



At a Glance

Why We Did This Project

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Inspector General (OIG) received numerous congressional requests and hotline complaints expressing concerns about former EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt's travel, as well as that of those traveling with him. The objectives of this audit were to determine the frequency, cost and extent of the former Administrator's travel through December 31, 2017; whether the Federal Travel Regulation and applicable EPA travel policy and procedures were followed; and whether the EPA's policy and procedures were sufficiently designed to prevent fraud, waste and abuse with the Administrator's travel.

This report addresses the following:

- *Compliance with the law.*
- *Operating efficiently and effectively.*

Address inquiries to our public affairs office at (202) 566-2391 or OIG_WEBPOSTINGS@epa.gov.

List of [OIG reports](#).

Actions Needed to Strengthen Controls over the EPA Administrator's and Associated Staff's Travel

What We Found

The OIG identified 40 trips and \$985,037 in costs associated with the former Administrator's travel for the 10-month period from March 1, 2017, to December 31, 2017. This covered 34 completed and six canceled trips and included costs incurred not only by the former Administrator but by his Protective Service Detail (PSD) and other staff. Of the 40 trips, 16 included travel to, or had stops in, Tulsa, Oklahoma—the location of the former Administrator's personal residence.

Actions need to be taken to strengthen controls over Administrator travel to help prevent the potential for fraud, waste and abuse.

We estimated excessive costs of \$123,942 regarding the former Administrator's and accompanying PSD agents' use of first/business-class travel because the exception that allowed for the travel accommodation was granted without sufficient justification and, initially, without appropriate approval authority. Although the EPA's travel policy is sufficiently designed to prevent fraud, waste and abuse and is consistent with the Federal Travel Regulation, we found that the policy did not initially outline who had the authority to approve the Administrator's travel authorizations and vouchers.

We also found that not all applicable provisions of the Federal Travel Regulation and/or EPA travel policy were followed. We identified:

- Improper granting of first/business-class exceptions.
- Unjustified use of non-contract air carriers.
- Improper approval of lodging costs above per diem.
- Missing detailed support for trips with stops in Tulsa.
- Improper approval of international business-class travel.
- Inaccurate and incomplete international trip reports.

The former Administrator's use of military/chartered flights was justified and approved in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulation and EPA policy.

Recommendations and Agency Response

We recommend that the agency determine whether the estimated excessive airfare of \$123,942 and any additional costs through the former Administrator's resignation in July 2018 should be recovered; implement controls to verify that requirements are met for the use of first/business-class travel; enforce requirements for use of a city-pair contract carrier; confirm adequate cost comparisons; and clarify requirements for preparing international trip reports and verify for accuracy and completeness. Of the report's 14 recommendations, we consider the agency's planned corrective actions acceptable for four of the recommendations while the other 10 are unresolved.