



Why This Matters

The Office of Inspection (OOI) in the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) conducts inspections, audits, internal reviews, and covert testing to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of TSA's operations and to identify vulnerabilities in TSA security systems. Additionally, OOI carries out internal investigations of the TSA workforce to ensure its integrity.

Approximately 60 percent of OOI's staff is composed of criminal investigators, who receive an extra 25 percent in pay, known as Law Enforcement Availability Pay (LEAP). As such, these positions are a more expensive resource than noncriminal investigator positions.

DHS Response

TSA acknowledged its responsibility to ensure that OOI was managed effectively and concurred with all of our recommendations. The component agreed with all of our recommendations, however it disagreed with some of our findings regarding OOI's use of criminal investigators and our conclusion that OOI did not use its criminal investigators in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The component also disagreed that it does not ensure some investigators are meeting the Federal workload requirement which qualifies them for LEAP.

For Further Information:

Contact our Office of Public Affairs at (202)254-4100, or email us at DHS-OIG.OfficePublicAffairs@oig.dhs.gov

TSA Office of Inspection's Efforts to Enhance Transportation Security

What We Determined

OOI did not use its staff and resources efficiently to conduct its work cost-effectively. OOI did not ensure that its criminal investigators performed criminal investigations the majority of the time, as required by Federal regulations. When performing duties unrelated to criminal investigations, criminal investigators were paid more than other OOI employees who could have performed the same work at a lower cost. In addition, OOI did not properly plan its work and resource needs, track project costs, or measure performance effectively. Quality controls were not sufficient to ensure that OOI's work complied with accepted standards; staff members were properly trained; and work was adequately reviewed. Finally, OOI could not ensure that other TSA components took action on its recommendations to improve operations.

As a result, TSA was not as effective as it could have been, and management may not be able to rely on the office's work. Also, OOI may not have fully accomplished its mission to identify and address transportation security vulnerabilities. With the appropriate classification and training of staff and better use of resources, OOI could improve the quality of its work. In addition, OOI could realize future cost savings of as much as \$17.5 million over 5 years by reducing the amount it spends on LEAP if all of its 124 criminal investigators were reclassified to noncriminal investigator positions. However, the appropriate number of reclassifications and more precise cost savings cannot be determined without an objective and comprehensive review of position classifications.

What We Recommend

We made eleven recommendations to TSA, including:

- 1) Ensure that criminal investigators in primary positions meet the minimum requirement of spending at least 50 percent of their time on criminal investigative activity and meet all LEAP requirements.
- 2) Conduct an objective workforce analysis of OOI, including a needs assessment, to determine the appropriate staffing levels to accomplish the office's mission cost effectively. Also, perform a position classification review of OOI to ensure all staff positions are properly classified.
- 3) Upon completion of a workforce analysis and position classification review, reclassify criminal investigator primary positions that do not meet or are not expected to meet the Federal 50 percent minimum workload requirement. In addition, ensure that secondary law enforcement positions are properly classified in accordance with Federal regulations.

These recommendations, when implemented, should lead to more efficient and effective operations, improve transparency and accountability, and enhance TSA's efforts to protect the Nation's transportation systems.