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Charities 'wasting money on travel deals'

By Toby Cohen

CHARITIES ARE wasting money by getting poor value travel deals, a new report has revealed.

Not-for-profit organisations are losing in excess of 15 per cent of their travel budgets by not making the most of cost saving deals, according to travel management company Key Travel, after nine months analysing of 1,500 client organisations.

The organisations spent approximately £31m on flights during the nine months and could have saved £2.3 million by opting for cheaper flights that were ignored due to personal preference, or a desire to get loyalty card points.

The COO of Key Travel, Steve Summers, said: "Too many of our not-for-profit clients are missing out on considerable savings, some by simply not booking at an optimum time and others for more frivolous reasons. At a time when everyone is looking at means to save money, where better to focus than the travel budget? A change in consumer buying behaviour will not only

ensure more money is available to be used on the charitable projects it was intended, but will also appease those who are actually donating."

A spokesperson for the Charity Commission said: "The Charity Commission encourages charities to make the most effective use of their charitable resources. We do recognise however, that there are other factors which charities may have to consider when travelling, such as the reliability of airlines.

"Trustees are required to use charitable funds and assets reasonably and only in furtherance of the charity's objects. It is for the trustees to oversee how a charity uses its resources, which would include decisions about travel arrangements. The Charity Commission would not generally become involved in issues relating to a charity's travel expenditure unless regulatory concerns were identified.

"We would recommend, however, that charities consider setting appropriate policies on travel and expenses if staff or trustees have to travel frequently on charity business, and ensure that these policies are followed."