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UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

CIVIL DIVISION

APR 30 1971



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Dear Mr. Farrell:

The General Accounting Office has made a review of selected administrative operations of the Boston District Office, Boston, Massachusetts, and the Northeast Regional Office, Burlington, Vermont, of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), Department of Justice.

We reviewed and evaluated selected administrative procedures and internal controls, including such tests of financial transactions as we deemed appropriate.

On February 24, 1971, we issued a letter report to the Regional Commissioner, Northeast Regional Office, concerning the need to improve a number of administrative procedures and internal controls. A copy of the report was furnished your office. In addition, we found questionable overtime claims and a need to reevaluate the usefulness of electronic vehicle and pedestrian counting devices. These matters are discussed below for your consideration and appropriate action.

QUESTIONABLE UNCONTROLLABLE OVERTIME CLAIMS

Our review showed that investigators of the Boston District Office often traveled to and from places where official business was transacted outside the normal workday and in excess of the basic 40-hour workweek. These investigators claimed travel time as compensable uncontrollable overtime.

In a memorandum dated January 11, 1962, to all INS regional offices, the Associate Commissioner, Management, stated that travel time was considered as hours of employment only when it (1) occurred within the employee's regularly scheduled workweek, including regularly scheduled overtime, (2) involved the performance of work while traveling, or (3) was carried out under arduous conditions which had the effect of making such travel inseparable from work.

Officials of the Boston District Office informed us that travel time to locations where official business was transacted may be

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compensable as uncontrollable overtime but that the return travel time to the investigator's residence was not compensable. An official of the Northeast Regional Office informed us that none of this travel time, whether to or from a site where official business was transacted, was compensable. Accordingly, the instructions on this matter have been subjected to varying interpretations and should be clarified.

NEED TO REEVALUATE USE MADE OF
ELECTRONIC VEHICLE AND PEDESTRIAN
COUNTING DEVICES

Our review showed that electronic vehicle counting devices installed by INS at ports of entry at Madawaska and Lubec, Maine, and Derby Line, Vermont, and a pedestrian counting device at Madawaska, Maine, were inaccurate and frequently inoperable. We were informed by an INS regional office employee that substantial costs were incurred in the procurement and installment of the electronic counting devices.

He informed us also that hand counters costing about \$25 each were more reliable than the electronic devices and were preferred by personnel at the border-crossing stations. The inexpensive hand counters were in use at a number of border-crossing stations at the time of our review and at March 30, 1971.

We also noted that section 2301.05 of the Administrative Manual does not require exact counts of vehicles and pedestrians crossing the border into the country but provides for estimating the count of border crossers admitted.

In view of the maintenance and operating problems that have been experienced with electronic traffic counters and the significantly higher cost for these devices compared to other types of traffic counters, we believe that INS should reevaluate the use made of the electronic traffic counters already installed and determine whether the less costly and more reliable types of traffic counters would serve INS needs.

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We will be pleased to discuss the matters presented herein with you or your representatives. We wish to acknowledge the courtesies and cooperation extended to our representatives during the review. We would appreciate receiving your comments as to the action taken or planned with respect to the matters discussed in this letter.

Copies of this report are being furnished to the Assistant Attorney General for Administration.

Sincerely yours,

Irvine M. Crawford

Irvine M. Crawford
Associate Director

The Honorable Raymond F. Farrell
Commissioner, Immigration and
Naturalization Service
Department of Justice