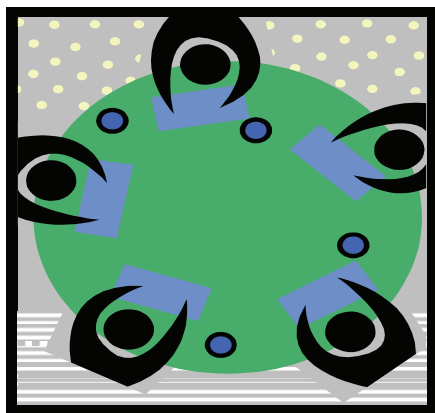


Inspection and Evaluation Committee

Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency

February 2009



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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 Anne Bracken at anne.bracken@oig.hhs.gov.

ANNUAL PCIE/ECIE AWARDS

In this issue, we will continue to highlight awards presented for Excellence in Evaluation at the 11th Annual PCIE/ECIE Awards ceremony.

United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

In recognition of significant contributions by the VA Office of Inspector General in the review of a high mortality rate at the VA Medical Center in Marion, Illinois.



To conduct this evaluation, the team reviewed 29 veteran patient mortality cases that occurred shortly after surgery at the Marion VA facility in 2007. The team also conducted a comprehensive examination of how the facility screened and hired physicians and how it granted them privileges to perform particular procedures at the facility.

The team found specific problems with the quality of care provided to veteran patients and deficiencies in the credentialing and privileging of physicians. The findings led to 17 recommendations for improvement in VA health care, both nationally and specifically at the Marion facility.

In response, the Marion VA facility developed a standardized mechanism for collecting and

reporting quality management data. Nationally, the project led to the development of a mechanism to ensure that VA facilities will not perform surgeries that are beyond their capability.

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)



In recognition of excellence in evaluating a critical FDIC insurance determination system.

FDIC's ability to determine the insured status of deposit accounts is essential to resolving bank failures. FDIC has implemented the Claims Administration System (CAS) to automate the handling of deposit insurance determination functions and the processing and payment of claims associated with failed financial institutions.

The evaluation team was charged with determining whether two different approaches to developing the claims system (one developed in-house and the other by a contractor) met FDIC's CAS criteria. In response to the team's findings, FDIC made changes to the leadership and composition of

SAVE THE DATE

The I&E Training will be June 16–17, 2009, at FDIC in Arlington, VA. For more information, contact Anne Bracken at (202) 260-4650.

its project team, refocused the project on critical functionality needed for insurance determinations, and reevaluated the in-house model.

As a result of these corrective actions, FDIC implemented a contingency model that enables it to accomplish large or multiple bank insurance determinations that otherwise may not have been possible. This capability is crucial in light of the uncertainties in the current economic environment and the volatile state of the banking industry.

**United States
Department of Justice
(DOJ)**



In recognition of outstanding work in the review of coordination of investigations by DOJ Violent Crime Task Forces.

DOJ has been making increasing use of different types of task forces to help tribal, State, and local governments combat violent crime. The team evaluated the coordination of investigations conducted by Violent Crimes Impact Teams of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; the Drug Enforcement Administration's Mobile Enforcement Teams; the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Safe Streets Task Forces; and the U.S. Marshals Service's Regional Fugitive Task Forces.

The team found that the task forces did not coordinate the operations of their violent crime investigations. The task forces duplicated one another's investigations 768 times from 2003 through 2005, which created a risk to officer safety.

In response to this evaluation, the Deputy Attorney General required each component to certify that it had policies and procedures that mandated coordination, including the use of national and local information-sharing measures. Each task force completed these actions within 6 months after the report was issued.

**National Aeronautics
and Space Administration (NASA)**



In recognition of determination and integrity in evaluating the management and execution of the National Aviation Operations Monitoring Service (NAOMS) Project.

NAOMS is designed to collect survey data from aviation pilots. From these data, decisionmakers in the aviation community can quantitatively measure safety, assess trends, identify factors driving those trends, and evaluate the effects of new technologies and procedures introduced into the National Aviation System.

The team found that NASA could not adequately describe the design and intended use of NAOMS data. In addition, NASA had not published an analysis of NAOMS data. The team determined that the majority of issues would be addressed if NASA determined the validity of the collected research data; analyzed the data; and openly published findings, conclusions, and other information relative to the NAOMS project.

In response, NASA developed the NASA-NAOMS Web site to post research findings. NASA also agreed to verify the methodology used to collect the NAOMS data.

PCIE STANDARD OF THE MONTH

Periodically, we highlight a different standard from the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency's Quality Standards for Inspections. This encourages the consistent application of these standards throughout the Inspector General community. The February standard is evidence.

The following guidelines should be considered regarding evidence:

1. Evidence should be sufficient.

Enough evidence should exist to persuade a knowledgeable person of the validity of the findings.

2. Evidence should be reliable.

Evidence from independent sources may be more reliable than evidence from the organization being evaluated. Evidence developed under a system of internal controls may be more reliable than evidence developed without such controls. Evidence obtained through direct observation or computation may be more reliable than evidence obtained through less direct means. Original documents may be more reliable than copies. Testimonial evidence from an unbiased, knowledgeable individual may be more reliable than testimonial evidence from someone with biases.

3. Evidence should be relevant.

The information used to prove or disprove an issue should have a logical relationship with the issue being addressed.