



**Social Security Administration
Office of the Inspector General**



Strategic Plan
Fiscal Years 2003 - 2005

Achieving Excellence as "One OIG"

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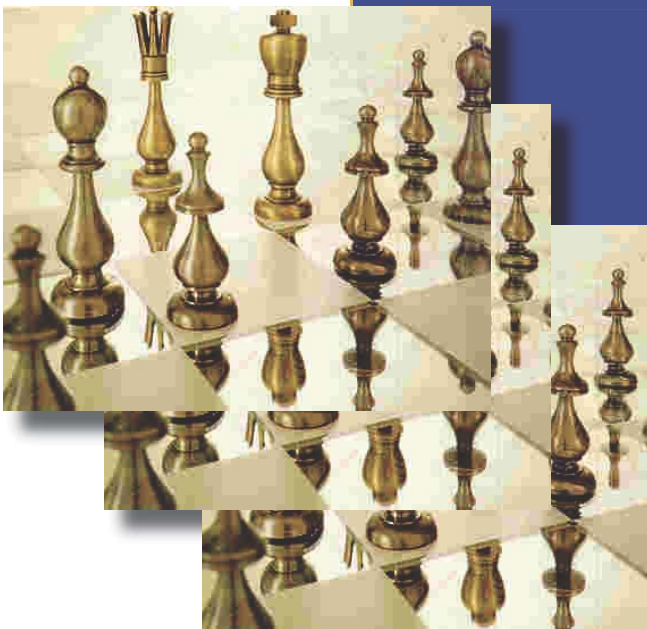
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A MESSAGE FROM THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF SOCIAL SECURITY



Just a few years ago, the Executive Staff and I developed the first Office of the Inspector General (OIG) Strategic Plan, charting a course for how our organization could better achieve its core mission of detecting and preventing fraud, waste, and abuse in Social Security's programs. Our team felt good about that, and I believe we have accomplished most of our intended activity and learned how our strategic planning program can improve our operations.

Now, as with any planning document, our Strategic Plan must be updated to reflect the changing nature and priorities of our work and to move our organization toward even greater excellence. In the past year, our priorities and resources have shifted across the organization to support the war on terrorism and I am proud of the way our investigators, auditors, attorneys and support staff have come together to jointly achieve our accomplishments in this area. The *esprit de corps* exhibited by our employees in these endeavors now serves as the underlying framework for this updated Strategic Plan, which focuses more on the overall organization than our previous Plan.

“Getting It Done as One OIG” is a phrase you will hear me express repeatedly. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of teamwork in achieving continued success. The goals, strategies, and performance metrics outlined in this Plan can only be accomplished if we work together. That is exactly what happened in the development of this Plan. Field and headquarters representatives from each OIG component came together to discuss, debate, and ultimately create a Strategic Plan that sets forth an aggressive, yet achievable, agenda for all of our employees.

This Plan focuses on achieving excellence in five focused areas: Impact, Quality, Timeliness, Value, and People. While each of these areas is important, I am especially excited about the new goal focusing on our human resources. The strategies and metrics outlined for this goal, including a proposed Organizational Health Assessment Instrument, will enable us to more effectively gauge the quality of the OIG work experience. These tools will allow us to be proactive in addressing recruitment, retention, ethnic diversity and ongoing professional development throughout all of our offices.

I commend and thank the members of the Strategic Planning Team for taking a bold approach in developing a plan that is crosscutting and meaningful for every OIG employee. The executive staff and I wholeheartedly support this Plan and are confident that each of you will do your part to fulfill the commitments defined in this document. Using this Plan as our compass, we can take our organization to a higher level of excellence; we will “get the job done as one OIG!” I am heartened by the volume of outstanding work performed every day by our employees and want you to know that we are making a difference at Social Security. Please embrace this Plan as your own and join your colleagues in making OIG an even better organization.

James G. Huse, Jr.
Inspector General

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Executive Summary

This Strategic Plan outlines the goals for the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) of the Social Security Administration (SSA) for Fiscal Years (FY) 2003 through 2005. This plan conforms to the requirements established by the *Government Performance and Results Act of 1993* (GPRA). Five general goals serve as the overall Plan's framework.

The first goal relates to the **impact** we have on Social Security's programs and operations. Through our investigative, audit, and legal activities, we will strive to continuously improve integrity, efficiency and effectiveness throughout SSA. Our second goal deals with **quality**. The products and services we deliver shall be highly reliable in terms of content and value. The third goal involves the **timeliness** of our products. We recognize the importance of timely delivery and this Plan includes a number of strategies that involve the sharing of best practices and the use of technology and improved processes that will enable us to meet this goal. Our fourth general goal focuses on **value** and the need to sustain a positive return for the monies invested in this organization. Finally, this Plan devotes a series of strategies and self-measuring goals to enhance the work experience for the **people** that are the foundation of the OIG organization. Our aggressive goals and strategies outlined in this Plan can only be achieved if our employees enjoy a positive and rewarding work environment.

The most important aspect of this Plan is the integrated manner in which the five goals are addressed. Specifically, the Plan formally recognizes that each OIG component produces data, information, and analysis of value to its peers. The strategies supporting each goal are crosscutting and consider the role each component has in affecting an outcome. For example, the Plan recognizes that data on potential SSA systems vulnerabilities maintained by the Office of Investigations (OI) will also have value to planning and analysis functions performed by the Office of Audit (OA). Understanding these relationships and taking the steps outlined in this Plan to ensure information sharing will better facilitate our operation as "One OIG."

In addition to the goals and strategies, two assessment tools are introduced to assist in data gathering and performance analysis. The Quality Assessment Instrument will be used to gauge the level of user satisfaction with OIG products and services. Administered by the Quality Assurance and Professional Responsibility Team, this tool will allow stakeholders to rate our components using a series of quality factors. The second assessment tool, the Organizational Health Assessment Instrument, will be administered by the Human Resources Division and disseminated internally to collect the views and opinions of our employees on a variety of factors relating to the overall OIG work experience.

It is also important to note that while this Plan is a reflection of OIG's independence from SSA, it serves to support SSA's overall mission and its own Strategic Plan. The Agency's Strategic Plan goals are expressed as: Service, Stewardship, Solvency and Staff. Our goals, objectives and performance targets under this plan are designed with the intention of improving SSA's management and performance, and successful achievement of our Plan will benefit SSA's attainment of its own desired performance levels, particularly those under Service and Stewardship.

Mission Statement

By conducting independent and objective audits, evaluations, and investigations, we improve the SSA programs and operations and protect them against fraud, waste, and abuse. We provide timely, useful, and reliable information and advice to Administration officials, Congress, and the public.

Vision and Values

We are agents of positive change striving for continuous improvement in SSA's programs, operations, and management by proactively seeking new ways to prevent and deter fraud, waste, and abuse. We are committed to integrity and achieving excellence by supporting an environment that encourages employee development and retention, and fosters diversity and innovation, while providing a valuable public service.

General Goals

The FY 2003 – 2005 Strategic Plan includes five general goals, each containing a series of crosscutting strategies with application to all OIG components. We used these crosscutting strategies to inform the development of our 15 self-measuring goals. For the general goals in the following chart, the strategies and associated self-measuring goals are discussed beginning on page 10.

Goal	Description of General Goal
Impact	To increase our impact on the integrity, efficiency, and effectiveness of SSA programs and operations.
Quality	To provide OIG products and services of quality and value to Congress, SSA, and other key decision makers.
Timeliness	To ensure OIG products and services are issued in time to meet the needs of Congress, SSA, key decision makers, and other end users.
Value	To sustain a positive return-result for each tax dollar invested in OIG activities.
People	To promote/ensure a skilled, motivated, diverse workforce in a positive and rewarding work environment.

Statutory Responsibilities

The SSA OIG was established pursuant to Public Law 103-296 on April 1, 1995, known as the *Social Security Independence and Program Improvements Act of 1994*. General OIG authority is established under the *Inspector General Act of 1978* (IG Act), as amended, which provides statutory responsibility to protect the integrity of SSA programs and operations affecting millions of beneficiaries, and to ensure that the programs are administered with maximum economy and efficiency.

We are an independent and objective organization within SSA and as prescribed by the *IG Act*, we will:

- Maintain independent and objective organizations to conduct and supervise audits and investigations relating to the programs and operations of SSA. Recommend policies for activities to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in administration of departmental programs.
- Take appropriate actions to prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse in the Agency's programs and operations. Keep the Congress and Commissioner fully informed about problems and deficiencies and the necessity for and progress of corrective action.
- Receive and, as appropriate, investigate complaints from any person or entity, including Congress.
- Report violations of law to the U.S. Attorney General.
- Notify the Congress and Commissioner of serious or flagrant problems in SSA or its programs.
- Review existing and proposed legislation and regulations.
- Protect the identity of whistleblowers.
- Prepare and submit semiannual reports to the Commissioner and Congress.

We also have significant responsibilities under the *Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996*, *Government Management Reform Act of 1994*, *GPR*A, *Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990*, *Federal Managers Financial Integrity Act of 1982*, and the *Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002*. We will fulfill these responsibilities by completing required audits of SSA's financial statements, assessing the adequacy of internal control systems, and identifying opportunities for improvement. When pertinent to the accomplishment of ongoing projects, we will also evaluate SSA's performance measures to determine their appropriateness for measuring progress toward their stated goals.

OIG Components

OIG is comprised of five components: Office of the Chief Counsel to the Inspector General (OCCIG), Office of Audit (OA), Office of Investigations (OI), Office of Executive Operations (OEO) and the Immediate Office of the Inspector General (IO).

Office of the Chief Counsel to the Inspector General

OCCIG reviews and evaluates legislation, regulations, and standard operating procedures in terms of their impact on program economy and efficiency or their prevention of fraud and abuse. It also provides legal advice and counsel to the IG on various matters, including: (1) statutes, regulations, legislation, and policy directives governing the administration of SSA's programs; (2) investigative procedures and techniques; and (3) legal implications and conclusions to be drawn from audit and investigative material produced by OIG. OCCIG also administers the Civil Monetary Penalty (CMP) program, which the Commissioner of Social Security delegated to OIG.

Office of Audit

OA conducts comprehensive financial, performance, and systems audits and evaluations of SSA programs and makes recommendations to ensure that program objectives are achieved effectively and efficiently. Financial audits, required by the *Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990*, assess whether SSA's financial statements fairly present the Agency's financial position, results of operations, and cash flow. Performance audits review the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of SSA's programs. OA also conducts short-term management and program evaluations and projects focused on issues of concern to SSA, Congress, and the general public. Evaluations often focus on identifying and recommending ways to prevent and minimize program fraud and inefficiency.

Office of Investigations

OI conducts and coordinates investigative activity related to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement of SSA programs and operations, in accordance with the Quality Standards for Investigations published by the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency; the SSA/OIG Special Agent Handbook; and other applicable laws, policies, and regulations. These activities include wrongdoing by applicants, beneficiaries, contractors, physicians, interpreters, representative payees, other third parties, and SSA employees. OI also conducts joint investigations with other Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies.

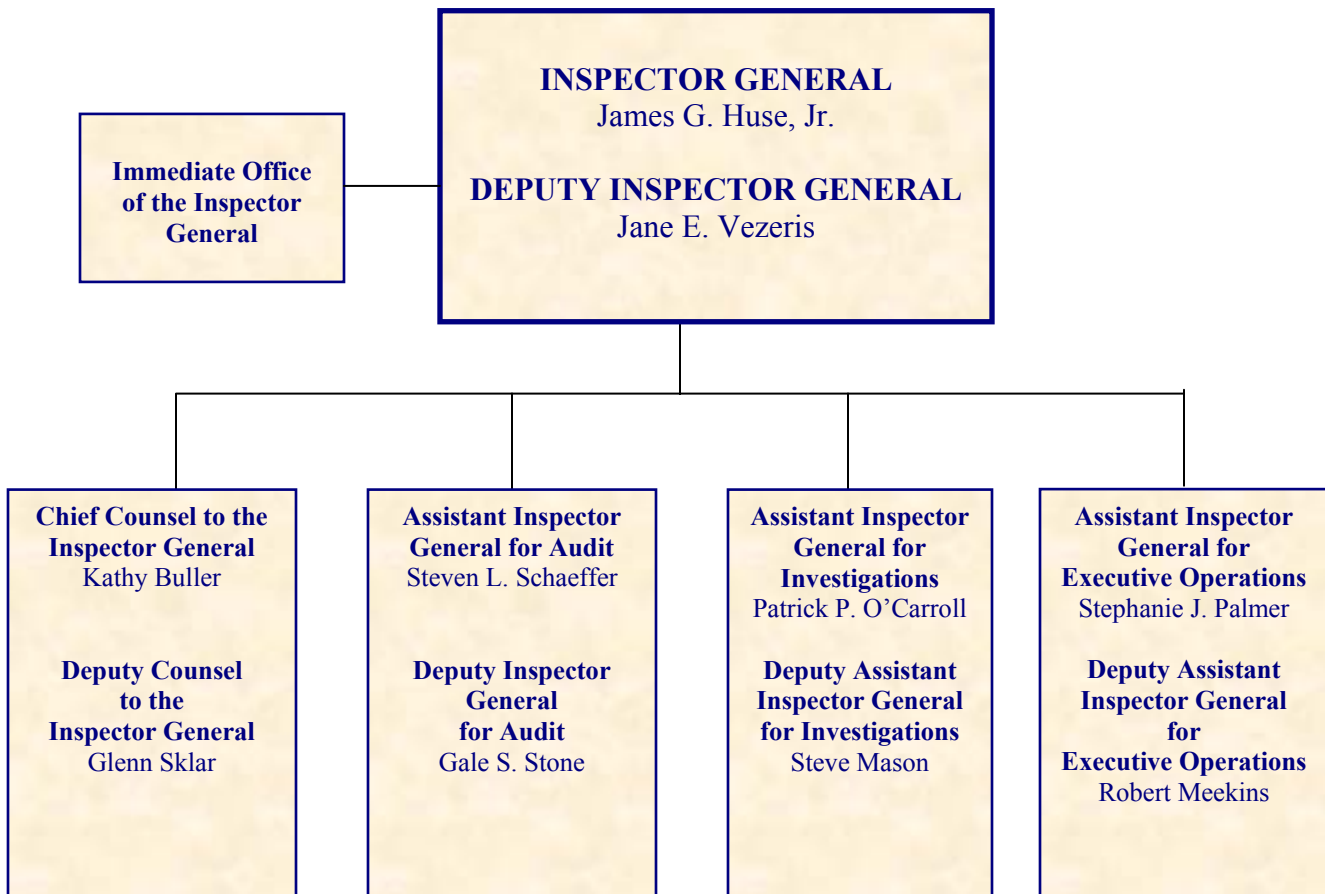
Office of Executive Operations

OEO supports OIG by providing information resource management; systems security and development; and the coordination of budget, procurement, telecommunications, facilities and equipment, and human resources. In addition, this office is the focal point for the strategic planning function and the development and implementation of performance measures required by GPRA. Finally, OEO administers OIG's public affairs, media and interagency activities and coordinates responses to congressional requests for information.

Immediate Office of the Inspector General

IO consists of two principal functions that report directly to the Inspector General (IG): (1) the Office of Quality Assurance and Professional Responsibility, which is responsible for performing internal reviews to ensure that OIG offices nationwide hold themselves to the same rigorous standards that we expect from SSA as well as conducting investigations of OIG employees when necessary, and (2) the Ombudsman Program.

OIG Organizational Chart



Strategic Planning Process

GPRA requires Federal agencies to develop goals, associated strategies, and performance indicators for gauging progress. A Strategic Planning Team comprised of headquarters and field employees was established and trained to develop this Plan. The Team was chartered to develop a Plan that would be useful in every component at all levels throughout the organization.

The Team followed a process that included:

- Examining the current plan and recommending improvements where necessary.
- Suggesting new goals, indicators, and target levels of performance.
- Developing strategies that could be implemented across the organization.

The Team reviewed the *IG Act*, *GPRA*, and other regulatory authorities and critically analyzed SSA's *Agency Strategic Plan* and *Annual Performance Plans*. The Team engaged in research including:

- Evaluating other Federal OIG goals and indicators.
- Reviewing and revising a quality assessment instrument.
- Developing CMP case origination criteria.
- Examining OIG ethnic and gender diversity data by component and grade level.
- Assessing organizational health factors and developing an assessment instrument.

Stakeholder Feedback

Stakeholders include: Congress; congressional staff; SSA's Commissioner; SSA managers and staff; President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency (PCIE) and the IG community at large; all OIG employees; General Accounting Office; Department of Justice (DOJ) and other Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies; the Office of Special Counsel; the Office of Government Ethics; other outside groups both public and private; the general public; and other parties interested in improving the efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity of SSA programs and operations. We meet periodically with stakeholders, particularly SSA management officials, U.S. Attorneys, and congressional representatives and staff to obtain direct feedback on the results of our work.

Internal Factors Affecting the Achievement of Strategic Goals

Neither the intellectual content of the 2003 – 2005 Strategic Plan nor its insights into achieving organizational excellence may be sufficient to establish the Plan as the powerful management tool it has the potential to become. All OIG employees at every level must embrace this Plan and commit to its goals and strategies to support its success and to promote excellence throughout the entire organization.

Major internal challenges include:

- Implementing a unified leadership approach, commitment, and active involvement necessary to ensure effective execution of the Strategic Plan.
- Designing and implementing the processes and technology needed to enhance communication and information sharing among components.
- Coping with changing workload requirements and resource constraints.
- Acquiring needed information technology and relevant foreign language expertise within OIG.

External Factors Affecting the Achievement of Strategic Goals

SSA's ability to undertake the recommended changes, budget constraints, changing congressional and Agency priorities, and political mandates continue as external factors that have historically affected the achievement of OIG strategic goals. Additional factors include:

- Redirection of resources to address national security and public safety issues in light of recent terrorist acts and ongoing threats.
- Contracting for outside services in the current climate of uncertainty with regard to the integrity and reliability of external auditors-consultants.
- Potential increases in fraud, waste, and abuse workloads stemming from new vulnerabilities as SSA moves toward providing online services.
- Competition from other organizations for staff with underrepresented skills.

Summary of Program Evaluations

GPRA requires agencies to include a description of the program evaluations used in establishing or revising general goals and objectives. Although there were no formal internal or external program evaluations of OIG for the Strategic Planning Team to consider in developing this Plan, the Team evaluated several other sources of information, including data obtained from the following:

- OIG Semiannual Reports
- OIG Budget Justification
- PCIE Annual Report
- Office of Audit PCIE Peer Review
- Results of Quality Assurance and Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA) Reviews
- Management information systems of individual OIG components
- SSA's Strategic Plan

The Team also compared the current SSA OIG Strategic Plan goals and performance measures against those reported by other agencies. In addition, the Team conducted several inquiries into planning and measurement issues affecting the FY 2003–2005 Plan, including issues surrounding:

- Workforce composition and diversity
- Civil Monetary Penalty streamlining processes
- Revisions to an OI product-service quality assessment instrument
- Development of an organizational health assessment instrument

This level of evaluation supported the development of new general goals relating to timeliness and organizational health, as well as the decision to establish crosscutting strategies for all five general goals. Presently, no formal evaluations of the SSA OIG are scheduled during the 3-year period covered by this Plan.

Goals, Strategies, and Measures

Goal 1: Impact

Increase our impact on the integrity, efficiency, and effectiveness of SSA programs and operations.

STRATEGIES

1. Establish and communicate an OIG-wide process for cross component communications on potential programmatic and operational vulnerabilities.
2. Each OIG component will coordinate, receive, and assess information about potential programmatic and operational vulnerabilities.
3. Focus OIG efforts on impacting congressional and SSA programmatic and operational decisions, including major budgetary decisions.
4. To reinforce OIG's role as an agent of positive change, components should use constructive, balanced language in presenting viable opportunities for improving SSA programs and operations.

Self-Measuring Goal 1.1

Maintain an annual acceptance rate of at least 85 percent for all recommendations through 2005.

Performance Measure 1.1

Title: Annual Acceptance Rate for OIG Recommendations

Definition: Number of legislative, policy and regulatory recommendations accepted by SSA and/or the Congress (included in proposed legislation) during the FY over the total number of recommendations made during the FY.

Demonstrates: Measures the office-wide ability of OIG to produce improvement ideas valued by SSA and the Congress. Recommendations are contained in OIG Audit, Evaluation, Management Advisory, legislative proposals, and Regulatory Commentary Reports.

Source: Planning Audit and Management System (PAMS) database and OCCIG's regulatory commentary database.

Self-Measuring Goal 1.2

Through 2005, achieve a 5-year annual average implementation rate of 85 percent for accepted recommendations aimed at improving the integrity, efficiency and effectiveness of SSA.

Performance Measure 1.2

Title: 5-Year Implementation Rate for Accepted OIG Recommendations.

Definition: The total number of accepted recommendations implemented by SSA during the past 5 FYs over the total number of recommendations SSA agreed to implement during the past 5 FYs.

Demonstrates: The impact of OIG recommendations on the integrity, efficiency, and effectiveness of SSA programs and operations.

Source: PAMS database

Goal 2: *Quality*

Provide OIG products and services of quality and value to Congress, SSA, and other key decisionmakers.

STRATEGIES

1. Implement a product and service quality assessment instrument.
2. Develop and implement procedures and a tracking system to review and analyze internal and external feedback to maintain a focus on continuous improvement of OIG products and services.
3. Communicate OIG-wide best practices and lessons learned.

Self-Measuring Goal 2.1

By FY 2005, achieve internal and external user assessment ratings of 80 percent for product-service quality.

Performance Measure 2.1

Title: Composite User Assessment Rating of Product-Service Quality

Definition: The total number of quality factors receiving a positive assessment by internal and external users of OIG products/services over the total number of quality factors rated by all internal and external users of OIG products-services.

Demonstrates: The overall quality of OIG products and services as seen by their users.

Source: QAR product-service quality database (User Assessment Data).

Goal 3: Timeliness

Ensure OIG products and services are issued in time to meet the needs of Congress, SSA, key decisionmakers, and other end users.

STRATEGIES

1. Identify administrative and operational barriers to timely delivery of OIG products and services.
2. Identify best practices and adopt the practices to aid the timeliness of OIG products and services.
3. Identify and use IT investments to expedite OIG work products and service delivery.
4. Use mid-point or other early warning reports to encourage swift action on sensitive and politically controversial issues.

Self-Measuring Goal 3.1

Evaluate and respond to all allegations on average within 30 days through 2005.

Performance Measure 3.1

Title: Average Allegation Response Time

Definition: The sum of the total number of days from the date an allegation is received to the date it is either declined, referred, or an investigation is opened for all allegations received during the FY over the total number of allegations received during the FY.

Demonstrates: OIG's ability to initiate timely action on allegations received.

Source: Investigative case management system

Self-Measuring Goal 3.2

Complete investigative fieldwork for 80 percent of cases within 180 days on average through FY 2005.

Performance Measure 3.2

Title: Timely Investigative Fieldwork

Definition: The sum of the total number of days from the date an investigation is opened to the date it is either referred for judicial action or closed for all cases completed during the FY over the total number of investigations closed.

Demonstrates: The ability to conduct investigations in an efficient, timely manner.

Source: Investigative case management system

Self-Measuring Goal 3.3

Respond to congressional requests within an average of 30 calendar days through 2005.

Performance Measure 3.3

Title: Average Response Time per Congressional Request

Definition: The sum of the total number of days from the date a congressional request is received by OIG to the date of a final response for all inquiries received during the FY over the total number of congressional requests received during the FY.

Demonstrates: The ability to provide a rapid response to congressional decisionmakers

Source: OIG control database

Self-Measuring Goal 3.4

Complete initial CMP determination letters for 80 percent of cases within an average of 30 days through by 2005.

Performance Measure 3.4

Title: Timely CMP Case Processing

Definition: The total number of CMP cases acted upon within 30 days of receipt during the FY over the total number of CMP cases received during the FY.

Demonstrates: The ability to identify and take timely action on CMP cases.

Source: OCCIG database

Self-Measuring Goal 3.5

Issue 70 percent of final audit reports within 1 year of the entrance conference with SSA.

Performance Measure 3.5

Title: Efficient Audit Practices

Definition: The total number of audit reports issued within 1 year from the date of the entrance conference for audits issued within the FY over the total number of audit reports issued within the FY.

Demonstrates: The ability to efficiently focus, plan, conduct, and report timely audit information.

Source: PAMS database

Self-Measuring Goal 3.6

By 2005, issue 95 percent of OIG products in time to meet the needs of congressional, SSA, and other key decisionmakers.

Performance Measure 3.6

Title: Percent of Timely OIG Products

Definition: The total number of OIG products rated timely by congressional, SSA, and other key decisionmakers during the FY over the total number of OIG products rated by these users during the FY.

Demonstrates: The ability to provide timely information, analysis, and recommendations to congressional, SSA, and other key decisionmakers.

Source: QAR Product-Service Quality Database

Goal 4: Value

To sustain a positive return-result for each tax dollar invested in OIG activities.

STRATEGIES

1. Maintain a “positive-return” culture within OIG.
2. Provide OIG components with training and tools necessary to ensure that analytical methods for determining returns-results are consistent and appropriate.
3. Prioritize high impact investigations, audits, and counsel actions to ensure an appropriate focus on more efficient and economic SSA programs and operations.
4. During the course of detecting and preventing fraud, waste, and abuse, maintain an awareness of, and address, both national security and public safety issues.

Self-Measuring Goal 4.1

Return at least \$6 for every dollar invested in the OIG budget on an annual basis through 2005.

Performance Measure 4.1

Title: OIG Return on Investment

Definition: The ratio of the total dollar amounts of recoveries, fines, judgments, restitution, funds put to better use, and other savings reported by all OIG components for the FY to the total OIG appropriation for the FY.

Demonstrates: The dollar value returned for each tax dollar invested in the SSA OIG.

Source: OEO Budget Division Files

Self-Measuring Goal 4.2

Increase the number of total judicial outcomes by at least 30 percent by 2005.

Performance Measure 4.2

Title: Percentage Increase in Total Judicial Outcomes

Definition: The incremental increase in convictions and other judicial outcomes, as reported in OIG’s semiannual reports, over the level of judicial outcomes taken in the base year (FY 2002).

Demonstrates: Additional impacts of OIG activities beyond traditional financial benefits.

Source: Investigative case management system

Goal 5: People

Promote/Ensure a skilled, motivated, diverse workforce in a positive and rewarding work environment.

STRATEGIES

1. Identify underrepresented professional, technical, and managerial skills at headquarters and field locations.
2. Identify assignment interests and developmental needs of all employees.
3. Prioritize resources to address underrepresented skills, employee interests, and developmental needs.
4. Prepare a comprehensive management development program that includes: succession planning, desired core competencies, and both technical and managerial skills for specific targeted positions.
5. Develop a proactive approach in recruiting and hiring candidates to meet different needs.
6. Pilot test, refine, and implement the proposed Organizational Health Assessment Instrument.
7. Be sensitive to and target underrepresented minority groups both internally and externally in recruiting, hiring and staff development.

Self-Measuring Goal 5.1

By 2005, achieve an 80 percent retention rate for newly hired employees.

Performance Measure 5.1

Title: OIG Staff Retention Rate

Definition: For each FY through 2005, the total number of staff retained for at least 5 years.

Demonstrates: The ability of OIG to provide a quality work experience that encourages staff to pursue their career goals within the SSA OIG.

Source: OEO Staffing Data

Self-Measuring Goal 5.2

By 2005, achieve an 80 percent organizational health assessment rate.

Performance Measure 5.2

Title: Office-wide Organizational Health Ratio

Definition: The total number of organizational health factors receiving positive ratings by all OIG employees over the total number of organizational health factors rated by these employees.

Demonstrates: The ability of OIG to provide a quality work environment that is attentive to the people, technology, communications, and other human capital factors influencing the job performance of its employees.

Source: Organizational Health Assessment Instrument

Self-Measuring Goal 5.3

On an annual basis, ensure that 90 percent of OIG staff receives at least 40 hours of appropriate developmental training.

Performance Measure 5.3

Title: OIG Training - Development Hours

Definition: The total number of OIG staff receiving at least 40 hours of continuing professional education during the FY over the total number of OIG staff employed during the FY.

Demonstrates: OIG's commitment to continued staff development.

Source: OEO Training Database

Self-Measuring Goal 5.4

By 2005, OIG will improve its overall workforce diversity with an emphasis on underrepresented groups.

Performance Measure 5.4

Title: OIG Workforce Diversity

Definition: The difference in the OIG workforce profile from the beginning of the FY compared to the end of the FY.

Demonstrates: OIG's commitment to diversity in the workforce.

Source: OIG Human Resource Division data



How to Report Fraud

The SSA OIG Fraud Hotline offers a means for you to provide information on suspected fraud, waste, and abuse. If you know of current or potentially illegal or improper activities involving SSA programs or personnel, we encourage you to contact the SSA OIG Fraud Hotline.

Call **1-800-269-0271**

Write Social Security Administration
Office of the Inspector General
Attention: SSA Fraud Hotline
P. O. Box 17768
Baltimore, MD 21235

Fax **410-597-0118**

Email **oig.hotline@ssa.gov**

web **www.ssa.gov/oig**

**Social Security Administration
Office of the Inspector General**



Strategic Plan
Fiscal Years 2003 – 2005

