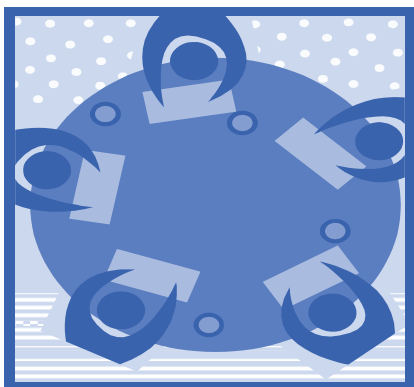


Inspection and Evaluation Committee

President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency

January 2008



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**FOR MORE
INFORMATION...**

For more information about any item in this newsletter, or to contribute suggestions for future newsletters, please contact Cynthia Thomas at cynthia.thomas@oig.hhs.gov.

INSPECTOR GENERAL COMMUNITY BIDS FAREWELL TO I&E LEADER



On January 3, 2008, I&E community member Jill Gross retired from Federal service after a long and distinguished career. Ms. Gross served as the Department of Commerce Assistant Inspector General for Inspections & Program Evaluations since January 1998 and Deputy Assistant Inspector General for the unit from 1994 to 1998. Key areas under recent review by Ms. Gross' office include overseas operations of the U.S. Commercial Service, U.S. dual use export controls, decennial census preparations and operations, and several marine and weather service programs of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Ms. Gross dedicated enormous time and energy to the Inspector General community. She served as a board member of the Inspector General Institute and was Chair of the Inspection and Evaluation Roundtable from 2000 to June 2007. Under her leadership, the Roundtable spearheaded numerous cross-agency reviews and produced a variety of important publications. Ms. Gross' Federal career has also included service as an Executive

Assistant to the Inspectors General at the U.S. Departments of State and Commerce. In addition, she worked at the U.S. Department of Energy, as Staff Director for Policy, Planning and Advocacy in the Office of Minority Economic Impact, in several positions in Commerce's Office of Minority Business Enterprise, and in the U.S. Peace Corps' Office of Evaluation. Earlier in her career, Ms. Gross was a researcher and economic planner with the Boston Economic Development and Industrial Commission and a local development corporation in Roxbury, MA. She also has worked for *Changing Times Magazine* and was a staff member for two U.S. Senators. Ms. Gross has a bachelor's degree in international relations from George Washington University (GWU) and has completed graduate course work in the same area at GWU. She also pursued graduate studies in energy policy and urban studies at several universities. Ms. Gross was a member of the Senior Executive Service and received numerous outstanding performance awards during her Federal career, including Commerce's Silver Medal, several bronze medals, and the Presidential Rank Award. The I&E community thanks Ms. Gross for her valuable contribution and years of dedicated service. We wish her well in retirement and in all future endeavors.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: I&E 2007 HIGHLIGHTS

This newsletter continues to highlight examples of significant work performed by I&E units in 2007. These reports reflect the I&E community's commitment to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Government programs and operations.

Department of Commerce *"Commerce Can Further Assist U.S.*



Exporters by Enhancing Its Trade Coordination Effort"

This review examined various aspects of Commerce's trade promotion efforts and the coordination of those efforts within Commerce, with other Federal and State trade agencies and other trade partners. The report identified concerns relating to Commerce's intra-agency coordination, its joint partnership post program with the State Department, its Internet resources for exporters, and its efforts at the multilateral development banks. OIG recommended actions to strengthen intra-agency coordination and cooperation with the State Department. OIG also identified ways Commerce could improve the organization and provision of export-related Internet resources and its assistance to U.S. companies seeking financing and business opportunities at the multilateral development banks. Based on OIG's recommendations, Commerce's International Trade Administration has taken steps to consolidate and improve its Internet

resources for exporters and increased coordination with other Commerce offices. Additionally, Commerce's Commercial Service (CS) has issued interim guidance to its overseas and domestic offices and pursued a formal MOU with the State Department to define how the agencies will work together in providing export-related assistance to U.S. companies operating in countries without a CS post.

Department of Energy *"Protective Force MK- 19 Grenade Launcher Use at the National Nuclear Security Administration's Pantex Facility"*



This review substantiated allegations and identified concerns regarding associated equipment, training, and qualification. The inspection team found that, although the MK-19 was to be utilized in darkness and during other reduced visibility conditions, it had been deployed without a night device or thermal imaging device compatible with the weapon's sighting system. In addition, the site contractor's formal training program for the MK-19 did not provide protective force officers with the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform assigned tasks. Further, the site contractor's formal qualification program did not ensure that protective force officers were fully competent to perform assigned tasks.

2007 I&E SURVEY

The 2007 I&E Survey is now available on the IGET at www.ignet.gov/pande/ie/2007IESurveyfinal.pdf

Department of the Interior *"Fish and Wildlife Service/National Wildlife Refuge System"*



The Department of the Interior OIG conducted Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) Progress Evaluations. Federal agencies use PART, a standard questionnaire, to submit Federal program information to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). OMB uses the information to determine program effectiveness, followed by recommended improvements for rated programs and follow-up on those improvements. OIG examined the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and found that overall the agency had made significant progress in addressing the four OMB recommendations related to the wildlife refuge system. FWS developed a 5-year draft strategic plan; developed and implemented an automated system that enables aggregation of performance data at regional and national levels, and engaged an independent contractor to evaluate program effectiveness in addressing strategic goals.



UPCOMING MEETING

A host is still needed for the next I&E Roundtable. If your office would like to host the next I&E Roundtable, please contact Cynthia Thomas at cynthia.thomas@oig.hhs.gov or 410-786-7896.

**Department of
Health & Human
Services**
**“FDA’s Oversight of
Clinical Trials”**



This review examined the Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) ability to oversee clinical trial inspections. In an effort to protect human subjects, Federal law requires that all new drugs and medical devices undergo clinical trials to demonstrate their safety and efficiency prior to receiving FDA approval. FDA oversees clinical trials through a variety of mechanisms which include protocol reviews and onsite inspections through its Bioresearch Monitoring Program (BiMo). The report focused exclusively on BiMo inspections, an important mechanism for protecting human subjects once a clinical trial is underway. OIG concluded that FDA does not have a system to identify all clinical trials and Institutional Review Boards (IRB), which approve, monitor, and review research involving human subjects. FDA also lacked a comprehensive database for tracking its inspections of clinical trials. OIG identified steps that FDA could take to improve its system for overseeing clinical trials, which are to:

- develop a comprehensive internal database of all clinical trials,
- create a registry of IRBs,
- create a cross-center database that enables users to perform complete tracking of FDA inspections,

- seek legal authority to provide oversight that reflects current clinical trial practices, and
- establish a mechanism to provide feedback to FDA district office staff on their inspection reports and findings.

FDA concurred with four of OIG’s recommendations but did not address the provision of feedback regarding inspection reports and findings.

Peace Corps
**“Evaluation of the
Medical Clearance
System for Peace
Corps Service”**



This review examined ongoing weaknesses in the Medical Clearance System and agency inaction in implementing improvements to the system. OIG recommendations focused on instituting and enforcing internal controls over medical screening practices, use of data in decision-making, and implementing information technology enhancements to the Medical Clearance System. Furthermore, the Director’s initiative to recruit a greater number of volunteers age 50+ will place an increased burden on the Medical Clearance System, further highlighting the urgency of implementing OIG’s recommendations.

**Department of
Veterans Affairs**
**“Quantitative Assessment of Care
Transition: The
Population-Based LC Database”**



This review was the result of a joint effort between VA OIG and the Department of Defense (DoD) OIG. In July 2006, DoD’s OIG and VA’s OIG agreed to jointly evaluate the medical care transition process for injured Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom service members from DoD to VA because only a very limited quantitative characterization of care transition issues was possible using available Government data. OIG used relevant DoD and VA data files to create an analytical database incorporating details about all 494,147 service members discharged from July 1, 2005, to September 30, 2006. OIG released an informational report describing the database and providing background for understanding and interpreting ongoing and planned studies using this unique database. The report also presented selected descriptive statistics of veterans who comprise the database population.

HAPPENINGS

If you are interested in participating on the External Peer Review Workgroup, please contact Cynthia Thomas at cynthia.thomas@oig.hhs.gov or 410-786-7896.

