

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
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FORMER AIRPORT LEADERS WASTED PUBLIC FUNDS

The New Orleans Office of Inspector General today released a report on its Review of New Orleans Aviation Board Credit Card Activity.

The Review covered 3,067 transactions that totaled \$562,688. It found that NOAB policies were not followed, that expenses were not supported by receipts and the business purpose was not documented in many cases. NOAB credit cards were charged for alcohol and for donations or tickets to events having little to do with airport operations. NOAB also wasted \$7,369 on late payment fees.

The former Director made 504 charges for \$81,470, 42% of which lacked any documentation. Of the 504 charges, 212 were for meals that averaged \$81. Time stamps on three of the former Director's meal receipts did not agree with the business explanation submitted. The former Director also tipped lavishly, averaging 33% on 5 meals. (By contrast, the new Director averaged one meal per month at an average cost of \$34.)

The former Chairman charged \$77,915 to his NOAB credit card, 59% of which lacked supporting documentation. Of those, 27 charges were for meals that averaged \$125 each, including "Director-elect dinner(s)" on two consecutive nights that cost \$600 and \$1,108. The former Chairman also used his card for a \$1,000 cash advance, and charged a first-class, round-trip flight to Dubai for \$10,286. The former Chairman charged 33 airline trips but submitted no documentation for 24 of them (73%).

Inspector General Ed Quatrevaux said, "The prior leadership wasted the people's money on their own comfort, and played big spender with excessive tips at local restaurants and donations of public money to private organizations. However, it appears the new Director has reversed the pattern of wasteful spending on NOAB credit cards and limited Board and employee access to all cards in use."

The report is attached to this press release. Other reports issued by the Office of Inspector General can be viewed and downloaded from the website at <http://www.nolaoig.org>.

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