

PUBLIC, COMMUNITY, & CUSTOMER RELATIONS  
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## **Media Statement from Bob Watkins, Chair, San Diego County Regional Airport Authority**

### **Business, Travel and Lodging Reimbursement Policies**

Today, Bob Watkins, Chair of the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority, sent communication to the Airport Authority Board and staff to address recent media coverage about the Airport Authority's business, travel and lodging reimbursement policies.

"The Airport Authority takes its responsibility to protect the public trust very seriously and is concerned about the perceptions this has caused," said Watkins.

Watkins has requested that an item be placed on the August 30, 2009 Airport Authority Audit Committee meeting agenda to discuss the issues raised, compare them to existing policies and make recommendations. The Audit Committee includes membership of external representatives who can offer a different perspective on the issue. The recommendations will then be discussed at the Executive Committee meeting within 30 days.

Thella F. Bowens, President/CEO of the Airport Authority, has directed staff to: 1) strictly adhere to existing policies and 2) add to the October 1, 2009 Authority Board meeting agenda an item to discuss additional policy clarifications, refinements and recommendations brought forward by the Audit Committee, including review of these issues:

- Reimbursement for meals for staff during travel
- Reimbursement for meals with consultants
- Reimbursement for staff and Board meals within the San Diego region
- Reimbursement for meals that have missing receipts
- Air travel policy
- Management of exceptions to the policies

The Authority does have detailed, written policies regarding business expense reimbursement, and travel and lodging expense reimbursement. These were put in place when the Authority was formed in January 2003. They have been revised many times since 2003, including an extensive review and revision by the then-new Board in a highly transparent public process in 2007.

In the vast majority of instances, those policies – which were designed to be consistent with those of other similar entities – have been adhered to by all Airport Authority Board members and staff.

In spite of that, some of the expenses cited in recent media stories do raise questions that the Airport Authority is taking very seriously and that merit further review.

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