



Government  
of Canada

Gouvernement  
du Canada

[Canada.ca](#) > [CBSA](#) > [Audit and evaluation reports](#)

# Targeted control audit of temporary resident permits: Significance, key findings and management response

[Canada Border Services Agency](#).

[← Previous page](#)

[Table of contents](#)

[Next page →](#)

## On this page

- [Significance of the audit](#)
- [Statement of conformance](#)
- [Audit opinion](#)
- [Key findings](#)
- [Summary of recommendations](#)
- [Management response](#)

## Significance of the audit

11. In 2020, the CBSA and IRCC (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada) issued over 2,000 TRP (Temporary Resident Permit)s <sup>5</sup>.

12. A TRP is granted in exceptional circumstances and carries privileges <sup>6</sup> greater than other temporary resident statuses:

- if valid for at least 6 months, it allows the FN (Foreign national) to apply for a work/study permit and gives access to health and social services; **and**
- it also allows the FN to apply for permanent residence after 3 years, and if the holder meets eligibility criteria.

13. Officers are the sole decision makers and must use their discretion and judgment to grant the traveller entry into Canada.

14. TRPs have been the subject of a number of audits from the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) in the last few years, as far back as 2008, as well as of CBSA internal assessments <sup>7</sup>.

15. The OAG has consistently identified gaps in compliance, specifically in the documentation of the reasons for issuing TRPs, as well as in monitoring the quality of TRPs. The agency committed to implementing national quality assurance, and improving its monitoring controls at POE (Port of entry)s.

16. Given the areas for improvement identified and the impact officer decisions may have on Canada and Canadians, it is critical that the agency seize the opportunity to improve its compliance and establish monitoring and oversight over the issuance of TRPs.

17. This audit was approved as part of the 2022 to 2023 Risk-Based Audit and Evaluation Plan.

18. The objective of this audit was to determine whether the agency consistently issued temporary resident permits in compliance with policies and standards, and monitored the non-compliance of TRP holders'

authorized stay.

19. The scope period for the entire audit was April 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022.

20. The scope of this audit included:

- a review of a sample of TRPs issued between April 1, 2021 and April 30, 2022
- policies, procedures, training and tools available to support TRP processing
- oversight and compliance monitoring regimes of selected regions and National Headquarters (NHQ)
- monitoring of TRP holders for non-compliance with their authorized stay

21. This audit did not include:

- a review of TRPs issued by the IRCC
- a review of the TRP fee collection and exemption
- a review and management of TRP paper files, including creation, storage and disposal
- the assessment of the determination of criminality
- compliance with policy changes after April 30, 2022

22. The following steps were taken to meet the objective of this audit <sup>8</sup>:

- engaged all 7 regions
- leveraged the Global Case Management System (GCMS) to obtain TRP data

- interviewed 80 agency officials (including chiefs, superintendents, BSO (Border Services Officer)s and NHQ staff)
- reviewed 147 documents including legislation, policies, Operational Bulletins and training materials
- reviewed 168 TRPs issued between April 1, 2021 to April 30, 2022

## Statement of conformance

23. This audit engagement conforms to the related Treasury Board's Policy and Directive on Internal Audit and the Institute of Internal Auditors' International Professional Practices Framework. Sufficient and appropriate evidence was gathered through various procedures to provide an audit level of assurance. The agency's internal audit function is independent and internal auditors performed their work with objectivity as defined by the Institute of Internal Auditors' International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

## Audit opinion

24. The agency has the supporting structure in place to issue TRPs to foreign nationals, including policies, procedures, training and guidance tools. However, significant non-compliance was identified with the requirements documenting the justification for issuing temporary residents permits, and there is limited oversight. Further work is required to have these fundamental elements in place to allow the agency to consistently demonstrate and justify its decisions to issue TRPs and make program improvements when needed.

# Key findings

25. Only half (48%) of the 168 TRPs reviewed were fully compliant in documenting the 5 required elements related to the justification for issuing a TRP, as prescribed in the ENF 4 manual. Almost all of the TRPs reviewed (99%) were issued at the appropriate designated authority.

26. There is no formal requirement to conduct quality control (QC) of TRPs in the regions. Some regions have established QC practices; however, they vary in scope and non-compliance remains high.

27. The Travellers Branch has limited compliance monitoring of TRPs and has conducted two Port Program assessments over the last 3 years. However, improvements needed are not consistently applied nationally to address systemic issues and gaps identified. The Branch has no plan to continue or expand compliance monitoring of TRPs beyond the Port Program Assessments.

28. TRP policies, resources and training cover the overall process and requirements to issue TRPs, but they provide limited guidance on the acceptable threshold of factors when they risk assess and training could include more on documenting TRPs in GCMS.

29. The agency does not systematically monitor TRP holders' compliance with their authorized stay. At the time of the audit, clear responsibility for monitoring TRP holders was not established. Although there is no monitoring, TB (Travellers Branch) has processes to notify IEB (Intelligence and Enforcement Branch) when high profile TRPs are issued. Officers may also request that certain travellers report their departure. Despite these processes, a traveller's departure may not be recorded in GCMS allowing

the agency to confirm their departure. Entry/Exit data was designed to determine overstay, but current limitations with this function further limit the agency's ability to monitor overstay.

## Summary of recommendations

30. The audit makes three recommendations pertaining to:

- improving compliance with respect to the documentation of TRP justification, through program oversight and ensuring that training for designated authorities is completed and tracked
- updating policies and supporting resources
- determining the risk and impacts for TRP holders who overstay and the extent to which monitoring and subsequent action is needed

## Management response

Overall, the Vice-President (VP) of Travellers Branch agrees with the recommendations of the audit and will work in collaboration with the Intelligence and Enforcement and Human Resources branches to develop an established and sustained quality control/quality assurance framework to improve oversight and overall compliance.

## Footnotes

- 5 2,044 TRPs issued. This number is based on calendar year. It accounts for a decreased number of travellers given the pandemic. In 2019, there were 6,080 TRPs issued. Source: Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration, IRCC.
- 6 [Temporary resident permits \(TRPs\): Eligibility and assessment – Canada.ca](#)
- 7 See Appendix A for further details on the OAG audits and internal reviews.
- 8 See Appendices C and D for key risks, and the full audit approach and methodology.

---

[← Previous page](#)[Table of contents](#)[Next page →](#)**Date modified:**

2023-11-06