

DEA hired TSA to take cash from luggage

By Nick Wing, Huffington Post

A Department of Justice watchdog officially condemned the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration this month, following a report that the agency had recruited a Transportation Security Administration security screener to search bags for cash that the DEA could confiscate.

The very existence of such a partnership highlights much broader concerns about the controversial legal practice known as civil asset forfeiture, which critics say contorts law enforcement priorities and props up a system of policing for profit.

In a summary of its investigation, the DOJ's Office of the Inspector General concluded that the agreement "violated DEA policy" on a number of levels. While the OIG determined that the TSA informant never provided any actionable information to the DEA, it concluded that the plans to pay the agent out of the cash he or she helped seize "could have violated individuals' protection against unreasonable searches and seizures if it led to a subsequent DEA enforcement action."

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