Recommendations – Charge Card Changes

1. Consider an exemption for both travel and purchase for DOI front office staff: Immediate Office of the Secretary has 50 travel cards and 11 purchase cards (including Office of Communications, Legislative and Regulatory Affairs, Exec Sec. If we include the AS hallways, the numbers will be slightly higher.)

2. Consider an exemption on both purchase and travel cards for national security, public safety, and immigration enforcement, including, but not limited to, the following:
    a. Law enforcement activities (including purchasing for equipment/supplies such as defensive equipment, ballistic body armor, uniforms, night vision goggles, etc.)
    b. Incident response, including wildland and structural fires, natural disasters, security incidents, and other human-caused emergencies
    c. Border and immigration activities
    d. Mandatory training for public safety activities
    e. Inspectors (aviation and other) and aviation mechanics
    f. Investigations
    g. Correctional facilities and related matters
    h. Facilities repairs and maintenance for public safety
    i. Utilities payments
    j. School operations and activities

3. Consider an exemption on both purchase and travel cards for litigation, audits, and investigations, for example, attorneys and witnesses traveling and other activities related to court cases and other legal proceedings, and investigations and proceeding related to adjudicating other administrative law matters.

4. Consider a purchase card exemption for mission-critical supply purchases for each operating unit, to be determined in coordination with bureaus and offices. These are purchases that may not qualify as national security, public safety, and immigration enforcement, but are essential for operations, like cell phones, copiers, toilet paper, printers, office supplies, care and feeding of live animals and fish, etc. As an example, one or two individuals in PMB could maintain a card and purchase supplies for all offices, and then re-allocate the charges back to the appropriate account.

5. Consider a travel card exemption for employees with approved detail assignments or PCS (moving / relocation paid by the Government).

6. Consider an exemption for both travel and purchase for OIG.

Note: For all recommendations related to purchase cards, recommend that users maintain their current limit, even if the total number of exempted cards exceeds 0.1%. PAM can provide reporting of expenditures on these cards in the format and cadence desired by leadership.

For all recommendations related to travel cards, recommend that the card limit not be decreased, and therefore coordination with the charge card office and GSA not be required on a trip-by-trip basis.

Recommended process for non-exempt travel

1. For travel that falls under the Secretarial review process, once approved by the Senior Advisor, the traveler can contact their bureau A/OPC to raise their spending limit. The Department can send reports to GSA regarding these travelers.

2. For travel that does not fall under the Secretarial review process, recommend approval one level above the supervisor, and then the traveler can contact their bureau A/OPC to raise their spending limit. The Department can send reports to GSA regarding these travelers.

Alternative for both would be for the traveler to contact either their A/OPC or the Charge Card Support Center (depending on whether you want to submit to GSA centrally or bureau-by-bureau), who can submit requests daily to GSA, wait for their approval, and then raise the thresholds.

Questions from Bureaus and Offices (sent by email on 2/24/25)

Travel Card Questions

1. ***Future Travel Requests***. A process is needed to describe how individuals whose travel has been approved will get approval for an increased spending limit for their travel card in the future. If these need to route to GSA, what internal approvals are needed first (if any); how does this process connect to the overall travel approval process.
2. ***Approved Travel***. How will DOI handle travel that has already been approved (for ex, conferences; other leadership approval) that begins after Tuesday? Do folks need to re-route those requests to get approval for the card threshold to be increased? How should those scheduled to begin travel Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday handle those trips?
3. ***Exemptions.*** Would leadership consider bulk exemptions or exemptions by traveler for specific situations (emergency, fire, etc.) to streamline the process of raising and lower thresholds in coordination with GSA for each trip?
4. ***Details***. How should we handle situations where employees are on long-term details, and are using their travel cards for expenses? (This is a long-term need for travel that's already begun. Should we leave their limits as-is for the length of the detail, or make changes?)
5. ***PCS***. How should we handle situations where PCS has been approved?

Purchase Card Questions

6. ***Mission Critical Activities***. Will there be any exemptions for mission-critical activities other than national security, public safety, and immigration enforcement? Examples included feeding livestock and other animals.
7. ***Recurring items commonly paid with cards***. Will there be a process for utilities payments, cellular phone payments, printers, copiers, etc. to pay monthly bills?
8. ***Administration Priorities***. Will there be exceptions for Administration priorities like return to work or lease reductions?
9. ***BIE Student Activity Cards***. Will there be any exceptions made for purchase cards for BIE's student activity cards?