



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Washington D.C. 20250



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REPLY TO
ATTN OF: 50501-9-FM

“OIG Audit Report: Management and Security over USDA Wireless Connections”

This report evaluates security controls in place over the use of wireless technology connected to the U.S. Department of Agriculture networks. Specifically, OIG reviewed the controls that the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) and selected agencies had over wireless devices. We determined that there had been limited planning, coordination, and/or oversight of agency wireless networks. As a result, OCIO could not ensure that wireless security management processes were integrated with agency strategic and operational planning processes, that wireless communications employed a streamlined configuration management, and/or that wireless technologies had been implemented with the appropriate security measures such as intrusion detection and anti-virus services.

During the review period, OIG stressed the importance of compliance in these areas with OCIO and the selected agencies. We also noted that OCIO had a new Chief Information Officer during 2007 and several memos were issued clarifying the roles of OCIO and agencies in wireless security. These actions have helped to strengthen controls over wireless security. However, until they are implemented Departmentwide, a material weakness will continue to exist. We recommended that OCIO implement effective policies and procedures over wireless access points, monitoring, physical security, and incident handling, and assume its role regarding oversight and coordination of the USDA agencies. The agencies need to comply with applicable Federal and Departmental guidance and perform periodic scanning as required. OCIO concurred with OIG’s recommendations and has proposed additional corrective actions.

This report is not being publicly released due to the sensitive security information it contains.