

## **BRIEFLY...**

Highlights of Report Number: 03-08-001-07-001, to the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management.

### **WHY READ THE REPORT**

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) performed an audit of the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Records Management program.

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) oversees records management at all Federal agencies. NARA requires Federal agencies to institute adequate records management controls over the maintenance, use, and disposition of records.

In DOL, the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management is responsible for managing the Department's records and providing overall policy direction for the Department's Records Management program. The DOL Records Management program consists of records creation, maintenance and use, and disposition to achieve adequate and proper documentation of the policies and transactions of the Department.

### **WHY OIG DID THE AUDIT**

The purpose of our audit was to answer the following questions:

1. Does DOL have sufficient controls to ensure that Federal records are preserved in accordance with Federal regulations?
2. Does DOL have sufficient controls to preserve e-mail and electronic documents, as a result of legal hold orders, litigation discovery, and requests?

### **READ THE FULL REPORT**

To view the report, including the scope, methodology, and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Operations' response, go to:

<http://www.oig.dol.gov/public/reports/oa/2008/03-08-001-07-001>

**September 2008**

## **The Department of Labor's Records Management Program Controls Need Strengthening**

### **WHAT OIG FOUND**

DOL could not demonstrate that controls are sufficient to ensure Federal records are preserved in accordance with Federal regulations. DOL did not: (1) conduct comprehensive periodic evaluations of its Records Management program; (2) provide records management training to all staff; and (3) effectively manage the quantity of transitory records or documents that have no legal retention requirements. The lack of sufficiency in conducting these practices results in DOL being unable to ensure that its employees were entering all Federal records into the appropriate recordkeeping system. DOL proposed to implement a new policy on deleting backup media containing e-mail and electronic files that are transitory records or documents that have no legal retention requirements. However, DOL should delay implementing the policy until it can demonstrate compliance with NARA and Department records management regulations.

We also found that DOL did not have an effective recordkeeping and document management system to manage its e-mail and electronic files in response to legal holds, litigation discovery, and other requests. DOL may be at risk of not being able to address these requests in a timely and complete manner.

### **WHAT OIG RECOMMENDED**

We recommended that the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management implement an effective evaluation process of its Records Management program. Additionally, DOL should delay implementing its new policy on deleting backup media until the evaluation process is operating. We also recommended that Agency Heads be required to implement program specific recordkeeping procedures on the maintenance and disposition of transitory records and documents. Finally, we recommended that DOL conduct a cost-benefit analysis on establishing a system which provides the capabilities to centrally, efficiently, and effectively manage and access e-mails that are Federal records.

The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Operations generally agreed with the recommendations.