



Office of Inspector General

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System
Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection

Executive Summary, 2018-FMIC-C-014, September 26, 2018

The Bureau's Travel Card Program Controls Are Generally Effective but Could Be Further Strengthened

Findings

Although the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection's (Bureau) government travel card (GTC) controls are generally effective, they could be further strengthened to prevent improper reimbursements. In a few cases, cardholders received duplicative reimbursements for multicity trips. In others, they received reimbursements for unallowable expenses incurred during leave while on official travel.

In addition, the Bureau has enhanced controls to ensure compliance with Federal Travel Regulation requirements related to reimbursing official travel expenses for traveling by personally owned vehicle, but it should strengthen controls to ensure compliance with requirements related to excess time spent traveling by personally owned vehicle. After we presented our draft findings to Bureau officials during our audit, the agency updated its existing cost-comparison worksheet to include estimated travel time per method of transportation and communicated the update to all managers and staff.

Recommendations

Our report contains recommendations designed to help ensure GTC program integrity. We recommend that the Bureau update travel guidance to clarify how to submit vouchers for multicity trips, incorporate instructions for multicity trips into training, and evaluate the benefit of detective controls for duplicative reimbursements. In addition, we recommend that the Bureau review transactions made by cardholders who received payment for unallowable expenses and seek reimbursement in accordance with Bureau policy. In its response to our draft report, the Bureau concurs with our recommendations and describes actions that have been or will be taken to address our recommendations. We will follow up to ensure that the recommendations are fully addressed.

Purpose

The objective of our audit was to determine whether the Bureau's GTC program controls are effectively designed and operating to prevent or identify instances of illegal, improper, or erroneous travel expenses and payments.

Background

Through its GTC program, the Bureau provides its employees with an individually billed GTC account to arrange and pay for official travel and related expenses. Approving officials review and approve authorized expenses, for which the Bureau then reimburses cardholders. The GTC program involves five major processes: (1) issuing GTCs, (2) training cardholders and approving officials, (3) reviewing and approving travel authorizations and travel vouchers, (4) monitoring GTC usage, and (5) closing GTC accounts.