



UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Controls Over Travel Vouchers

**Report Number OIG-2009-02
March 2009**

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UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE
WASHINGTON, DC 20003



INSPECTOR GENERAL

PREFACE

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) prepared this report pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended. It is one of a series of audit, reviews, and investigative and special reports prepared by OIG periodically as part of its oversight responsibility with the respect to the United States Capitol Police to identify and prevent fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement.

This report is the result of an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the office or function under review. It is based on interviews with employees and officials of relevant agencies and institutions, direct observation, and a review of applicable documents.

The recommendations therein have been developed on the basis of the best knowledge available to the OIG, and have been discussed in draft with those responsible for implementation. It is my hope that these recommendations will result in more effective, efficient, and/or economical operations.

I express my appreciation to all of those who contributed to the preparation of this report.

Carl W. Hoecker
Carl W. Hoecker
Inspector General

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Abbreviations

Chief Administrative Officer	CAO
Chief Financial Officer	CFO
Chief of Police	Chief
Dignitary Protection Division	DPD
Federal Travel Regulation	FTR
Fiscal Year	FY
General Order	GO
Government Accountability Office	GAO
Office of Financial Management	OFM
Office of Inspector General	OIG
Protective Services Bureau	PSB
U. S. General Services Administration	GSA
United States Capitol Police	USCP or Department
United States Capitol Police Board	Board

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The FY 2007 financial statement audit disclosed a lack of controls with regard to the accuracy of United States Capitol Police (USCP or Department) processing of travel vouchers. Thus in accordance with our FY 2009 Annual Plan, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted a review of USCP travel vouchers. Our objective was to determine if the Department complied with USCP guidance and/or applicable Government travel regulations. Our scope included travel vouchers processed during FY 2007 through March 31, 2008. During that period, the Department processed 4,711 transactions for 19 Divisions and Offices, for a total disbursed amount of \$6,715,443. Protective Services Bureau (PSB) was responsible for 4,114 or 87% of the transactions and \$6,343,199 or 94.5% of the amount disbursed.

Overall, the Department could improve controls and compliance over travel expenditures. We found that the Department had not fully disseminated its various versions of interim travel guidance to all employees. In addition, the August 2007 interim guidance replaced by another August 2008 version (draft Directive [REDACTED]) was undated and remained in draft as of March 1, 2009. We also found that Department officials did not always ensure that costs claimed on individual travel vouchers were accurate, allowable, and actually incurred during official travel. This included instances where the employee used the official travel card for purchases that did not relate to official government travel or were used for ATM withdrawals that were outside periods of official travel. We further noted instances where travel expenditures claimed were not supported by proper documentation or adequate explanation. As a result, OIG questioned travel costs of about \$16,000.

In addition, PSB does not obligate funds in advance for individual travel related to the performance of protective duties and other PSB official duties. Instead PSB uses a blanket group travel authorization to cover its Dignitary Protection Division (DPD) and Investigations Division. However, the lack of one to one, travel authorization to travel voucher policy allows for multiple vouchers to be applied against a single authorization, circumventing typical controls in the accounting system, which call for an individual obligation for each disbursement. As a result, we identified 9 duplicate payments totaling \$7,589 (19 percent or 9 of 47 travel vouchers tested). This lack of control also could potentially lead to a violation of the Anti-Deficiency Act. For example, during the FY 2007 financial audit, we noted that USCP had to reprogram funds several times to fully fund travel for PSB's protective detail and at least one was after the end of the fiscal year.

To improve the internal efficiency and effectiveness of the travel program, OIG is recommending that USCP finalize its *draft* [REDACTED] and disseminate to all employees, collect unallowable questioned costs, and consider the feasibility of using an automated and integrated travel system for processing travel authorizations and vouchers. An automated travel

system would minimize the risk of duplicate payments and unallowable costs, enabling better travel management and reduce the need for end of year reprogramming of funds.

On March 6, 2009, OIG conducted an exit conference with Department officials and provided a draft report for comment.

Background

While the Department, as a legislative branch agency, is not required to comply with the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) and executive branch travel guidelines, USCP used these principles in the development of its policies and procedures. The Department requires written permission to travel on official business (travel authorization). According to the interim draft Directive [REDACTED], the Department utilizes the following three basic types of travel authorization.

1. **Blanket Travel Authorization** also called a Limited Open Travel Authorization, allows an employee to travel on official business without further authorization under certain specific conditions, i.e., travel to specific geographic areas(s) for specific purpose(s) and/or for specific periods of time.
2. **Trip-by-Trip** authorization allows an individual or group of individuals to take one or more specific official business trips, which must include specific purpose, itinerary, and estimated costs.
3. **Group Authorization** is one authorization that covers all travel and related expenses incurred in the performance of protective duties and other official duties of the PSB, DPD, in support of congressional protectees in the Washington, DC area and other destinations within the United States.

The Department also requires a written request, travel voucher, with supporting documentation and receipts where applicable, for reimbursement of expenses incurred in the performance of official travel.

All offices, with the exception of DPD, use a travel authorization and voucher for each individual for every trip, which is approved similar to any procurement. DPD uses a blanket travel authorization for group travel. All travelers use government-issued travel charge cards that are held and paid by the individual cardholders.

According to the interim draft Directive [REDACTED], the Director of the Office of Financial Management (OFM) is responsible for the execution and management of the Government travel program—a Department of Veterans Affairs-sponsored program through Citibank¹. The OFM

¹ October 30, 2008, the Department of State became the Government agency that currently sponsors the USCP Travel Card Program through Citibank.

Agency Program Coordinator is the liaison between the travel card contractor and the agency cardholder.

Objective, Scope, and Methodology

Our objective was to determine if the Department complied with applicable USCP guidance and/or applicable Government travel regulations. Our scope included travel vouchers processed during FY 2007 through March 2008. During that period, the Department processed 4,711 transactions for 19 Divisions and Offices, for a total disbursed amount of \$6,715,443.

To accomplish our objectives, OIG engaged contract auditors to conduct agreed-upon procedures. In addition, OIG staff conducted analytical procedures; reviewed USCP operational and program data and applicable Federal laws and Department directives; written policies and procedures; and supporting documentation related to travel. We verified travel voucher transactions for the period October 1, 2006 through March 31, 2008, and identified potential duplicate payments and other noncompliance issues. Using the Government Accountability Office (GAO), Financial Audit Manual, as guidance; a sample size of 45 was determined to be sufficient. Using audit software, we randomly selected 45 vouchers. Additionally, we selected the three highest dollar vouchers from the Operational Services Bureau for verification. To determine compliance, we reviewed these 48 travel vouchers totaling \$63,918 from the 18-month period for the following attributes.

- Is the locality per diem correct?
- Does the hotel charge agree to the per diem rate?
- If actual cost for hotel is used in lieu of per diem, is the supervisory approval on file and properly approved?
- Are all the required receipts present?
- Are the laundry expenses appropriate and reasonable?
- Is the calculation correct?
- From reviewing the travel card statement(s), do expenditures seem reasonable? If not, list the type of unusual expenditures.

Additionally, we selected a separate sample for testing of duplicate payments. Using IDEA duplicated key detection feature, a separate sample of 47 transactions totaling about \$22,365 was reviewed for duplicate payments.

We used the following criteria in evaluating compliance: General Orders (GO) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] an August 2, 2007 memo from the then CAO, [REDACTED] which cancelled GOs [REDACTED] and undated interim draft Directive [REDACTED]. While the Department, as a legislative branch agency, is not required to comply with the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) and executive branch travel guidelines, we also used U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) travel cardholder guidance and the FTR because USCP considered this guidance in developing

its policies and procedures. Additionally, we used GAO's *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*, (GAO/AIMD-00-21.3.1) as criteria.

We conducted fieldwork in Washington, D.C. from June 2008 through February 2009. This review was performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* except for independent referencing² and included such procedures, as we considered necessary in the circumstances. March 6, 2009, we conducted an exit conference with Department officials and incorporated applicable comments.

Review Results

We found that Department controls over travel expenditures and compliance with travel guidance could be improved. Specifically, we found:

1. Outdated and incomplete guidance.
2. Official travel cards were not always used appropriately.
3. Travel expenditure oversight needs improvement.

As a result, the Department made improper reimbursements to cardholders. The Department is at increased risk of inappropriate charges and unauthorized ATM withdrawals. Lack of appropriate oversight and disciplinary action may set an unwanted precedent that travel card misuse is not deemed serious. Inappropriate use of the travel card violates the terms of the contract with the travel card provider, represents abuse of a Government-provided resource, and compromises the integrity of the Department. However, the Department has an opportunity to enhance travel cardholder training and the management of blanket/group travel authorization, thereby minimizing the related risk exposure to the Department.

Outdated and Incomplete Travel Guidance

Policies and procedures are part of control activities and help ensure that management directives are carried out as intended. According to GAO, *Standards of Internal Control in the Federal Government* (GAO/AIMD-00-21-.3.1), control activities are the policies, procedures, techniques, and mechanisms that enforce management's directives, such as adhering to travel requirements. Additionally, the GAO, *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*, states

...Internal control is a major part of managing an organization. It comprises the plans, methods, and procedures used to meet missions, goals, and objectives and, in doing so, support performance-based management. Internal control also serves as the first line of defense in safeguarding assets and preventing and detecting errors and fraud....

² GAS, Appendix 1, *Supplemental Guidance*, states one way to help ensure that the audit report meets reporting standards is to use a quality control process such as referencing. Referencing is a process in which an experienced auditor who is independent of the audit verifies that statements of facts, figures, and dates are correctly reported, and that the findings are adequately supported by the audit documentation, and that the conclusions and recommendations flow logically from the support. As of March 2009, OIG had only one auditor on staff.

OIG found the Department's travel policy and procedures outdated and incomplete. On August, 2, 2007, the then Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) issued interim travel guidance. However, the Department had not disseminated this guidance to all employees. An August 3, 2007, email from the then CAO's representative stated

...As there are limited USCP employees who travel, this guidance is not being disseminated to all employees at this time. Once the final Travel Policy has been vetted through the established policy review process and issued by the Chief of Police, all employees will receive the policy document....

According to officials, in August 2008, the CAO rescinded the August 2007 interim travel guidance and replaced it with draft Directive [REDACTED]. This was done to present travel guidance to sworn officers prior to the "conventions". As of February 24, 2009, Directive [REDACTED] still was in draft and the Department could not provide expected dates of publication or full implementation. Further, the Department had not disseminated this draft interim travel policy to all USCP employees.

Additionally, our review of the draft Directive [REDACTED] showed that the Department had not updated the Travel Card Contractor information. The draft directive states "the Government agency that currently sponsors the USCP Travel Card Program is the Department of Veterans Affairs". Yet, as of October 30, 2008, USCP had issued new travel cards and employees had signed new agreements when the Department of State became the sponsor of the USCP Travel Card Program.

Furthermore, according to DPD, the August 2, 2007, interim guidance was incomplete and did not address issues specifically related to DPD travel. Although, the interim guidance indicated that it canceled previous policies and procedures, at the time of our fieldwork DPD still followed GO [REDACTED] because it is more applicable to their needs. DPD travel accounts for the majority (over 90%) of the total USCP travel. Due to the nature of the DPD travel and the mission, some of the expenses incurred during travel are also unique, which the interim guidance did not address fully. For example:

- Actual expense for lodging due to the DPD mission and last minute detail arrangement.
- Air travel other than coach class.
- Multiple ATM fees if the limit per withdrawal is over the total per diem.
- ATM withdrawal exceeding the per diem allowance to cover for cab fares, etc.
- Extra baggage fee.
- Authorization for use of the hotel business center.

We noted that the 2008 interim draft Directive [REDACTED] appeared to address DPD's concerns.

Conclusions

The August 2, 2007, interim travel guidance was outdated, incomplete, and had not been disseminated to all employees. Without published guidance available to all employees, the

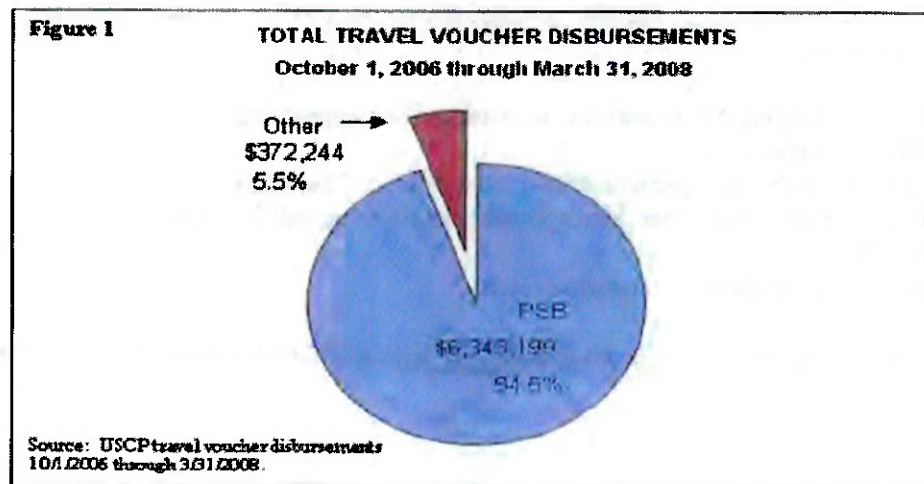
Department cannot ensure compliance with its travel policy nor effectively manage its travel funds. The August 2008, interim draft Directive [REDACTED], appears to address DPD employee travel concerns; however, this directive was still in draft as of March 1, 2009 and the Department had not disseminated it to all employees. Thus, OIG is making the following recommendation.

Recommendation 1: We recommend that the United States Capitol Police finalize its draft Directive [REDACTED]. This directive should provide needed policy and procedures related to the USCP Travel Card Program including travel authorization, appropriate use of the official government travel card, and the submission of claims for the reimbursement of travel expenses. The current interim travel guidance should be disseminated immediately to all employees.

Official Travel Cards Were Not Always Used Appropriately

OFM's Directive No. FIN [REDACTED], states the travel card shall be used only for travel related to expenses incurred while on official USCP travel. Additionally, a cash advance shall only be made in relation to official travel and travelers should make every effort to limit cash withdrawals to the maximum per diem allowed for each trip. However, we found that employees did not always comply with this directive and inappropriately used their travel card. For instance, employees used the official travel for purchases that did not relate to official government travel, made ATM withdrawals outside periods of official travel, and used the card for expenses other than for official travel as required.

During our review period, the Department processed 4,711 transactions for 19 Divisions and Offices, for a total disbursed amount of \$6,715,443. PSB was responsible for 4,114 or 87% of the transactions and \$6,343,199 or 94.5% of the amount disbursed as shown in Figure 1.



We reviewed expenses claimed on 48 individual travel vouchers. We noted unusual/questionable transactions. For example:

- An employee did not voucher hotel charges in the amount of \$282.
- An employee did not voucher rental car in the amount of \$50.
- An employee used the official travel card for ATM withdrawals (about \$480) that were outside of official travel periods.

OFM was reviewing these vouchers and had requested an explanation from the appropriate Bureaus. Additionally, the employee that made ATM withdrawals outside of official travel periods was under investigation.



The [REDACTED] that must be signed by the travel card applicant states that the cardholder agrees to use the card for official expenses incurred for authorized USCP travel and failure to follow these procedures will subject cardholders to disciplinary action up to and including termination. The travel charge card itself includes on its face the statement **“For Official Government Travel Only”**.



We also noted that the Department neither provides new travel cardholder training nor requires new applicants to take the free on-line training course offered by the General Service Administration (GSA). GSA provides web based training for cardholders of the government travel card. This course provides general information on traveling for the government and

reviews how to use a government travel card. It allows the cardholder to become familiar with the FTR and government travel card policies. According to GSA's website, this course can be completed in less than 45 minutes.

Conclusions

The Department neither provides new travel cardholder training nor requires new applicants to take the GSA on-line training courses. As a result, some cardholders claimed unusual or questioned expenses on their travel vouchers. Thus, OIG is making the following recommendation.

Recommendation 2: We recommend that the United States Capitol Police provide travel cardholders training or, at a minimum, require all cardholders to take the U.S. General Services Administration on-line training course for cardholders and document such training. Additionally, the Office of Financial Management should review the questionable vouchers and determine if questioned costs should be collected from cardholders.

Travel Expenditure Oversight Activities Needs Improvement

GAO's Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government (GAO/AIMD-0021.3.1) states

...Internal control and all transactions and other significant events need to be clearly documented, and the documentation should be readily available for examination. All documentation should be properly managed and maintained....

The Department needs to improve its oversight activities over travel expenditures. During the FY 2007 financial audit and this review, we identified instances where oversight activities designed to ensure that Department funds were used in an allowable, effective, and economical manner did not always function as intended. We found Department officials did not always ensure that costs claimed on individual travel vouchers were accurate, allowable, and actually incurred by the traveler. This included validating that claimed expenses were supported by proper documentation, miscellaneous expenses were appropriately explained and documented, and calculations were correct. As a result, the Department made improper reimbursements to cardholders. For example, we identified

- 9 duplicate payments totaling \$7,589 (19 percent or 9 of 47 travel vouchers sampled). After the FY 2007 financial statement audit, we recommended OFM conduct reviews of travel vouchers. Accordingly, OFM had identified 5 of these 9 duplicate payments and subsequently collected (\$4,403). At the completion of our fieldwork \$3,186 remained uncollected. After travel, DPD agents prepare vouchers and make a copy of the original voucher, which is provided for the multiple layers of review. However, the voucher is not marked "COPY" and often is resubmitted to OFM resulting in duplicate payments.
- 36 of 48 or 75 percent travel vouchers sampled showed employees claimed and were paid hotel taxes totaling about \$2,700. None of the vouchers had attached justifications as to why the hotel did not accept USCP's tax-exempt certificate. USCP interim travel guidance and GSA encourage employees to make every effort to obtain a tax exemption

for all applicable hotel charges, regardless of the city, state, or municipality visited on official business.

- 23 of 48 vouchers sampled showed employees claimed actual lodging expenditures that exceeded allowable amounts resulting in additional costs of \$5,243. While DPD uses a [REDACTED] to identify exceptions and provide justifications for actual lodging costs, 65 percent (15 of 23 travel vouchers) did not have the checklist attached to justify the additional lodging costs. According to interim draft Directive [REDACTED], actual subsistence justification and approval must be shown on the travel reimbursement voucher under the group authorization.
- 3 of 48 vouchers sampled showed employees had claimed charges on travel card statements where the traveler did not claim reimbursement and excessive use of ATM withdrawals in between trips resulting in potential misuse of the USCP travel card. According to interim draft Directive [REDACTED], the Travel Card is to be used in conjunction with official travel. Cash withdrawn from an ATM is approved for estimated miscellaneous travel expenses for official business travel.
- 2 of 48 vouchers sampled showed employees claimed reimbursements for tips (gratuities). The USCP draft interim travel guidance states M&IE per diem includes related tips and taxes. We did note that DPD asked the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) the policy for reimbursement on tips for valets and bellmen at hotels. A July 30, 2008, DPD email asked the CFO: "Can they claim as they have in the past or does it have to come from their per diem." The interim draft Directive [REDACTED] states M&IE per diem includes related tips and taxes for meals and incidental expenses, including fees and tips, given by an employee on official travel to porters, baggage carriers, bellhops, hotel maids, and stewards/stewardesses.
- 1 of 48 vouchers sampled showed the Department reimbursed the employee using the incorrect M&IE per diem.
- 1 of 48 vouchers sampled showed an employee claimed laundry expenses that we considered unreasonable. The voucher (Document Number [REDACTED]) showed the DPD agent traveled October 11, 2006 through October 19, 2006 to New York and claimed total laundry costs of \$413 for an average daily laundry cost of \$68.83.

These conditions occurred in part because incomplete voucher reviews and unfamiliarity with Department policies and procedures by applicable approving officials and travelers.

Conclusions

Ineffective oversight of travel expenditures can result in inappropriate use of Department resources and violations of Department policies and/or procedures. Further, there is a risk that employees may be reimbursed for charges that they did not actually incur or that were

unallowable, or reimbursed for more than their entitlement. Without timely adequate monitoring of travel expenditures, a precedent may be set that inappropriate charges are tolerated by the Department. Thus, OIG is making the following recommendation.

Recommendation 3: We recommend that the United States Capitol Police strengthen its controls surrounding voucher payment process. Specifically, require cardholders to mark duplicate travel vouchers clearly as "COPY" when resubmitting to the Office of Financial Management. Additionally, the Office of Financial Management should develop and implement a mandatory specialized training course for the approving, authorizing, and certifying officials reiterating their roles and responsibilities. Refresher courses should be provided on a periodic basis. Until a training course is developed and implemented, require applicable officials to review the FTR and Department policies and procedures related to reviewing travel vouchers and approving travel expenditures.

Opportunity to Enhance the Management of its Travel Program

The Department has an opportunity to enhance the management of its travel program, thereby minimizing the related risk exposure to the Department. Currently, PSB does not obligate funds in advance for individual travel related to its protective detail. Instead a blanket group travel authorization is established at the beginning of the year and used to fund all protective detail travels. The lack of one to one, travel authorization to travel voucher policy allows for multiple vouchers to be applied against a single authorization, circumventing typical controls in the accounting system, which calls for individual obligation for each disbursement. As a result, as stated before, the Department erroneously processed duplicate payments and paid questionable costs.

This lack of control also could potentially lead to a violation of the Anti-Deficiency Act. For example, during the FY 2007 financial audit, we noted that the Department had to reprogram funds to fully fund travel vouchers for PSB's protective detail after the end of the fiscal year. Shown in Table 1 are examples of funds reprogrammed during FY 2007, to cover USCP's DPD travel program. We also noted one FY 2008 reprogramming of \$25,000 for DPD travel.

Table 1 – Reprogramming of Funds for DPD Travel

<i>Date</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Justification</i>
10/22/07	\$63,988	To move funds from OFM to DPD travel. Accounting period 13 of FY 2007.
9/28/2007	\$140,079	To cover the DPD travel program that have come in during the last few weeks and the anticipated ones for the remaining two days of the fiscal year.
9/17/2007	\$30,919	To move funds into DPD travel program for a new leased vehicle.
8/9/2007	\$228,415	To reprogram additional funds for DPD based upon travel funds expended to date and projected travel for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Source: OIG generated from various OFM email and reprogramming tracking worksheet related to travel as of 9/30/07. FY 2007 Financial Statement Audit (OIG-2008-03).

These reprogrammings occurred, in part, because the Department could not reasonably estimate the amount needed for travel as there are always unexpected or critical last minute needs. Additionally, employees did not prepare and submit vouchers in a timely manner.

Nevertheless, an automated travel system could assist the Department in managing its travel program, which may realize efficiencies in managing its scarce resources and minimize budget reprogrammings. For instance, an automated system can reduce error, voucher processing time, unauthorized claims, and duplicate voucher submissions.

GSA manages five E-Government initiatives launched to improve the internal efficiency and effectiveness of the federal government. E-Gov Travel Service (ETS) gives federal travelers the ability to manage their travel from end-to-end through a common, web based, government-wide service that integrates:

- Travel planning and cost estimating;
- Travel authorization;
- Reservations;
- Fulfillment services;
- Filing, processing, and approving official travel claims;
- Travel reimbursement data; and
- Reporting and data exchange.

Some government agencies have identified savings from automating travel processes such as trip approval and voucher processing, standardization of travel management practices across the organization, and encouraged a policy compliant environment.

Conclusions

The Department has an opportunity to enhance its travel program and better manage its travel funds. Based on the fact that the Department did require reprogramming of funds to cover the DPD travel program, during FY 2007, it was obvious that funds were not available to process travel vouchers at year end. This condition could be improved or even avoided if the Department had a policy of creating a travel authorization (obligation) prior to incurring the actual expense and submitting vouchers. An automated and integrated approach to managing its travel program would greatly assist the Department in enforcing travel policies and procedures and monitoring its travel dollars. Thus, OIG is making the following recommendation.

Recommendation 4: We recommend that the United States Capitol Police review the General Services Administration E-Gov Travel Service and consider the feasibility of obtaining and utilizing a common automated and integrated approach to managing its travel function. At a minimum, the Department should obligate funds prior to travel to ensure that sufficient funds are available to cover travel vouchers, thereby reducing the need to reprogram at year end.

APPENDICES

List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1: We recommend that the United States Capitol Police finalize its draft Directive [REDACTED]. This directive should provide needed policy and procedures related to the USCP Travel Card Program including travel authorization, appropriate use of the official government travel card, and the submission of claims for the reimbursement of travel expenses. The current interim travel guidance should be disseminated immediately to all employees.

Recommendation 2: We recommend that the United States Capitol Police provide travel cardholders training or, at a minimum, require all cardholders to take the U.S. General Services Administration on-line training course for cardholders and document such training. Additionally, the Office of Financial Management should review the questionable vouchers and determine if questioned costs should be collected from cardholders.

Recommendation 3: We recommend that the United States Capitol Police strengthen its controls surrounding voucher payment process. Specifically, require cardholders to mark duplicate travel vouchers clearly as "COPY" when resubmitting to the Office of Financial Management. Additionally, the Office of Financial Management should develop and implement a mandatory specialized training course for the approving, authorizing, and certifying officials reiterating their roles and responsibilities. Refresher courses should be provided on a periodic basis. Until a training course is developed and implemented, require applicable officials to review the FTR and Department policies and procedures related to reviewing travel vouchers and approving travel expenditures.

Recommendation 4: We recommend that the United States Capitol Police review the General Services Administration E-Gov Travel Service and consider the feasibility of obtaining and utilizing a common automated and integrated approach to managing its travel function. At a minimum, the Department should obligate funds prior to travel to ensure that sufficient funds are available to cover travel vouchers, thereby reducing the need to reprogram at year end.

United States Capitol Police
Office of Inspector General
Review of 48 Travel Vouchers Totaling \$63,918
For the Period: October 1, 2006 through March 31, 2008

Schedule of Questioned Costs³

Exception	Questioned Costs		
	Unallowable/ Unauthorized	Unsupported	Unreasonable
Duplicate Payment	\$7,589		
Actual Lodging		\$5,243	
Incorrect Per Diem Rate	\$35		
Toll Charges		\$12	
Tips	\$7		
Incorrect ATM Fee	\$4		
Laundry Expense			\$413
Total	\$7,635	\$5,255	\$413

³ A "questioned cost" denotes that one or more of the following three situations exist: (1) an alleged violation of a provision of a law, regulation, contract, grant, cooperative agreement, other agreement, or document governing the expenditure of funds; (2) a finding that, at the time of the audit, such cost is not supported by adequate documentation; or (3) a finding that the expenditure of funds for the intended purpose is unnecessary or unreasonable.

**United States Capitol Police
Office of Inspector General
Review of 48 Travel Vouchers Totaling \$63,918
For the Period: October 1, 2006 through March 31, 2008**

Schedule of Funds Put to Better Use

<i>Funds Put to Better Use⁴</i>	
Tax Exemption Not Claimed	\$2,726

⁴ A recommendation that funds be put to better use is a recommendation by the OIG that funds could be used more efficiently if Department management took actions to implement and complete the recommendations, including: reductions in outlays, deobligation of funds from programs or operations; withdrawal of interest subsidy costs on loans or loan guarantees, insurance, or bonds; costs not incurred by implementing recommended improvements related to the operations of the Department, a contractor, or a grantee, avoidance of unnecessary expenditures noted in preaward reviews of contract or grant agreements; or any other savings which are specifically identified.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS



UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF
199 D STREET, NE
WASHINGTON, DC 20010-7210

March 20, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Carl W. Hoecker
Inspector General

FROM: Phillip D. Morse, Sr.
Chief of Police

SUBJECT: Response to *Draft Report Controls Over Travel Vouchers* (Report No. OIG-2009-02).

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the United States Capitol Police Department's responses to the Office of the Inspector General's (OIG's) *Draft Report Controls Over Travel Vouchers* (Report No. OIG-2009-02).

After review of the audit findings and recommendations, the Department generally concurs with the recommendations in the draft report.

Recommendation 1: *We recommend that the United States Capitol Police finalize its draft Directive [REDACTED]. This directive should provide needed policy and procedures related to the USCP Travel Card Program including travel authorization, appropriate use of the official government travel card, and the submission of claims for the reimbursement of travel expenses. The current interim travel guidance should be disseminated immediately to all employees.*

USCP Response: We agree and while this policy is in the final stages of being evaluated and edited for conformity with agency guidelines by the Office of Policy and Management Services (OPOL), the Office of Financial Management (OFM) will clearly mark each page "draft" and distribute this draft policy by agency-wide Bulletin, as well as post it on the OFM Intranet site until it is finalized as a Directive. The Bulletin will state that this draft policy is now in effect; that all travel claims must be prepared in accordance with its procedures; and that OFM will audit all future travel claims for compliance with its policies.

Recommendation 2: *We recommend that the United States Capitol Police provide travel cardholders training or, at a minimum, require all cardholders to take the U.S. General Services Administration on-line training course for*

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cardholders and document such training. Additionally, the Office of Financial Management should review the questionable vouchers and determine if questioned costs should be collected from cardholders.

USCP Response: We generally agree and have determined that before new travel card holders receive their cards, we will require them to undergo the online training of the U.S. General Services Administration on computers located in the Office of Financial Management. OFM will also provide the training developed by its Accounts Payable department, which is currently provided to new cardholders in the field, as a refresher course to all cardholders several times during the year. Additionally, we have collected 7 of the 9 duplicate payments identified during your audit and have determined that the two remaining duplicate payments, amounting to \$17.44, did not need to be collected. OFM will continue its quarterly reviews to ensure that any future duplicate payments are identified in a timely manner and recovered.

Recommendation 3: *We recommend that the United States Capitol Police strengthen its controls surrounding voucher payment process. Specifically, require cardholders to mark duplicate travel vouchers clearly as "COPY" when resubmitting to the Office of Financial Management. Additionally, the Office of Financial Management should develop and implement a mandatory specialized training course for the approving, authorizing, and certifying officials reiterating their roles and responsibilities. Refresher courses should be provided on a periodic basis. Until a training course is developed and implemented, require applicable officials to review the FTR and Department policies and procedures related to reviewing travel vouchers and approving travel expenditures.*

USCP Response: We generally agree and will refocus our efforts to ensure that the practice of clearly marking and tracking resubmissions to avoid duplicate payments continues. Our Office of Financial Management has drafted a memo that directs the bureaus to clearly identify resubmissions and copies which will be issued soon. However, as an additional measure, OFM has developed a database to log travel vouchers submitted by employee, travel date, and trip number, and is now requesting that original documents be provided with vouchers in order to identify duplicate submissions. Furthermore, OFM will draft a memo to the bureaus requiring authorizing officials to review Federal Travel Regulations and the agency's draft travel policy. In the meantime, the Chief Administrative Officer will develop a course for future mandatory specialized training for the Department's approving, authorizing, and certifying travel officials.

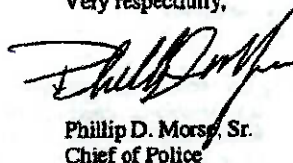
Recommendation 4: *We recommend that the United States Capitol Police review the General Services Administration E-Gov Travel Service and consider the feasibility of obtaining and utilizing a common automated and integrated approach to managing its travel function. At a minimum, the Department should*

obligate funds prior to travel to ensure that sufficient funds are available to cover travel vouchers, thereby reducing the need to reprogram at year end.

USCP Response: We generally agree and are currently evaluating the feasibility of several options to record estimated costs in our financial system, [REDACTED] prior to travel, in order to ensure that funds are available in advance throughout the year. We consider this ability to better track travel costs especially important to our efforts to more accurately identify funding requirements in an environment where it is difficult to predict travel needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the OIG's draft report. Your continued support of the men and women of the United States Capitol Police is appreciated.

Very respectfully,



Phillip D. Morse, Sr.
Chief of Police

cc: Capitol Police Board
Chief Administrative Officer
Assistant Chief of Police
USCP Audit Liaison