
Office of Inspector General

Review Of
Office of Inspector General
Senior Managers' Travel

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Subject: INFORMATION: Review of Office of Inspector
General Senior Managers' Travel
Report No. QR-1999-067

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Reviews and Internal Affairs

Reply to
Attn. of: J-3

To: Kenneth M. Mead
Inspector General

INTRODUCTION

This report provides the results of a review conducted by the Office of Quality Assurance Reviews and Internal Affairs of the travel performed by the senior management staff¹ in the Office of Inspector General (OIG), Department of Transportation. The objective of the review was to determine if adequate internal controls exist over the senior managers' temporary duty (TDY) travel.

This review was initiated in response to a suggestion from the Integrity Committee of the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency that periodic reviews be conducted of OIG personnel travel due to complaints of alleged abuse.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

For this review, we selected all TDY travel performed by the ten OIG senior managers in Fiscal Year 1998 and the first quarter of Fiscal Year 1999. During the 15-month period, the ten OIG senior managers took 71 TDY trips and were paid a total of \$45,783 (see attachment).

We evaluated internal controls established over the approval of travel and claims for payment. We reviewed travel authorizations for TDY travel (Form DOT F 1500.3), travel vouchers (Standard Form 1012) and available supporting documents, and the Federal Aviation Administration Travel Section's schedule of paid travel voucher claims. Travel claims were analyzed for the existence of abusive travel.² The review excluded a determination of correctness of amounts paid.

¹ The senior management staff includes the Inspector General and nine Senior Executive Service personnel in the OIG.

² We have defined abusive travel to include (1) trips conducted exclusively for personal purposes, (2) excessive expenses such as unjustified First Class airfare, and (3) non-job related expenditures.

In performing the review, we applied policies and procedures found in the Federal Travel Regulations, Title 41, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapters 301-304 and amendments, and DOT Order 1500.11, Official DOT Travel Guiding Principles.

PRIOR COVERAGE

This is the first review of TDY travel performed by OIG senior managers.

REVIEW RESULTS

The results of our review indicate adequate internal controls exist over OIG senior management TDY travel. All travel was properly authorized. Travel vouchers were generally complete except as noted below, and claims were adequately supported. The vouchers were timely approved by supervisors and forwarded to the Federal Aviation Administration Travel Section in Oklahoma City for payment. We identified no evidence of travel abuse by the OIG senior managers for TDY travel reviewed.

The review identified the need for more explanatory information on TDY travel vouchers to facilitate their approval and payment.

- The front page of all TDY travel vouchers should contain a written statement of the specific purpose of the travel. This action documents the relevancy of the travel and provides clarity to the items and amounts claimed. We found 29 of 71 TDY vouchers had no statement of purpose or only stated “official business.” The absence of this information can contribute to questions about the propriety of claims. For example, on one TDY travel voucher, where no purpose was indicated, a claim was made for \$96 for 1-day use of a rental car (including gasoline). The supporting documents indicated the traveler’s lodging was on a subway line, which also connected to the OIG office. We interviewed the traveler who advised a rental car was needed to travel to training held at an off-site location, which was not on the metro-rail line.
- Each TDY trip and claims for local travel expenses should be submitted on separate travel vouchers. This action will minimize possible confusion by the approving official and the FAA Travel Section by facilitating the match of expenditures with trip purpose and itinerary. We found 2 of 71 TDY vouchers that combined unrelated TDY travel and local travel expenditures (parking fees and taxi fares). One of the two vouchers also included two unrelated TDY travel claims. The two vouchers in question did not contain statements of purpose.

- Travel vouchers must have a justification statement signed by the approving official for the rental of a car while on TDY travel. We found in one instance that the FAA Travel Section disallowed a claim for a rental car because there was no justification statement on the voucher.

The OIG senior managers should be mindful of the need for full inclusion of pertinent information on TDY travel vouchers. This will ensure the continued high level of integrity demonstrated by the OIG senior managers.

We appreciate the cooperation provided by the senior managers and their respective administrative staff during this review. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at x6-1504.

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Attachment

SCHEDULE OF TEMPORARY DUTY TRAVEL BY OIG PERSONNEL

| OIG Senior Managers (Identified By Number) | Number of TDY Travel Voucher Claims in FY 1998 | Number of TDY Travel Voucher Claims in 1 st Qtr FY 1999 | Total Dollar Value of Travel Voucher Claims Paid in FY's 1998 & 1 st Qtr. 1999 |
|--|---|---|--|
| 01 | 2 | 0 | \$ 640.15 |
| 02 | 2 | 2 | \$ 2,673.11 |
| 03 | 10 | 5 | \$ 8,877.51 |
| 04 | 1 | 1 | \$ 483.44 |
| 05 | 7 | 5 | \$10,963.41 |
| 06 | 6 | 4 | \$ 7,682.73 |
| 07 | 4 | 0 | \$ 1,963.50 |
| 08 | 2 | 0 | \$ 514.03 |
| 09 | 6 | 1 | \$ 4,181.89 |
| 10 | 10 | 3 | \$ 7,804.12 |
| TOTAL | 50 | 21 | \$45,783.89 |