



Office of Inspector General

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System
Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

Executive Summary, 2026-MO-B-009R, June 15, 2026

The Board Can Strengthen Its Process to Monitor and Mitigate International Travel Risks

Findings

The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System's international travel processes for its employees related to monitoring and mitigating their international travel risks should be strengthened. The Board does not have a formal program to prepare employees before international travel on how to identify and mitigate possible threats to personal safety and Board information. Employees also do not receive post-travel questionnaires to report suspicious activity that could help mitigate potential security risks for future travelers. Further, the Board does not have (1) a program to aggregate and analyze available employee travel data; (2) a process to share travel-related information among relevant groups to identify and escalate travel risks, when appropriate; or (3) a process to assess compliance with its international travel reporting requirements.

The Board limits its international travel reporting requirements to employees with a security clearance and does not require reporting by employees with access to sensitive Federal Reserve System information. Finally, the Board does not consistently inform division designated travel reviewers of travel risks before their review of employee requests to use Board devices while on international travel. Without these practices, the Board limits the support it offers to its divisions, which increases operational and information security risks.

Recommendations

Our report contains six recommendations designed to strengthen the Board's international travel processes to minimize the risks presented to Board information and Board employees while traveling abroad. In its response to our draft report, the Board concurs with our findings and recommendations and outlines planned actions to address the recommendations. We will follow up to ensure that the recommendations are fully addressed. Given the sensitivity of the information in our review, portions of the public version of this report have been redacted.

Purpose

We conducted this evaluation (1) to assess whether and ensure the Board's reporting and monitoring processes for international travel by employees follow standards and guidance for mitigating undue foreign influence and (2) to assess the Board's processes for monitoring international travel with Board devices to ensure protection of Board information. We assessed employee travel data from multiple sources from March 1, 2023, through March 31, 2025, as well as a sample of security alerts from February 1, 2025, through March 31, 2025.

Background

International travel helps facilitate the Board's collaboration efforts with other central banks and other foreign governmental and nongovernmental entities. International travel introduces information security and physical risks that are not present when traveling within the continental United States. It is common for foreign adversaries to target U.S. government employees to acquire nonpublic information.

To help address these risks, the Office of the Chief Operating Officer and the Division of Information Technology primarily manage the Board's international travel processes. Specifically, the Office of the Chief Operating Officer manages international travel reporting for clearance holders, and the Division of IT manages the international travel with Board devices processes for all travelers, including monitoring for any suspicious activity related to those devices.