

BRIEFLY...

Highlights of Report Number: 09-04-001-12-121, a report to the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration. March 31, 2004

WHY READ THE REPORT

The Employee Benefits Security Administration's (EBSA) compliance assistance information is designed to assist employers and employee benefit plan officials in understanding and complying with the requirements of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as it applies to the administration of employee pension and welfare benefit plans.

EBSA's Office of Participant Assistance provides participant and compliance assistance to the public through a wide variety of vehicles including public outreach, brochures, national educational campaigns, public service announcements, and EBSA's website. EBSA's benefits advisors respond to approximately 170,000 telephone, written and electronic inquiries annually from plan participants, employers and plan sponsors, assisting them in understanding their rights and obligations under the law and in obtaining benefits that may have been denied.

WHY OIG CONDUCTED THE AUDIT

The OIG audited EBSA's Participant and Compliance Assistance Program to determine if it provided information and assistance timely and accurately, and accurately reported performance data, including benefit recoveries.

READ THE FULL REPORT

The full report, including the scope, methodology, and agency response, is available on the Internet at:

<http://www.oig.dol.gov/public/reports/oa/2004/09-04-001-12-121.pdf>

MARCH 2004

EBSA PROVIDES TIMELY AND ACCURATE COMPLIANCE ASSISTANCE

WHAT OIG FOUND

We reviewed EBSA Program policies, procedures and performance reports; interviewed EBSA national and regional Program staff; and analyzed and tested EBSA's Program systems, data, and quality control/monitoring activities.

We projected the results of our tests of a nationwide statistical sample of inquiries and benefit recoveries from fiscal year 2002 and found no significant problems.

OIG concluded that EBSA provided information and assistance timely and accurately, and that reported performance data were accurate.

WHAT OIG RECOMMENDED

OIG did not make any recommendations.