



Executive Summary:

Collecting Additional Information Can Help the CFPB Manage Its Future Space-Planning Activities

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Purpose

The Office of Inspector General conducted an audit to assess the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's (CFPB) short-term and long-term space-planning activities to determine whether controls are in place to effectively manage the agency's space needs and associated costs. We focused on the CFPB's processes for planning, obtaining, and managing space for both its headquarters and regional offices.

Background

The CFPB's Office of Administrative Operations (OAO) is responsible for managing space for approximately 1,500 CFPB employees in its headquarters and regional offices. In fiscal year 2015, the CFPB budgeted \$29.6 million for its occupancy agreements for these offices, which includes \$10.0 million for temporary office space that is needed because the CFPB is renovating its headquarters building.

Findings

We identified controls that the OAO is using to plan for CFPB headquarters office space. Because the CFPB determined it does not have leasing authority, the OAO plans to continue to use the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) for its future space procurement needs. To provide the CFPB with office space that meets its needs, GSA collects information to understand the CFPB's space requirements. Therefore, the CFPB could benefit from implementing a process for consistently collecting, maintaining, and using space-planning information to manage evolving regional office space needs and associated costs.

The U.S. Government Accountability Office highlights the importance of acquiring information about how office space is currently used in an environment of increased workforce mobility, and GSA notes the importance of receiving client agency information to develop space requirements. An OAO official noted that the office is not consistently collecting, maintaining, and using relevant regional information because of other priorities.

Implementing policies, procedures, or guidance that includes a process for collecting and maintaining information about the current use of office space may assist the OAO in effectively using office space in the short term. Further, this information can assist GSA in procuring the correct amount and type of space in the future to meet the long-term mission needs of the CFPB as well as to mitigate the risks associated with managing its space costs.

Recommendation

Our recommendation is designed to ensure that the CFPB consistently collects, maintains, and uses information about its evolving space needs to manage the agency's future space-planning activities and associated costs. In her response to our draft report, the Chief Administrative Officer concurs with our recommendation and outlines planned corrective actions to address our recommendation.