



United States Department of Agriculture



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL



# Food Safety and Inspection Service's Process for Handling Vehicle Misuse Complaints Audit Report 50099-0002-21

## OBJECTIVE

Our audit objective was to determine if FSIS, in coordination with the Office of Procurement and Property Management (OPPM), implemented effective policies and procedures to handle and adequately resolve vehicle misuse complaints.

## REVIEWED

We interviewed GSA, OPPM, and FSIS officials; reviewed Department-wide and agency-specific policies, procedures, and regulations; and evaluated FSIS' publically submitted complaints regarding the possible misuse of government vehicles.

## RECOMMENDS

We recommend requiring ICS to assess all publically submitted alleged vehicle misuse complaints; developing and implementing specific procedures for supervisors to follow when investigating complaints are forwarded to them by FSIS' fleet manager; developing a system to log complaint data; and developing and implementing periodic procedures to review employee authorization for operating government vehicles.

## OIG reviewed FSIS' policies and procedures to determine if it effectively handles and resolves alleged vehicle misuse complaints

## WHAT OIG FOUND

Department of Agriculture (USDA) agencies own nearly 84 percent of their motor vehicles and lease the remaining 16 percent from the General Services Administration (GSA). The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) leases 2,256 vehicles, which accounts for almost 35 percent of all USDA vehicles leased from GSA. When the public makes complaints about alleged government vehicle misuse to GSA's "How's My Driving Program," GSA forwards all USDA-related complaints to the Department. The Office of Inspector General (OIG) found that FSIS did not implement effective policies and procedures to resolve alleged vehicle misuse complaints from GSA.

Specifically, we found that FSIS did not have a sufficient process in place to handle public complaints of alleged employee vehicle misuse through the GSA reporting system. Although FSIS' Internal Controls Staff (ICS) is required to assess the validity of vehicle misuse allegations, it did not review any of the 43 complaints in our sample. We found that FSIS' procedures did not include specific instructions for ICS to review GSA's publically submitted complaints; FSIS' fleet manager received them instead. This method of handling complaints is problematic, as our sample included complaints with multiple risk factors that had not been resolved. Furthermore, FSIS supervisors inconsistently resolved complaints, as FSIS' responses for handling and resolving complaints varied among different offices and supervisors.

OIG also found that FSIS did not have an effective system for logging the publically submitted complaint data and had not monitored its employees' qualifications and authorizations to operate a government vehicle.

FSIS officials concurred with our findings and recommendations, and we accepted management decision on all four recommendations.





United States Department of Agriculture  
Office of Inspector General  
Washington, D.C. 20250



DATE: March 27, 2017

AUDIT  
NUMBER: 50099-0002-21

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Director  
Office of Procurement and Property Management  
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SUBJECT: Food Safety and Inspection Service's Process for Handling Vehicle  
Misuse Complaints

This report presents the results of the subject audit. Your written response to the official draft report, received on January 26, 2017, is included in its entirety at the end of this report. Your response and the Office of Inspector General's (OIG) position are incorporated into the relevant sections of the report. Based on your written response, we are accepting management decision for all audit recommendations in the report, and no further response to this office is necessary.

In accordance with Departmental Regulation 1720-1, final action needs to be taken within 1 year of each management decision to prevent being listed in the Department's annual Agency Financial Report. For agencies other than the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), please follow your internal agency procedures in forwarding final action correspondence to OCFO.

We appreciate the courtesies and cooperation extended to us by members of your staff during our audit fieldwork and subsequent discussions. This report contains publicly available information and will be posted in its entirety to our website (<http://www.usda.gov/oig>) in the near future.



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## Background and Objectives

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### Background

USDA spends nearly \$270,000,000 annually to own and operate more than 40,500 motor vehicles.<sup>1</sup> These vehicles are used to support USDA's mission of providing leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development, nutrition, and related issues based on sound public policy, the best available science, and efficient management. USDA agencies generally obtain motor vehicles by purchasing or leasing them through the General Services Administration (GSA) after evaluating costs and other factors such as agency requirements, mileage, and storage.<sup>2</sup> USDA agencies own nearly 84 percent, or approximately 34,000, of its motor vehicles. The remaining 16 percent, or approximately 6,500 vehicles, of USDA's fleet are leased through GSA (see Figure 1).<sup>3</sup>

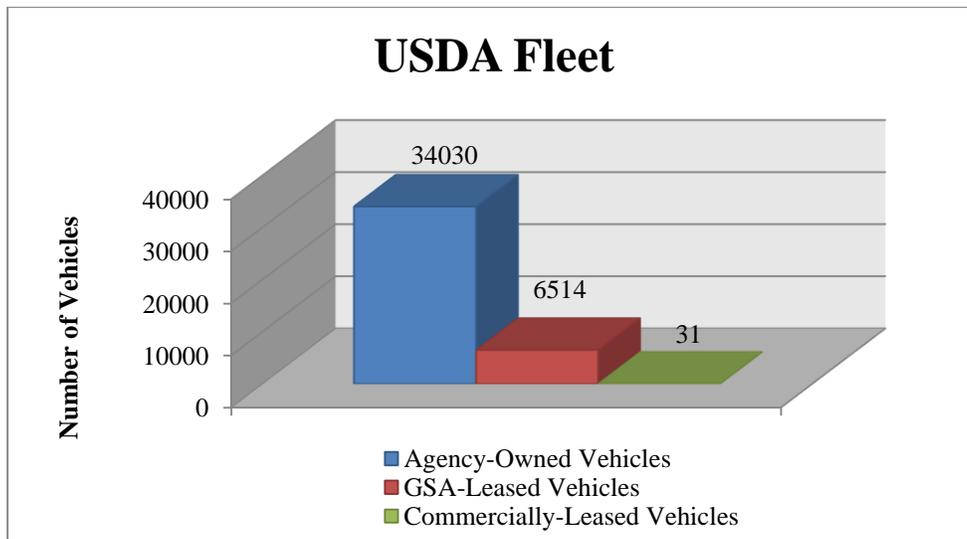


Figure 1: Breakdown of USDA's fleet of Agency-Owned, GSA-Leased, and Commercially-Leased vehicles

With more than 40,500 USDA vehicles on the road, fleet managers and supervisors are responsible for the safety of their fleet operations and should take preventative measures to minimize risks, such as accidents, injuries, and fatalities that impact the public and operators of government vehicles. According to GSA's leased vehicle statistics, across all government agencies, there were more than 21,000 accidents, almost 1,800 injuries, and over 40 fatalities with GSA's fleet between fiscal year (FY) 2012 and FY 2014.

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<sup>1</sup> This amount includes maintenance, depreciation, and lease and fuel costs.

<sup>2</sup> USDA is made up of 29 agencies and offices with nearly 100,000 employees at more than 4,500 locations. These agencies include the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), Forest Service (FS), and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS).

<sup>3</sup> A commercially-leased vehicle is a vehicle leased from a commercial source and not from GSA.

## GSA's "How's My Driving" Program

As part of the effort to ensure the safe operation of government vehicles, GSA developed the "How's My Driving" program. This program also provides the public a method to submit complaints of alleged vehicle misuse by government employees by sending an e-mail to [howmydriving@gsa.gov](mailto:howmydriving@gsa.gov).<sup>4</sup> To report a complaint, the public can send an email to GSA and provide information regarding the incident, including information such as the license plate; the date, time, and location of the alleged activity; and pictures, videos, and descriptions of the vehicle, the employee/driver, and passengers, if applicable. Even though the public can submit complaints for both GSA-leased and agency-owned vehicles through this program, a majority of complaints received are related to GSA-leased vehicles.

The public can identify both GSA-leased and agency-owned vehicles by the vehicle tags or license plates. GSA-leased vehicles have license plates with a GSA tag prefix starting with the letter "G," include the GSA logo, and have the following structure: GXX-XXXXX (see Figure 2). In contrast, an agency-owned vehicle license plate will only include an agency tag prefix followed by a series of numbers (e.g., Agriculture, A-XXXXXX; see Figure 3).



Figure 2: License plate for a GSA-leased vehicle



Figure 3: License plate for an Agency-owned vehicle

Neither GSA-leased or agency-owned vehicles contain visible information explaining how to submit a complaint to GSA. Rather, the public must conduct an Internet search to find information on how to submit a complaint on a government vehicle after identifying these government license plates. GSA has received complaints ranging from using a government vehicle for personal use, such as completing personal errands, to reports of speeding or reckless driving by employees.

## Office of Procurement and Property Management (OPPM)

GSA forwards all USDA-related complaints (related to both GSA-leased and agency-owned vehicles) it receives from the public to the Property Management Division (PMD) of USDA's OPPM. Between January 2012 and October 2015, the public had submitted 170 complaints to

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<sup>4</sup> The public can also submit complaints by contacting the GSA fleet service representative or by directly calling GSA's hotline. GSA officials also ensure that complaints received in these two ways are collected by the "How's My Driving" program's email system.

GSA with the number of complaints generally increasing annually.<sup>5</sup> OPPM is required to develop and monitor Department-wide policies, procedures, and regulations to ensure best practices are in place for managing USDA’s vehicles. OPPM’s oversight includes having a process to handle and resolve complaints of alleged vehicle misuse. After receiving complaints from GSA, OPPM distributes the complaints to the appropriate USDA agency. Agencies, responsible for managing their own motor vehicle fleets, determine what actions to take when addressing each complaint of alleged vehicle misuse.

### Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)

FSIS performs inspections in over 6,400 plants that produce meat, poultry, and egg products located throughout the United States. A large number of FSIS inspection personnel have responsibilities in multiple plants and work “patrol/relief assignments,” traveling from plant to plant on a daily basis. Depending on the inspector’s proximity to given assignments and remote locations, inspectors may be required to travel over larger geographical areas.

FSIS leases over 2,200 vehicles (and only owns 1 vehicle), more than any other USDA agency, and accounts for almost 35 percent of all GSA-leased vehicles at USDA.<sup>6</sup> Figure 4 shows the top five agencies with the highest number of GSA-leased vehicles at USDA: FSIS, Forest Service (FS), Rural Development (RD), Farm Service Agency (FSA), and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS).

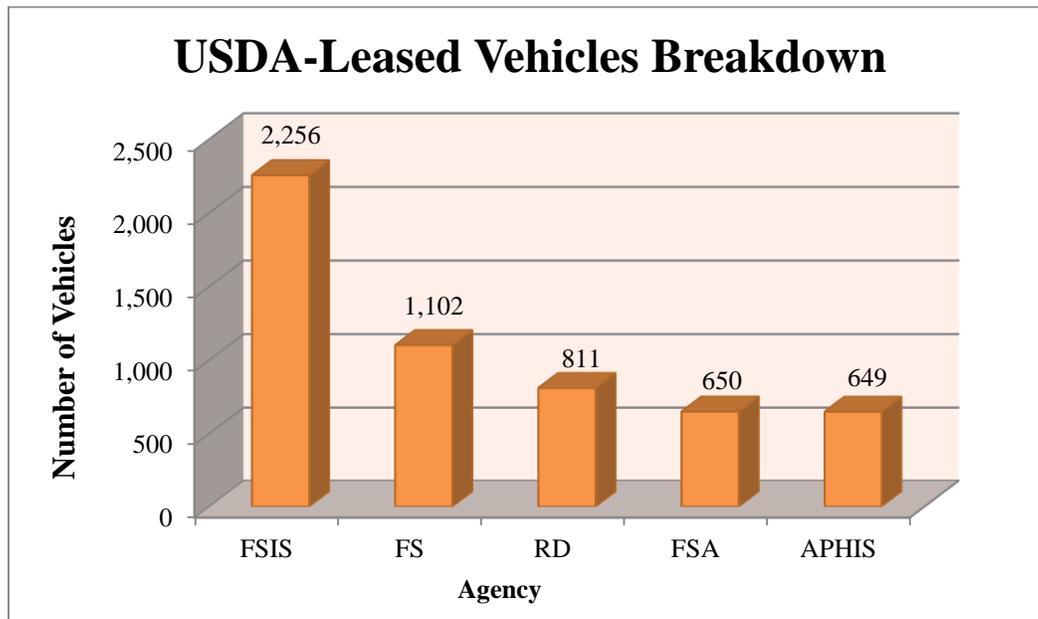


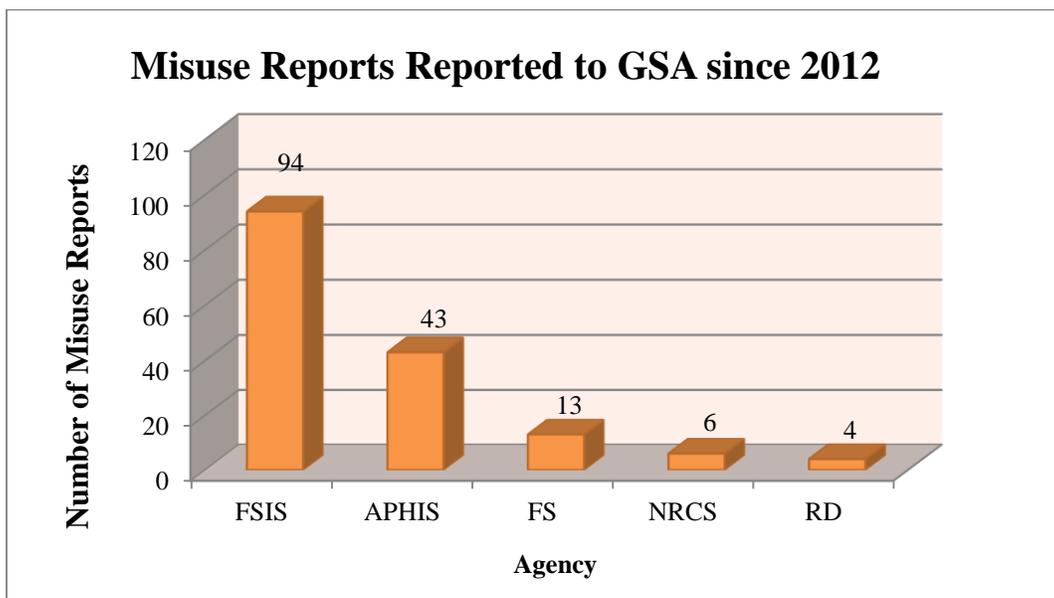
Figure 4: The breakdown of the top five USDA agencies that lease vehicles

<sup>5</sup> The 170 complaints are comprised of: a) 41 complaints in CY 2012, b) 29 complaints in CY 2013, c) 46 complaints in CY 2014, d) 52 complaints through October 2015, and e) 2 other complaints with no corresponding date information.

<sup>6</sup> FSIS leases 2,256 out of 6,514 vehicles leased by all USDA agencies.

FSIS’ fleet and its employees are subject to complaints by the public. FSIS receives complaints of alleged government vehicle misuse generally from one of three sources: (1) USDA’s OIG—Office of Investigations, which can be reached online, by telephone, or by mail, (2) an FSIS employee or supervisor, who can directly contact a fleet manager or an appropriate FSIS office area, or (3) GSA’s “How’s My Driving” program, which receives complaints submitted by the public primarily through email. In this audit, we focused solely on complaints submitted to GSA.

Between January 2012 and October 2015, FSIS accounted for more than 55 percent (94 out of 170) of all USDA complaints of alleged vehicle misuse submitted to GSA by the public.<sup>7</sup> Figure 5 shows the top five USDA agencies with the most complaints of alleged vehicle misuse reported to GSA: FSIS, APHIS, FS, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and RD.



**Figure 5: The breakdown of misuse complaints for the top five agencies with GSA-leased vehicles.**

Since 2012, GSA received the most complaints from the public related to FSIS vehicles as compared to other USDA agencies. Therefore, we selected to review FSIS’ process to handle and resolve complaints of alleged vehicle misuse for this audit.

## Objectives

Our objective was to determine if FSIS, in coordination with OPPM, implemented effective policies and procedures to handle and adequately resolve vehicle misuse complaints.

During the course of our audit fieldwork, we obtained information related to OPPM and the overall vehicle misuse complaint process at USDA. Initial evaluation of that information indicated that OPPM may need to strengthen its policies and procedures related to USDA’s fleet management. In calendar year (CY) 2017, we plan to conduct additional work at OPPM and

<sup>7</sup> FSIS received an additional 5 complaints between October 2015 and March 2016.

other USDA agencies in a separate audit to finalize our analysis, and will issue any OPPM-related findings and recommendations in that audit report. Thus, this audit report focuses solely on our conclusions related to FSIS' policies and procedures to handle and resolve alleged vehicle misuse.

## **Finding 1: FSIS Did Not Have a Sufficient Process to Resolve Complaints by the Public of Employees Misusing Government Vehicles**

FSIS did not thoroughly and consistently review any of the 43 complaints of alleged vehicle misuse in our sample that were submitted to GSA. This occurred because FSIS' policy did not include specific instructions for its internal and independent investigative authority to review GSA's publically submitted complaints.<sup>8</sup> Instead, almost all complaints were routed to the employees' supervisors, who often did very little to evaluate the merits of the complaint. The complaints were not investigated based on risk factors, such as those involving employees with multiple alleged offenses or employees with a questionable driving history. FSIS also did not have formal instructions for program supervisors to handle and resolve complaints in a consistent manner. These policy and procedure weaknesses expose USDA to adverse media attention, unnecessary financial liability, and public criticism.

Federal agencies are required to establish procedures to ensure the appropriate use and safe operation of government vehicles.<sup>9</sup> Departmental regulations also authorize agencies to conduct investigations of employees for possible misuse of government vehicles.<sup>10</sup> If allegations of vehicle misuse are substantiated, agencies are required to suspend any employee who willfully misuses or authorizes the misuse of a government vehicle for at least one month. Under certain circumstances, agencies can suspend a government employee for a longer period of time or terminate an employee.<sup>11</sup>

Currently, FSIS officials receive complaints of alleged government vehicle misuse generally from one of three sources: (1) USDA OIG—Office of Investigations, (2) an FSIS employee or supervisor, or (3) GSA's "How's My Driving" program. According to FSIS' procedures, OIG and FSIS officials report complaints of alleged vehicle misuse to FSIS' Internal Controls Staff (ICS).<sup>12</sup> ICS assesses the complaint to determine if an investigation is justified. However, FSIS' policies and procedures do not address how FSIS should handle complaints submitted by the public, which come from GSA's "How's My Driving" program.<sup>13</sup> As a result, ICS generally does not assess complaints submitted to GSA. Instead, FSIS' program supervisors handle the majority of alleged vehicle misuse complaints that are submitted by the public that the agency receives from GSA through OPPM. FSIS' program supervisors also have the authority to refer the public's complaints to ICS for an investigation.

The typical complaint of an FSIS employee misusing a vehicle generally arrives through GSA's [howmydriving@gsa.gov](mailto:howmydriving@gsa.gov) website. GSA officials forward the complaint to OPPM, and OPPM distributes it to FSIS' fleet manager. The fleet manager forwards the complaint to the local FSIS

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<sup>8</sup> FSIS' Internal Controls Staff has the delegated authority to investigate employee misconduct, including alleged vehicle misuse, as well as conduct OIG hotline and other investigations to detect and deter fraud, waste, abuse, or mismanagement within the agency.

<sup>9</sup> Public Law no. 107-217, section 1, title 40, subtitle I, chapter 5, subchapter VI, §601, dated August 21, 2002.

<sup>10</sup> USDA Departmental Personnel Manual 751-1, *Discipline*, subchapter 3, dated November 17, 1981.

<sup>11</sup> 31 United States Code (U.S.C.) §1349, dated September 13, 1982.

<sup>12</sup> OIG refers hotline complaints involving the misuse of government vehicles to ICS.

<sup>13</sup> FSIS Directive 8021.1, Revision 1, *Investigative Methodology for Conducting Misconduct, OIG Hotline, and other Investigations*, dated January 25, 2016.

office where the employee subject to the complaint works. The local office manager distributes the complaint to the employee's supervisor, who discusses the complaint with the employee. The program supervisor reports actions taken, if any, to resolve the complaint back to the FSIS fleet manager, who forwards this information to OPPM. OPPM requires FSIS to respond to the complaint within 10 days. Once OPPM receives FSIS' actions, it notifies the complainant and GSA that the agency has handled the misuse report, and the complaint is closed.

Between January 2012 and October 2015, GSA had received nearly 170 complaints of alleged USDA vehicle misuse, with the number of complaints generally increasing annually.<sup>14</sup> Based on technological advances, like GSA's program and the use of mobile devices, we expect the number of complaints to continue to grow. From January 2012 to March 2016, FSIS received 99 complaints of alleged vehicle misuse from the public. Of these complaints, we selected a non-statistical sample of 43 complaints to gain a better understanding of FSIS' process and its actions to resolve complaints of alleged vehicle misuse.

To evaluate these complaints, we interviewed OPPM and FSIS officials and obtained documentation and relevant e-mail correspondence that demonstrated how FSIS handled each complaint.<sup>15</sup> We also reviewed the qualifications and competence of the employee described in each complaint by analyzing authorizations to operate a government vehicle,<sup>16</sup> approvals to maintain a government vehicle while at home,<sup>17</sup> time and attendance reports, accident reports,<sup>18</sup> training records, and prior disciplinary actions.<sup>19</sup> The following sections provide details of our findings.

#### *FSIS Procedures Did Not Require ICS to Investigate Complaints Submitted to GSA*

FSIS' ICS is required to assess the validity of allegations of misusing government vehicles in order to prevent misconduct and mismanagement from continuing.<sup>20</sup> If requested, ICS investigators receive and review complaints submitted by OIG or by FSIS' supervisors and employees. However, ICS did not assess for possible investigation any of the 43 complaints in our sample. This occurred because FSIS' procedures did not require ICS to assess alleged vehicle misuse complaints submitted to GSA by the public for a possible investigation. Without a thorough assessment and possible investigation from ICS of complaints submitted by the public, FSIS could allow employees with questionable driving records to operate government vehicles and increase the risk of accidents, injuries, or fatalities for both FSIS employees and the public.

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<sup>14</sup> OPPM provided complaint data for all agencies through October 2015.

<sup>15</sup> We interviewed FSIS' fleet manager and officials from FSIS' ICS and Labor Employee Relations Division.

<sup>16</sup> FSIS Form 2450-5, *Request for Authorization to Operate a Government Owned or Leased Vehicle*, dated October 20, 2006.

<sup>17</sup> FSIS Form 2450-8, *FSIS Request and Authorization for Home to Work Transportation*, dated February 2011, and Form AD-728, *Request and Authorization for Home to Work Transportation*, dated December 1988, are used by employees to request to store a vehicle at or near their homes if they meet requirements.

<sup>18</sup> Standard Form-91, *Motor Vehicle Accident Report*, dated February 2004.

<sup>19</sup> We reviewed prior disciplinary actions dating back to January 2012.

<sup>20</sup> FSIS Directive 8021.1, *Investigative Methodology for Conducting Misconduct, OIG Hotline, and Other Investigations*, dated January 25, 2016.

ICS is organizationally independent and has the authority to request the records needed to conduct a thorough investigation for the alleged vehicle misuse complaints ICS receives. To complete these investigations, ICS officials can perform procedures not always available to program supervisors. For example, they can:

- request the employee's prior disciplinary actions;
- review authorizations, including employees' authorizations to operate a government vehicle and to take it home;
- review time and attendance records, work schedules, and locations of establishments worked;
- interview individuals involved in the incident, such as employees, supervisors, witnesses, and law enforcement officials;
- conduct surveillance of employees and government vehicles;
- analyze credit card records to identify irregularities in fuel consumption related to the vehicle involved in the complaint; and
- complete other reviews relevant to the circumstances surrounding the complaint of alleged vehicle misuse.

ICS investigations can take up to 90 days to complete. After an investigation is completed, ICS provides a report with the results to FSIS' Labor and Employee Relations Division (LERD). A LERD official makes the final decision on any disciplinary actions taken against the employee based on the evidence and findings in the investigation report. This process is more thorough than the process followed by program supervisors.

ICS investigators generally did not review complaints of alleged vehicle misuse received from the public. Instead, FSIS' fleet manager received these complaints from OPPM and forwarded them to supervisors to resolve. Even though FSIS supervisors could refer publically submitted complaints to ICS for investigation, only three of the complaints in our sample were referred to ICS. We concluded that allowing supervisors to handle the complaints was problematic. First, supervisors work closely with employees on a day-to-day basis; therefore, they may not be independent and unbiased when evaluating the merit of a complaint. We identified several instances in our sample that appear to fall into this category. In one case, the complaint described a vehicle in a shopping mall on a Sunday. In this instance, the supervisor merely advised the employee to make sure the government vehicle was used only for official duties in compliance with the agency's guidance. No action was taken even though this was a serious allegation and there was a picture attached to the complaint.

We are also concerned that supervisors could be biased against some employees and not objectively evaluate the merit of a complaint. Of the 43 complaints we reviewed, supervisors referred 3 complaints to ICS. We determined that two of these three complaints were associated with an employee who claimed to have had an adverse relationship with the supervisor. In our view, it would be better for an independent unit, such as ICS, to assess all complaints, including those submitted to GSA from the public, because ICS is better suited to evaluate risk factors to determine if an investigation is justified.

We evaluated the 43 complaints in our sample to identify risk factors, such as repeat offenders, time and attendance reports, questionable driving histories, and prior disciplinary actions, present in complaints of alleged vehicle misuse submitted by the public. We identified four employees in our sample that had one or more prior alleged offenses of vehicle misuse. One employee had a complaint of alleged speeding in February 2013. In April 2013, a different individual reported the same employee for alleged reckless driving. Despite receiving two complaints related to alleged speeding and reckless driving within two months, FSIS officials, including the employee's supervisor, took no action to further investigate the complaints. We found similar circumstances with the other three cases. However, none of the complaints involving these four employees were referred to ICS after receiving multiple alleged offenses. It is our position that repeat offenses, especially complaints of reckless driving and speeding, should result in a higher level of scrutiny by FSIS. That is especially true for subsequent complaints from different individuals within a short period of time, as they may indicate an increased likelihood that they have merit, and that the alleged misuse may have been more than an isolated incident.

We also determined that employees named in five complaints (from our sample of 43 complaints) were not on-duty at the time of the alleged misuse.<sup>21</sup> The complaints alleged personal use, speeding, and other acts of reckless driving.<sup>22</sup> However, in all five instances, the employees were on leave without pay, on sick leave, or off-duty (i.e., it was the weekend or the workday had ended). In one instance, the complaint included a picture of an FSIS vehicle parked at a casino on Sunday evening. However, the employee driving the vehicle was only scheduled to work Monday through Friday.<sup>23</sup> According to Federal regulations, employees must not use government vehicles for anything other than official purposes. Unofficial use of a government vehicle results in a minimum one month suspension.<sup>24</sup> If the employee's time and attendance record and his or her work assignments do not clearly support that the employee was using the vehicle for official purposes at the time of alleged misuse, FSIS should investigate the complaint.<sup>25</sup>

There were also employees from 12 complaints in our sample that disclosed one or more accidents on their personal or government driving record. One employee disclosed three accidents on the authorization to operate a vehicle. Additionally, the employee disclosed a speeding violation that resulted in a conviction. A different employee did not have an up-to-date driving history, but had previously disclosed multiple accidents and also

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<sup>21</sup> For 12 additional complaints, the time and attendance reports did not disclose the employee's starting and ending times for his/her workday. Therefore, we could not conclude whether the employee was off-duty.

<sup>22</sup> Reckless driving refers to any complaint that alleged speeding, tailgating, or driving erratically.

<sup>23</sup> This complaint was eventually referred to LERD because the supervisor determined there was vehicle misuse. FSIS then took disciplinary action against the driver. However, in our view ICS should have directly received this complaint to minimize any bias that could have occurred by the supervisor.

<sup>24</sup> 31 U.S.C. §1349, dated September 13, 1982.

<sup>25</sup> We attempted to determine if the alleged misuse had occurred near employees' assigned establishments for work. However, due to the time that had elapsed since the complaints were reported and the variability of FSIS' employees' schedules, we were unable to efficiently collect accurate information on the employees' assigned establishment at the approximate time of the alleged misuse.

received two complaints of alleged vehicle misuse. According to FSIS' policy, agency officials should revoke an employee's authorization if the employee has three or more preventable motor vehicle accidents, or is convicted of a serious traffic violation.<sup>26</sup> In our view, frequent accidents and multiple traffic violations are relevant information in an employee's driving history that should also trigger a referral to ICS.

Lastly, we reviewed disciplinary actions in personnel files for the employees selected in our sample. We found that employees associated with two complaints from our sample had some type of prior disciplinary or adverse action issued against them by FSIS.<sup>27</sup> For example, one employee in our sample had received a disciplinary action in 2013 for employee misconduct. The employee's supervisor did not take this information into account when evaluating the complaint. However, ICS typically identifies prior disciplinary actions as background information in all of its investigations because its policy is that the employee's history is relevant and contributes to a better assessment of the situation or the circumstances involved. This is another example we considered in arriving at the conclusion that ICS should be responsible for evaluating all complaints of alleged vehicle misuse by FSIS employees. It is also our position that such information is relevant and that FSIS should consider employees' prior disciplinary actions to help them determine the merits of a complaint. FSIS did not investigate the complaint regarding the employee with the prior disciplinary action; as of February 2016, the employee received two additional disciplinary actions.<sup>28</sup>

FSIS can improve its process, minimize risks, and ensure a safer driving environment by requiring that ICS assess complaints that OPPM forwards to FSIS. Furthermore, ICS officials can assess the merits of the complaints and determine whether the complaint should be investigated by someone from ICS or the employee's supervisor. FSIS officials agreed that ICS would be better suited to assess complaints or allegations submitted by the public prior to forwarding these complaints to its supervisors.

#### *FSIS' Supervisors Inconsistently Resolved Complaints*

FSIS' supervisors did not consistently resolve complaints of alleged vehicle misuse submitted by the public. This occurred because FSIS did not have instructions for program supervisors to handle complaints. Other than discussing the allegation or obtaining a written response from its employees, we could not find sufficient evidence in our sample to show that supervisors treated FSIS employees consistently despite employees receiving similar allegations of vehicle misuse. For example, one complaint alleged that an FSIS employee was speeding and driving his government vehicle with several unauthorized passengers.<sup>29</sup> The supervisor responded to the complaint by

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<sup>26</sup> FSIS Directive 2450.1, Revision 6, *Assignment and Use of Motor Vehicles for Official FSIS Business*, dated November 3, 2014.

<sup>27</sup> We only received prior disciplinary actions dating back to January 2012.

<sup>28</sup> These prior disciplinary actions include a 5-day suspension for the misuse of a credit card (2013), a letter of reprimand for an absence without leave (2015), and an alternative discipline agreement for failure to follow instructions (2016).

<sup>29</sup> Only FSIS employees on official business are permitted to be transported in a government vehicle.

gathering the employee's fueling records, requesting surveillance on the employee, and even contacting the complainant to clarify details of the incident. For a similar complaint (allegations of speeding and unauthorized passengers), a different supervisor provided the employee with a copy of the policy on the official and unofficial use of a government vehicle.<sup>30</sup> However, the supervisor did not take any other actions.

Our sample of complaints showed varied responses of how supervisors addressed complaints of alleged vehicle misuse, most of which concerned personal use of a government vehicle and reckless driving. These responses included:

- requesting a written response from the employee;
- discussing the incident with the employee;
- sharing guidance on the official and unofficial use of government vehicles with the employee (or with the entire field office);
- contacting the complainant for further information regarding the incident;
- reviewing employee schedules and assigned establishment information to identify irregularities;
- instructing the employee to complete training courses related to the use of government vehicles; and
- referring the complaint to ICS for an investigation (3 of 43 complaints).

We reviewed the locations of the supervisors associated with each of the 43 complaints in our sample and analyzed how the supervisors responded to each complaint. We found that FSIS' responses to handle and resolve complaints also varied among different offices and supervisors. Therefore, without FSIS providing instructions for supervisors to follow while handling complaints, two similar complaints can likely be resolved in different ways depending on the supervisor or office.

In our view, program supervisors can still handle and resolve complaints if ICS assesses a complaint and determines an investigation is not required. For example, ICS could conclude that an investigation is not justified because risk factors are not present. However, FSIS needs to develop and implement procedures to improve consistency of supervisory actions for complaints submitted by the public. Supervisors should take the same steps to process a complaint in order to prevent biased actions and inconsistent treatment of FSIS employees. FSIS officials agreed that issuing guidance to supervisors would ensure consistency with its process to handle and resolve complaints of alleged vehicle misuse.

FSIS' fleet managers and supervisors are responsible for the safety of their fleet operations and should take preventative measures to minimize risks, such as accidents, injuries, and fatalities that impact the public and operators of government vehicles. Since FY 2012 there have been

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<sup>30</sup> FSIS Directive 2450.1, Revision 6, *Assignment and Use of Motor Vehicles for Official FSIS Business*, dated November 3, 2014.

more than 1,300 accidents involving FSIS government vehicles, costing the Federal Government over \$4 million (see Figure 6).<sup>31</sup>

**Figure 6: The fiscal year breakdown of FSIS accidents and total accident and repair costs for leased vehicles.**

<b>FY</b>	<b>Accidents</b>	<b>Total Accident &amp; Repair Costs</b>
FY2012	240	\$638,300.30
FY2013	261	\$828,889.13
FY2014	257	\$841,171.12
FY2015	338	\$951,608.39
FY2016 (to date 7-25-16)	231	\$811,674.49
<b>Total</b>	<b>1327</b>	<b>\$4,071,643.43</b>

Overall, the misuse of government vehicles, reckless driving, and other unsafe practices can impact the public and FSIS employees, and can also result in financial liabilities for FSIS. FSIS can minimize accidents and repair costs by more effectively handling complaints they receive from OPPM. FSIS needs to update its procedures to have ICS receive complaints of alleged vehicle misuse. FSIS needs to also consider risk factors to help the agency determine which complaints ICS should investigate. FSIS should also issue guidance to its supervisors to ensure that complaints not investigated by ICS are consistently handled. Without these improvements, FSIS is exposing the USDA to potential adverse media attention, financial liabilities, and public criticism.

## **Recommendation 1**

Require ICS to assess alleged vehicle misuse complaints submitted by the public. The assessment should include identifying risk factors, such as repeat offenders, employee time and attendance records, questionable driving histories, and prior disciplinary actions, and conclude whether ICS should further investigate the complaint or forward it to FSIS' fleet manager to process.

## **Agency Response**

In its January 26, 2017, response, FSIS concurred with this recommendation. FSIS will have ICS conduct the assessment of alleged vehicle misuse complaints submitted by the public and will forward complaints that do not warrant an investigation to the FSIS fleet manager. The estimated completion date is July 31, 2017.

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<sup>31</sup> According to FSIS officials, none of the 43 complaints in our sample were associated with the accidents or repair costs presented in this table. OIG did not verify the accuracy of this statement.

## **OIG Position**

We accept management decision for this recommendation.

## **Recommendation 2**

Develop and implement specific and approved procedures for supervisors to follow when investigating complaints forwarded to them by FSIS' fleet manager.

## **Agency Response**

In its January 26, 2017, response, FSIS concurred with this recommendation. FSIS will develop and provide guidelines, procedures, and training for supervisors to follow when investigating alleged vehicle misuse complaints forwarded to them by the FSIS fleet manager. The estimated completion date is September 30, 2017.

## **OIG Position**

We accept management decision for this recommendation.

## **Finding 2: FSIS' System of Records for Vehicle Operations Was Ineffective**

FSIS had not logged complaint data submitted by the public into a system of records, and had not monitored its employees' qualifications and authorizations to operate a government vehicle. Additionally, FSIS did not document that its employees were qualified and authorized to operate a government vehicle at the time of the alleged vehicle misuse. FSIS officials had not developed an effective system to maintain employee data and periodically review whether employees had: (1) valid driver's licenses, (2) safe driving histories, (3) authorization to operate a vehicle, and (4) permission to store government vehicles at home, because these records were left to employees to update and for supervisors to maintain. Without an effective system, FSIS officials cannot identify which complaints present a greater risk to the agency and should, therefore, be evaluated by the ICS unit.

Federal regulations require agencies to establish an efficient and effective system to identify employees who are qualified and authorized to operate government-owned or government-leased motor vehicles while on official government business.<sup>32</sup> These regulations also require agencies to periodically review the competence and physical qualifications of Federal employees to operate vehicles safely. FSIS also requires its employees to be authorized to operate a government vehicle,<sup>33</sup> and the agency is required to review each employee's authorization to operate a government-leased vehicle at least once every four years.<sup>34</sup>

FSIS officials had not logged any information collected from complaints of alleged vehicle misuse received from the public during the period of our audit. Information such as license plate numbers, employees' names, date, time, and location of alleged misuse, descriptions of the complaints, and FSIS' resolutions of the complaints were not documented in FSIS' system of records. Furthermore, FSIS did not have a centralized system to view employees' qualifications and authorizations (to operate) for all FSIS employees. The information FSIS received from the public's complaints and the data collected from its employees, such as driving history, could help decrease the Department's liability in the case of an injury, accident, or fatality.

We planned to compare OPPM's system of records for alleged vehicle misuse complaints to FSIS' records to ensure the accuracy of FSIS' records. However, FSIS did not log any data from complaints of alleged vehicle misuse. Instead, to meet our requests and complete that aspect of our work, FSIS provided us data from OPPM's system of records to gather information regarding the complaints received.

We did select 43 complaints, from the 99 total complaints of alleged vehicle misuse by FSIS employees, to determine if the agency's lack of information had negatively impacted its ability to evaluate and resolve complaints.<sup>35</sup> For each selected complaint, we requested that FSIS provide

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<sup>32</sup> 5 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) § 930.101-.115, dated September 12, 2005.

<sup>33</sup> FSIS Form 2450-5, *Request Authorization to Operate a Government Owned or Leased Vehicle*, dated October 20, 2006.

<sup>34</sup> 5 C.F.R. § 930.101-.115, dated January 1, 2012.

<sup>35</sup> This was a non-statistical sample of complaints from January 2012 through February 2016. We selected the 43 complaints based on risk factors such as employees with multiple alleged offenses, complaints of reckless driving, or personal use of a government vehicle.

the name of the employee operating the vehicle in question and we reviewed documents to verify that the employee was authorized and qualified to operate a government vehicle.

We found several issues with FSIS' process for monitoring its government vehicle operations. First, FSIS did not track or log complaint information from its employees, such as repeat offenses, to help identify which vehicle complaints ICS should investigate. In addition, FSIS did not properly monitor and maintain documents to ensure its employees were authorized and qualified to operate a government vehicle. The following sections provide details regarding our findings and conclusions in each of these areas.

#### *FSIS Did Not Log Complaint Data from its Employees*

As discussed in Finding 1, FSIS did not have a process to identify risk factors to help assess complaints. As an extension of that issue, we found that even if FSIS had a methodology to determine those complaints ICS should investigate, the agency did not have an effective system of records to log the information. FSIS officials said they were not aware that they were required to log and maintain such information. As a result, FSIS officials could not view data needed to select complaints for investigation.

In our view, information such as employees' names and details related to the specific complaint needs to be maintained in a system of records. That type of information, along with other risk factors, was not available for agency officials to review. Therefore, FSIS was unable to identify complaints that should have been investigated in more detail. We identified several employees who were the subject of multiple complaints. It is our position that those employees pose a greater threat to FSIS' driving operations than employees with no history of complaints. Second, the time and location of alleged misuse should be clearly supported by employees' time and attendance records, and the proximity to their assigned establishment(s). FSIS officials should also monitor employees' vehicle operating history when ultimately deciding if complaints merit further investigation. Lastly, FSIS should pay close attention to an employee's disciplinary history when deciding if a FSIS employee deserves initial and continued authorization (see Finding 1).

We discussed this issue with FSIS officials and they agreed that a system of records that includes logging complaint data would help improve their process to handle and resolve complaints of alleged vehicle misuse. By keeping a detailed log of complaints, along with the employee's information, FSIS can maintain the relevant data needed to determine which complaints ICS should investigate. For example, after we requested the names of employees associated with all complaints submitted to GSA by the public, we found four FSIS employees that had received multiple alleged offenses. In other instances, we found complaints where the date of alleged misuse was a Federal holiday, in which case the complaint needed to be further investigated to ensure the employee was on-duty.

When FSIS receives a complaint from the public, FSIS should document license plate numbers, employees' names, date, time, and location of alleged misuse, descriptions of the complaints, and FSIS' resolutions to these complaints. In addition, FSIS should document the risk factors present with the complaint and the employee before determining if an investigation is justified.

*FSIS' System of Records Did Not Support That Employees Were Authorized, Qualified, or Trained to Operate a Vehicle*

According to FSIS' record system, of the 43 complaints in our sample, there were 27 FSIS employees that were not authorized or qualified to operate a government vehicle, 6 employees that were not authorized to drive their vehicles home, and 7 employees that did not fully complete the training requirements to operate vehicles.

FSIS' fleet manager was required to retain a copy of each employee's authorization to operate a vehicle,<sup>36</sup> and to maintain an original copy of an employee's approval to maintain a government vehicle while at home.<sup>37</sup> Additionally, agencies were required to ensure that appropriate training be provided to employees.<sup>38</sup> However, FSIS' fleet manager had not established an effective system of records to monitor the authorizations, qualifications, or training requirements. Instead, FSIS' program supervisors maintained these records and relied on employees to update them, including such records as a driver's license renewal, an accident report, or a traffic violation. As a result, FSIS' records for employees operating vehicles are likely incomplete and inaccurate.

We requested key agency documentation to support that each employee in our sample was authorized, qualified, and trained to operate a vehicle. FSIS employees answered critical questions regarding their driving history on their authorization forms to support that they were qualified to operate a government vehicle. Another authorization disclosed information about where the vehicle should be parked when the employee was not on duty. FSIS national officials had to request the information from field program supervisors to provide the documents to us. Ultimately, FSIS did not document that all employees had valid driver's licenses, satisfactory driving records, current permission to have vehicles at home (or en route to), or appropriate training at the time of alleged misuse.

FSIS requires its employees to be authorized to operate a government vehicle. Furthermore, Federal regulations require agencies to review each employee's authorization to operate a government-leased vehicle at least once every four years.<sup>39</sup> On the authorization form, an employee certifies that he or she has a valid driver's license, has not been convicted of a serious traffic violation (reckless driving, manslaughter, or

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<sup>36</sup> FSIS Form 2450-5, *Request Authorization to Operate a Government Owned or Leased Vehicle*, dated October 20, 2006.

<sup>37</sup> FSIS Form 2450-8, *FSIS Request and Authorization for Home to Work Transportation*, dated February 2011.

<sup>38</sup> GSA Administrative 5620.1, *GSA Internal Motor Vehicle Management*, dated September 12, 2005 (extended May 18, 2016).

<sup>39</sup> 5 C.F.R. § 930.101-.115, dated January 1, 2012.

exceeding the speed limit by more than 20 miles per hour), and has less than three preventable accidents within a period of three years. The information on this form is critical in evaluating the employee's eligibility. Thus, FSIS must maintain these forms to support that its employees are authorized to operate a vehicle.

We found 16 instances in our sample where the FSIS employee's authorization to operate a vehicle was out-of-date.<sup>40</sup> Additionally, 15 employees' driver's licenses had expired, according to the authorization, at the time of complaint. For example, we reviewed a complaint that was submitted in 2014 and found that the employee's authorization was last certified in 2000, more than 14 years prior to the complaint. This outdated authorization also showed that the employee's driver's license had expired in 2004. We found another nine instances where employees did not have an authorization form on file at the time of the complaint. Finally, we found two instances where FSIS officials completed an authorization form after the alleged incident had occurred and the complaint was filed with GSA. In total, agency officials did not have documentation to support that the employee was authorized to operate a government vehicle at the time of alleged misuse for 27 of the 43 complaints in our sample.

We also identified issues related to the authorizations that allow an employee to drive the vehicle to his or her residence. FSIS employees are permitted to take government vehicles home if they request approval.<sup>41</sup> In these cases, the employee can only use the vehicle for official business and not for private business, personal errands, or recreation.<sup>42</sup>

We found 10 complaints related to FSIS employees possibly using vehicles in violation of this policy. For example, there were four employees who completed this authorization after the alleged incident and six other employees whose authorization had expired. Two of the 10 complaints related to possible personal use of the vehicle. One complaint described a vehicle parked at a residence in the morning hours well before the start of the work day. Another complaint described an employee filling up a gasoline can at 3:30 a.m. Two other complaints included picture evidence of alleged vehicle misuse; both questioned the location where the vehicle was parked. The nature of these complaints raises other questions if proven valid. However, we found that none of the 10 employees had a current authorization in FSIS' record system to drive the vehicle to and from his or her residence at the time of alleged misuse. FSIS needs to better maintain these forms to support that its employees are authorized to take vehicles home.

Lastly, we reviewed FSIS' training records related to our sample and found seven instances where employees had not fully met the training requirements necessary to operate a vehicle. According to FSIS officials, all agency employees that operate a government vehicle were required to take vehicle orientation training in December 2012.

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<sup>40</sup> The authorization form requires that the employee provide information about his or her driving history within the past three years. Therefore, we determined that all authorizations certified more than three years from the date of alleged misuse were out-of-date.

<sup>41</sup> FSIS Form 2450-8, *Request Authorization for Home-to-Work*, dated February 1, 2011.

<sup>42</sup> Federal travel regulations authorize an employee to stop for food at suitable eating places and locations while performing government business.

Since that time, every new employee that operates a government vehicle is required to take orientation training. Similarly, as of November 2013, every employee that operates a government vehicle was required to have completed a fleet policy certification. However, in these seven complaints, FSIS employees either did not complete the orientation training and/or the fleet policy certification. FSIS needs to develop a sound record system to ensure that authorized employees are in compliance with all training requirements for the operation of government vehicles.

FSIS national officials agreed with our position. Prior to the end of our audit, FSIS had started to collect and update all operating employees' qualifications, authorization forms, and training certificates from its supervisors.

In summary, FSIS did not establish an effective system to log complaint data and monitor supporting documentation for those employees who are qualified and authorized to operate a government vehicle. FSIS needs to improve its record system to track or log complaint data to select complaints for investigation based on risk factors (e.g., multiple complaints, accident history, training records, prior disciplinary actions, etc.). In addition, FSIS needs to ensure its system maintains accurate and updated information to support that its employees are authorized and qualified to drive government vehicles. This should include periodically reviewing whether employees have: (1) valid licenses, (2) safe driving histories, (3) permission to store government vehicles at home, and (4) appropriate training. With these improvements, FSIS will maintain data to help select which complaints of alleged vehicle misuse it should investigate and decrease the Department's liability in the case of an injury, accident, or fatality.

We met with FSIS officials in June and August 2016 to discuss our preliminary conclusions for this finding. They agreed with our preliminary conclusions and proposed corrective action. Furthermore, as of December 2016, FSIS' Fleet Manager, ICS officials, and other FSIS personnel stated that they have already begun to implement a system where complaint data, authorizations, and qualifications can be stored and shared to better monitor the agency's fleet operations.

### **Recommendation 3**

Improve the record system to track or log vehicle complaint data to help select complaints that ICS should investigate based on risk factors (such as multiple complaints, accident history, training records, prior disciplinary actions, etc.).

### **Agency Response**

In its January 26, 2017, response, FSIS concurred with this recommendation. FSIS will input complaints into an ICS database that will track risk factors and help ICS select complaints it should investigate. The estimated completion date is July 31, 2017.

### **OIG Position**

We accept management decision for this recommendation.

## **Recommendation 4**

Develop and implement procedures to periodically review documentation authorizing employees to drive government vehicles. This should include ensuring that employees have: (1) a valid driver's license, (2) acceptable driving history, and (3) authority to store government vehicles at home.

### **Agency Response**

In its January 26, 2017, response, FSIS concurred with this recommendation. FSIS will establish a Master System of Record and periodically review this system to ensure operators have: (1) a valid driver's license, (2) acceptable driving history, and (3) authority to store government vehicles at home. The estimated completion date is September 30, 2017.

### **OIG Position**

We accept management decision for this recommendation.

## Scope and Methodology

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We conducted our audit work of FSIS' process for handling complaints of alleged vehicle misuse by meeting with OPPM officials in Washington, D.C.; FSIS officials in Beltsville, Maryland; and GSA officials in Washington, D.C. We also reviewed Department-wide and agency-specific policies and procedures related to alleged vehicle misuse and analyzed complaints and employees' records. We performed our fieldwork from March 2016 to October 2016.

Since 2012, GSA received the most complaints from the public related to FSIS vehicles. Therefore, we selected FSIS' process to handle and resolve complaints of alleged vehicle misuse for this audit. We non-statistically selected 43 FSIS alleged vehicle misuse complaints from a total of 99 complaints submitted to GSA by the public, dated from January 2012 to March 2016. To select complaints, we chose those that were most likely to contain risks associated with factors we identified. We first identified those that contained repeat offenders.<sup>43</sup> We then categorized the remaining complaints as: (1) reckless driving,<sup>44</sup> (2) personal use,<sup>45</sup> or (3) other.<sup>46</sup> Overall, we selected the following types of complaints:

- 15 complaints associated with repeat offenders,
- 10 complaints describing alleged reckless driving,
- 16 complaints describing alleged personal use, and
- 2 other.

For the 43 complaints in our sample, we obtained the (1) names of the FSIS employees operating the vehicles at the time of the alleged misuse, (2) time and attendance reports, (3) accident reports, (4) training records, (5) records of prior disciplinary actions, (6) authorizations to operate a government vehicle, and (7) approvals to park government vehicles at employee residences.<sup>47</sup>

To accomplish our objectives, we also performed the following procedures:

- Reviewed legislation, regulations, agency policies, and agency procedures related to government vehicle use and the vehicle misuse complaint process;
- Interviewed GSA, OPPM, and FSIS officials to gain a better understanding of the complaint process and the roles and responsibilities related to the process;
- Obtained and reviewed reports of investigation by FSIS' ICS on the possible misuse of government vehicles;

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<sup>43</sup> "Repeat offender" refers to any FSIS employee cited for two or more allegations of misuse of a government vehicle.

<sup>44</sup> "Reckless driving" refers to any complaint that alleged speeding, tailgating, or driving erratically.

<sup>45</sup> "Personal use" refers to any government employee cited for an allegation of misuse related to parking a government vehicle at a residence or establishment without authorization, traveling to an unauthorized location during duty or non-duty hours, or transporting unauthorized passengers.

<sup>46</sup> "Other" stands for complaints that did not fit under any of the three prior categories.

<sup>47</sup> We also requested fuel reports and mileage documents; however, due to the time that had elapsed since the complaints were reported, we were unable to collect this documentation for all 43 complaints in our sample. Therefore, we did not fully analyze this documentation.

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- Obtained an understanding of GSA’s “How’s My Driving” program and the e-mail system used to receive complaints. However, we did not evaluate the e-mail system because it was not part of our objectives.

During the course of our audit, we did not verify information in any USDA electronic information system, and we make no representation regarding the adequacy of any agency computer system or the information generated from it.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

## Abbreviations

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APHIS	Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
C.F.R.	Code of Federal Regulations
CY	Calendar Year
FSA	Farm Service Agency
FS	Forest Service
FSIS	Food Safety and Inspection Service
FY	Fiscal Year
GSA	General Services Administration
ICS	Internal Controls Staff
LERD	Labor and Employee Relations Division
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OPPM	Office of Procurement and Property Management
PMD	Property Management Division
RD	Rural Development
U.S.C.	United States Code
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture

**USDA'S  
FOOD SAFETY AND  
INSPECTION SERVICE'S  
RESPONSE TO AUDIT REPORT**





United States Department of Agriculture

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Food Safety and  
Inspection Service

1400 Independence  
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Washington, D.C.  
20250

TO: Gil H. Harden  
Assistant Inspector General  
Office of Inspector General

FROM: Alfred V. Almanza /s/ **January 26, 2017**  
Acting Deputy Under Secretary, Food Safety  
Administrator, Food Safety and Inspection Service

SUBJECT: Office of Inspector General (OIG) Official Draft Report –  
Food Safety and Inspection Service’s Process for Handling  
Vehicle Misuse Complaints, Report Number 50099-0002-21

We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on this Official Draft report. The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) reviewed the Official Draft report and has general comments followed by a response to each recommendation.

**FSIS’ General Comments**

FSIS would like to clarify that the majority of public complaints concerning alleged vehicle misuse were either not misuse or lacked sufficient evidence to determine they were misuse. Furthermore, under FSIS’ current process, an internal investigation is not always needed for the agency to take appropriate disciplinary action. FSIS received 99 complaints from the public over four-years while leasing more than 2200 vehicles a year. FSIS determined no misuse occurred in 21 of these complaints as the public misunderstood what appeared to be a violation. These complaints primarily concerned FSIS government vehicles parked at establishments under FSIS regulation, parked at residences of employees with home to work authorizations, or concerned incorrectly reported license plate numbers. An additional 54 complaints could not be substantiated and were denied by the drivers. Consequently, 75 of the 99 alleged vehicle misuse complaints that the public submitted over four years when FSIS leased more than 2200 vehicles a year were either not misuse or unsubstantiated alleged misuse. FSIS works diligently to address allegations of vehicle misuse. A supervisor, District Manager or Program Manager, following their organization's procedures, may refer a case directly to the agency’s Labor and Employee Relations Division (LERD) for disciplinary action. LERD reviews the case and determines if it requires an investigation by the agency’s Internal Controls Staff. Based on the circumstances and evidence, LERD may also determine that an Internal Controls Staff investigation is not needed and instead propose disciplinary action.

**Recommendation 1:**

Require that the Internal Controls Staff (ICS) assess alleged vehicle misuse complaints submitted by the public. The assessment should include identifying risk factors, such as repeat offenders, employee time and attendance records, questionable driving histories, and prior disciplinary actions, and conclude whether ICS should further investigate the complaint or forward it to FSIS’ fleet manager to process.

FSIS Response:

ICS will conduct an assessment of alleged vehicle misuse complaints submitted by the public, which will include identifying risk factors. If ICS determines the complaint warrants a formal investigation, ICS will follow FSIS Directive 8021.1, Revision 1, "Investigative Methodology for Conducting Misconduct, OIG Hotline, and Other Investigations." If the complaint does not warrant investigation, ICS will forward the complaint to the FSIS fleet manager for follow-up.

Estimated Completion Date:

FSIS will implement its process for assessing alleged vehicle complaints submitted from the public by July 31, 2017.

**Recommendation 2:**

Develop and implement specific and approved procedures for supervisors to follow when investigating complaints forwarded to them by FSIS' fleet manager.

FSIS Response:

LERD will develop guidelines and procedures for supervisors to follow when investigating alleged vehicle misuse complaints forwarded to them by the FSIS fleet manager. Supervisory training focusing on adverse actions related to vehicle misuse will become part of yearly courses given by LERD. These guidelines and procedures will be provided to the Agency for approval within the year.

Estimated Completion Date:

FSIS will develop guidelines and procedures and incorporate vehicle misuse into supervisory training by September 30, 2017.

**Recommendation 3:**

Improve the record system to track or log vehicle complaint data to help select complaints that ICS should investigate based on risk factors (e.g., multiple complaints, accident history, training records, prior disciplinary actions, etc.).

FSIS Response:

Once an alleged vehicle misuse complaint is received, ICS will input the complaint into Assurance Net, which is an ICS database that will track risk factors thereby helping ICS select complaints it should investigate.

Estimated Completion Date:

FSIS will implement its process for inputting complaints into Assurance Net by July 31, 2017.

**Recommendation 4:**

Develop and implement procedures to periodically review documentation authorizing employees to drive government vehicles. This should include ensuring that employees have: (1) a valid driver's license, (2) acceptable driving history, and (3) authority to store government vehicles at home.

FSIS Response:

The Office of Administrative Services (OAS) will establish a Master System of Record to ensure FSIS government vehicle operators have the following: (1) valid driver's license, (2) acceptable driving history, and (3) authority to store government vehicles at home when the criteria are met. OAS will issue a data call for FSIS government vehicle operators to complete form FSIS 2450-5, "Request for Authorization to Operate a Government-owned or Leased Vehicle," and form AD-728, "Request and Authorization for Home to Work Transportation." OAS will enter data from these forms into the Master System of Record to ensure employees have a valid driver's license, acceptable driving history, and that their request to park government vehicles at home meets criteria. OAS will then periodically review the Master System of Record to ensure the forms stay up-to-date.

Estimated Completion Date:

FSIS will establish and record data into the Master System of Record by September 30, 2017.

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