

Report Summary

Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General

March 2010



Objective

To (1) determine whether the Social Security Administration (SSA) had procedures for routinely examining field office workload data for anomalous trends; and (2) review the reasons for some notable post-entitlement workload increases.

Background

SSA uses the automated District Office Workload Report (DOWR) system to develop and report comprehensive field office workload production information. The primary purpose of DOWR is to provide weekly and/or monthly counts of measured field office workloads. DOWR captures statistics on approximately 60 workloads. DOWR data used in conjunction with other workload analysis tools enables SSA management to measure staff and other resources expended on field office workloads.

To view the full report, visit
http://www.ssa.gov/oig/ADO_BEPDF/A-04-10-21047.pdf

Field Office Post-Entitlement Workload Statistics (A-04-10-21047)

Our Findings

SSA management analyzed DOWR data at a national and regional level; however, this analysis did not always focus on, or identify, anomalous trends at specific field offices. Interviews with regional officials and field office managers determined that some high-priority workloads may have been routinely monitored. However, for lower priority tasks, such as those we examined, less emphasis was placed on examining the rationale for unusual trends—unless a specific allegation or problem was brought to management's attention.

For the six selected field offices reviewed, management at the respective regional offices (Dallas, New York, and San Francisco) stated they had not identified the significant changes in the three workloads we tested. However, SSA regional officials generally provided reasonable explanations for the significant increases in the three workloads we examined.

Matters for Consideration

DOWR statistics provide management with a useful tool for monitoring field office workloads. To ensure SSA management identifies significant changes in all workload statistics, which may indicate potential problems in workloads or a need for employee training, we believe SSA should consider requiring regional offices to develop workload trend statistics for all DOWR categories for each of their respective field offices. From this data, SSA should identify and investigate significant workload anomalies.

SSA agreed that regional offices should develop DOWR trend statistics for each of their respective field offices and stated that it will work to implement this practice.