Why GAO Did This Study

According to White House officials, to be able to communicate instantly with the U.S. military, the President flies on military aircraft whenever he travels—whether for official, political, or other non-official reasons. On February 15, 2013, the President flew from Joint Base Andrews in Maryland to Chicago, Illinois to deliver remarks on economic proposals that he introduced in his State of the Union address on February 12, 2013, later flew to Palm Beach, Florida for vacation, and then returned to Joint Base Andrews.

GAO was asked to identify the costs associated with the President's February 15, 2013 through February 18, 2013, travel to Illinois and Florida. This review was conducted in response to a request from Senator Barrasso, then Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works. This report provides information on the major costs incurred by DOD and DHS in supporting the President's February 2013 trip to Illinois and Florida.

GAO examined cost data from DOD and DHS on aircraft operating costs, per diem expenses, and other significant costs. Additionally, GAO interviewed knowledgeable officials from the White House, DOD, and DHS who were involved in supporting presidential travel. GAO also examined relevant guidance.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is not making recommendations in this report.

View GAO-17-24. For more information, contact Brian Lepore, 202-512-4523, leporeb@gao.gov