

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-16-136](#), a report to congressional requesters

Why GAO Did This Study

Federal agencies spent about \$1 billion in fiscal year 2014 to lease about 186,000 vehicles from GSA. Assessing the utilization of leased vehicles is important to agency efforts to manage their fleet costs.

GAO was asked to examine federal processes for assessing the utilization of leased vehicles. This report addresses, among other objectives, (1) GSA's role in identifying and reducing underutilized leased vehicles and (2) the extent to which the processes used by selected federal agencies facilitate the identification and removal of underutilized leased vehicles, and any cost savings that could be achieved by reducing underutilized vehicles. GAO selected five agencies using factors such as fleet size, and analyzed over 15,500 fiscal-year 2014 vehicle records. At the five agencies, GAO surveyed fleet managers with at least 20 leased vehicles; reviewed fleet policies and guidance; and interviewed federal officials. These findings are not generalizable to all agencies or fleet managers.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends, among other things, that GSA develop a mechanism to help ensure that FSRs speak with fleet managers about vehicle utilization, that the Air Force and VHA modify their processes for vehicle justifications, and that NPS and VHA take corrective action for vehicles that do not have readily accessible written justification or did not pass a justification review. Each agency concurred with the recommendations and discussed actions planned or underway to address them.

View [GAO-16-136](#). For more information, contact Lori Rectanus at (202) 512-2834 or rectanusl@gao.gov.

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FEDERALLY LEASED VEHICLES

Agencies Should Strengthen Assessment Processes to Reduce Underutilized Vehicles

What GAO Found

The General Services Administration (GSA) provides guidance to agencies to assist them in reducing underutilized leased vehicles. This guidance can be written (such as bulletins) or advice from GSA's fleet service representatives (FSR) to agency fleet managers. FSRs assist agencies with leasing issues, and GSA expects its FSRs to communicate with fleet managers about vehicle utilization at least annually. However, 18 of 51 fleet managers GAO surveyed reported that they had never spoken to their FSR about vehicle utilization. GSA has no mechanism to ensure these discussions occur and therefore may miss opportunities to help agencies identify underutilized vehicles.

While the selected agencies—the Air Force, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the National Park Service (NPS) and the Veterans Health Administration (VHA)—took steps to manage vehicle utilization, their processes did not always facilitate the identification and removal of underutilized vehicles. Certain selected agencies (1) could not determine if all vehicles were utilized, (2) could not locate justifications for vehicles that did not meet utilization criteria, or (3) kept vehicles that did not undergo or pass a justification review. These agencies paid GSA about \$8.7 million in fiscal year 2014 for leased vehicles that were retained but did not meet utilization criteria and did not have readily available justifications (see table).

Selected Leased Vehicles That Did Not Meet Utilization Criteria and Did Not Have Readily Available Justifications That Were Retained across Five Agencies

Agency	Percentage of the agency's selected vehicles ^a	Cost paid to GSA in FY2014
Air Force	8%	\$1.5 M
Bureau of Indian Affairs	22%	\$1.2 M
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	4%	\$0.1M
National Park Service	47%	\$2.9M
Veterans Health Administration	14%	\$3.0M
Total for Selected Vehicles	15%	\$8.7 M

Source: GAO analysis of GSA and agency-provided data. | GAO-16-136

^aThe selected vehicles include all GSA-leased sedans, station wagons, and light trucks, except those that were (1) leased by multiple agencies during fiscal year 2014; (2) tactical, emergency responder, or law enforcement vehicles; or (3) outside the continental United States, among other exclusions. Results for selected vehicles cannot be generalized to vehicles outside of the selected population.

Of the selected agencies, NASA and VHA did not apply their utilization criteria to nearly 400 vehicles, representing about \$1.2 million paid to GSA in fiscal year 2014. However, these agencies have taken steps to rectify the issue. The Air Force, BIA, NPS, and VHA could not readily locate justifications for over 1,500 leased vehicles that did not meet utilization criteria, representing about \$5.8 million. BIA and NPS are planning action to ensure justifications are readily available in the future. As of May 2015, NPS and VHA had retained more than 500 vehicles—costing \$1.7 million in fiscal year 2014—that were not subjected to or did not pass agency justification processes. While costs paid to GSA may not equal cost savings associated with eliminating vehicles, without justifications and corrective actions, agencies could be spending millions of dollars on vehicles that may not be needed.