



Why This Matters

The travel, purchase, and fleet charge cards provide the Department of Homeland Security (Department or DHS) with an efficient mechanism for making small purchases, as well as other numerous benefits. On October 5, 2012, the President signed into law The Government Charge Card Abuse Prevention Act of 2012 (Charge Card Act), Public Law 112-194, which reinforced Administration efforts to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of Government-wide charge card programs. Under the Charge Card Act, Inspectors General (IGs) will conduct periodic risk assessments of agency purchase cards (including convenience checks), combined integrated card programs and travel card programs to analyze the risks of illegal, improper, or erroneous purchases.

Fiscal Year 2013 Risk Assessment of DHS Charge Card Abuse Prevention Program

What We Determined

DHS has established internal controls and safeguards for purchase, travel, and integrated cards; as well as centrally billed accounts.

In most instances, DHS had an adequate framework for internal controls to manage its charge card program. Although the Department has established internal controls for its charge card programs, the Components did not always follow DHS' procedures, and they did not always have procedures in place to supplement those developed by DHS. The Department needs to improve its implementation of internal controls to mitigate the inherent risks associated with the use of charge cards. For example, the Department needs to strengthen its post payment audit process to ensure that Component personnel are complying with appropriate charge card internal controls.

One Component uses the DHS Charge Card Manual as their primary guidance, while others maintain their own guidance and use the DHS manual as an overarching policy. The Department needs to ensure that the DHS Charge Card Manual and current Components' guidance are consistent and address all Office of Management and Budget regulatory requirements. We assessed the risk that the Department's internal controls over the charge card programs will not prevent illegal, improper, or erroneous purchases.

Based upon the results of our procedures, we determined that there is a moderate level of risk that DHS' internal controls over the charge card programs will not prevent illegal, improper, or erroneous purchases.

For Further Information:

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