

# Summary: Investigation of BLM Employee's Time, Attendance, and Travel

**Report Date: July 10, 2014**

OIG investigated an anonymous complaint alleging that an employee of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) was committing time and attendance fraud. The complainant alleged that the BLM employee was never in the office but his time and attendance reflected that he was, and that he was not claiming the leave hours he used. We were also asked to investigate a trip that the BLM employee took to Salt Lake City, UT, in January 2014. The BLM employee had claimed the trip was to conduct official U.S. Government business, but it appeared to have been personal in nature.

Our investigation did not substantiate the allegation that the BLM employee was falsifying his time and attendance. It does appear, however, that he traveled to Salt Lake City at the Government's expense for at least partially personal reasons.

The BLM employee planned an official trip to Salt Lake City from January 22 through 24, 2014. The trip coincided with a large trade show of outdoor retailers in the city, and the BLM employee told other employees that the purpose of his trip was twofold: to attend the show and also to meet with BLM staff in Utah. When he requested a travel authorization from his supervisors, however, he mentioned only the meetings as justification for the trip.

The BLM employee did attend official meetings on January 22 but spent January 23 at the show. He did not attend any meetings on January 23 and conducted only minimal official business via telephone. In addition, because no hotel rooms were available in Salt Lake City at the per diem rate of \$115 during his trip, the BLM employee stayed for 2 nights in a hotel in Park City, UT, at a much higher rate of \$211.

We provided the report on our investigation to the Director of BLM for any action he deemed appropriate. According to BLM's response, the BLM employee received a letter of expectations from a BLM supervisor. Due to the amount of time it took BLM to take action, the supervisor decided not to discipline the employee.

*This is a summary of an investigative report that was issued internally to the U.S. Department of the Interior. This summary was posted to the web on August 12, 2015.*

