the provision of a number of training classes. Training was provided to SEC and OED office assistants during the week of March 1–5 and then again on March 9. Individual discussions have also been held with members of SEC and OED office staffs on question that have arisen since implementation.

4. As requested by the Committee, the N-16 process can still be completed, as in the past, through an e-mail response to an incoming e-mail notification from a department. The consultation can now also be completed by checking a box on the Travel Portal. The two alternatives have been available in parallel as agreed with the Committee. That said, training sessions for the ED assistants have pointed out the value of consultations being completed through the Portal. Benefits of the Portal include:

- Offering Executive Directors more information earlier on Department travel plans by providing access to approved trips to ED constituent countries three months in advance of mission start dates.
- Reducing the flow of e-mails through SEC related to the N-16 process.
- Providing departments online access to up-to-date information on the status of the N-16 consultations.

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<sup>1</sup> "Streamlining Rule N-16 Procedures for Business Travel" (EB/APC/10/1), dated February 12, 2010 was issued to members of the Agenda and Procedures Committee to be taken up by the Committee on February 18, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> See EB/APC/Mtg/10/1 and EB/APC/Mtg/10/2.

5. The Travel Portal has been operating for nearly three months. The implementation has gone smoothly with no major problems; minor start up issues are diminishing over time. The Travel Portal is being used widely around the Fund. Available data show that every ED office has completed at least some N-16 consultations through the Travel Portal and that overall there is a high rate of completion through the Portal. To date, more than 600 consultations with ED offices have been marked complete through the Portal. The number of consultations that continue to be completed via e-mail is declining.

6. The expectation is that the Portal will achieve savings in airfares by providing better information earlier to departments, travelers and budget managers. A simpler lapse of time approval of the N-16 consultation would contribute to that objective. In addition, as the next phase of the Travel Portal project a new self-service expense reporting module will be rolled out later this month.

### **III. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSULTATION PROCESS UNDER RULE N-16**

7. The requirement under Rule N-16(c)(i) that an Executive Director be consulted prior to staff travel to a territory of a member of his or her constituency was adopted by the Board in 1948. It has been the understanding that the “consultation” refers to a full and adequate opportunity to exchange views and information on the plans by staff to undertake official travel to a member territory. While the Director’s approval is not required, the consultation has the effect of informing him/her of mission travel to a constituent country and affording an opportunity to share thoughts, advice, and concerns with a department in relation to the proposed travel. As noted above, the Travel Portal will provide Directors with more information on staff travel plans to constituent countries up to three months in advance of mission start dates.

8. The proposed process reflecting the operation of the new system provides that each N-16 consultation be deemed complete 14 calendar days after the department officially initiates the consultation with an Executive Director’s office unless the Executive Director extends the consultation period.<sup>3</sup> Directors would have the prerogative of extending each consultation for further 14 calendar day periods if they deem that necessary. Directors will also have the ability to complete consultations before the expiration of the 14 calendar day period through the Travel Portal by clicking a box to indicate that the consultation has taken place. For each consultation, the staff is expected to provide sufficient information on the purpose of its travel.

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<sup>3</sup> Per the request of the APC, the lapse of time period has been extended from 7 to 14 calendar days in response to an indication from the Committee that it would not be possible in all cases to complete consultation with their authorities within the 7 calendar day timeframe proposed originally.

#### **IV. NEXT STEPS**

9. Upon Executive Board approval, the proposed change in the Rule N-16(c)(i) process will be implemented two weeks after the date of the Executive Board decision.

#### **V. PROPOSED DECISION**

The Agenda and Board Procedures Committee recommends the adoption by the Executive Board of the following decision:

The Executive Board hereby approves the changes to the consultation process for official travel by persons on the staff of the Fund to a member's territory under Rule N-16(c)(i) as set out in paragraph 8 of EBAP/10/49 (6/2/10), effective 14 calendar days after the date of the Executive Board decision.