



## MEMORANDUM

January 14, 2015

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TO: Division I Directors of Athletics  
Division I Head Men's Basketball Coaches  
Division I Head Women's Basketball Coaches

FROM: Anucha Browne  
Vice President of Women's Basketball Championships

Dan Gavitt  
Vice President of Men's Basketball Championships

SUBJECT: Travel Issues for the Division I Basketball Championships

Happy New Year.

As most are aware, travel operations for last season's NCAA Division I Men's and Women's Basketball Championships were confronted with unprecedented issues related to charter availability. While challenging every year, the lack of charter availability in 2014 was the worst the NCAA has experienced in the last 15 years. Unfortunately, we do not expect it to be any better this year. The lack of availability can be traced to several items, which include new crew regulations from the FAA; carrier issues such as bankruptcies and mergers; and simple supply and demand.

Since the 2014 tournaments ended, the NCAA has been doing everything possible to secure additional aircraft and guarantees from the charter market. We have had only limited success as there just aren't enough charter aircraft available in March. The NCAA coordinates travel operations for the two tournaments with between 10-15 dedicated aircraft (plus one-off flights from other carriers). The notion that dozens of planes are available but are not being used due to cost is inaccurate. Simply put, we use every available large aircraft (including some extremely expensive 747s) that meets our requirements for safety and operations. The reality is that in the early preliminary rounds of the tournaments teams will not be able to continue traveling the way they have been accustomed to in past years.

The most problematic day for outbound travel will occur on the first Wednesday after selections (March 18). The issues will be exacerbated in 2015 because of the change to the days of play for the 2015 women's championship, with play beginning on Friday. This change means at least 20 additional teams will need to travel on what is already one of the single busiest dates for any NCAA championship period.

In order to address these challenges, changes will have to occur. The changes affecting the women's teams will include:

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1. Teams that play on Friday for the first-round, and typically would travel on Wednesday, will be required to change their preferred departure times to as late as 10 p.m. local time.
2. To address potential fatigue concerns, teams will be permitted to leave a day earlier and will be paid per diem for the additional day. Teams choosing to leave Tuesday should plan for a departure time as late as 10 p.m. local time.

Changes affecting the men's teams will include:

1. For the second-round (Thursday/Friday), teams that play games with a tip-off scheduled before 3 p.m. local time may be required to travel home post game. Departures will be scheduled for as early as seven hours after scheduled tip-off and up to as late as 10 p.m. local time, so there will be ample time for the team to visit family members, check out of the hotel and have a team meal.
2. Teams that have a scheduled tip-off of 3 p.m. or later local time will have return flights scheduled for the next day. These departures will be scheduled as early as practical based on a team's game time, but teams should be aware that departures may be scheduled as late as 10 p.m. local time. Teams with late departure times will be paid per diem for the additional day and have hotel rooms secured for late check-out.

As we face these charter travel challenges together, we respectfully ask that all teams be flexible in their requests and recognize there are larger issues at stake than just arrangements for individual teams. While we understand and appreciate that teams are accustomed to departing at the same time for trips in the regular season, the sheer logistics of the tournaments make it impossible to meet those demands in the preliminary rounds. Specifically, we ask that team administrators request windows of time for travel rather than exact times and be willing to adjust their schedules to accommodate all the needs of the teams competing in the tournaments.

Finally, we request that all teams make a special effort to respect the schedule they receive and ensure they are on time every time, as determined by the NCAA travel staff and charter operations. Arriving later than scheduled for loading and departure will cause delays not only for those specific teams but for several teams after them as well.

We understand these changes and requests are less than optimal and will have an impact on you. However, there are no other events at the national level that present the logistical travel challenges our tournaments create, and we must adjust to the realities of the current charter marketplace while providing the best possible travel experience for the student-athletes in these two marquee events. We greatly appreciate your assistance and consideration in making this happen.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact us. We wish you all good luck the remainder of the season and hope to work with your respective programs this March.

AB/DG:js

cc: Danielle Donehew  
Jim Haney  
Conference Commissioners  
Senior Woman Administrators  
NCAA Division I Men's and Women's Basketball Committees