

Report Summary

Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General

March 2010



Objective

To determine whether the Social Security Administration's (SSA) oversight of its Government Purchase Card Program was effective.

Background

The Government Purchase Card Program was created as a way for agencies to streamline the acquisition process and reduce paperwork and administrative costs for simplified acquisitions. SSA began participating in the Government Purchase Card Program in 1988.

SSA reported purchase card use increased from \$47.3 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 1999 to \$84.3 million in FY 2009. The number of cardholders ranged between 2,800 and 3,000 at any given time during these FYs.

To view the full report, visit <http://www.ssa.gov/oig/ADO/BEPDF/A-13-09-29027.pdf>

The Social Security Administration's Government Purchase Card Program (A-13-09-29027)

Our Findings

SSA's oversight of its Government Purchase Card Program needed improvement. We found that cardholders did not comply with SSA's policies and procedures. Our testing of Purchase Card transactions found that 36 (72 percent) of 50 transactions reviewed (a) did not have adequate pre-approval documentation; and/or (b) had no evidence that the goods were received and accepted; or (c) had no documentation provided. These transactions totaled about \$8,300. In addition, for 12 (24 percent) of 50 possible split purchases we examined, the cardholders circumvented their \$3,000 single-purchase limit. These purchases totaled about \$61,000.

Our Recommendations

We recommend that SSA:

1. Ensure cardholders comply with SSA policy and procedures on obtaining and maintaining adequate pre-approval documentation.
2. Remind cardholders to comply with SSA policy and procedures on obtaining and maintaining adequate receipt and acceptance of goods documentation.
3. Instruct cardholders to comply with SSA policy and procedures to prevent making split purchases.
4. Analyze Purchase Card data routinely to identify possible split purchases and take steps to ensure cardholders follow Agency policy.

The Agency agreed with our recommendations.