At a Glance

Catalyst for Improving the Environment

EPA Needs to Strengthen Management Controls Over Its Travel Authorization Process

What We Found

The EPA travel program lacks sufficient management controls to ensure that travel documents are properly routed and authorized. Current travel controls do not prevent prohibited employees from self-authorizing their travel. Also, the EPA travel system allows unauthorized personnel to self-approve travel, and does not ensure that GovTrip routing lists are controlled to ensure an independent review of travel. We did not identify any instances of fraud during our review. However, the lack of sufficient management controls to ensure that travel documents are properly routed and authorized leaves the Agency's travel system vulnerable to fraud, waste, and abuse that may go undetected.

What We Recommend

We recommend that the Chief Financial Officer revise the Agency's current *Delegations Manual* to prevent the self-authorization of travel at any level within the Agency. This revision should require the program and regional offices to delete outdated routing lists, fix those that are incorrect, and create new routing lists to match current organizational structures. We also recommend that the Chief Financial Officer require that personnel not be on routing lists that give them the authority to authorize travel, and ensure that routing list managers notify the Cincinnati Financial Management Center when personnel or organizational changes require routing list changes. We further recommend that the Chief Financial Officer request that the General Services Administration change GovTrip to prevent self-authorization of travel and include audit trails to determine who made changes to routing lists. Finally, we recommend that the Chief Financial Officer require Agency program and regional offices to assist the Office of the Chief Financial Officer in developing policy to effectively manage routing lists, and that computer programs be run monthly to determine whether travelers are in compliance with policy, and investigate any exceptions.

The Agency's response to our draft report did not specifically state concurrence or nonconcurrence with our audit findings. We noted that the Agency response did include an attachment that addressed each of our recommendations, along with proposed corrective actions and completion milestones.