

**Strategic Plan
FY 2009-2015**



Plans are nothing; planning is everything.

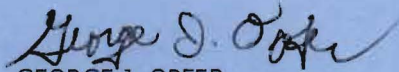
—Dwight D. Eisenhower

The Strategic Plan of the VA Office of Inspector General (OIG) is, and must always be, a living document, because OIG is committed to ensuring that the Department's programs and operations are as effective and efficient as possible, and that VA support services—financial management, procurement practices, and information management—are strong and secure. In accordance with the *Government Performance and Results Act of 1993* (Public Law 103-62), this OIG strategic plan for fiscal years (FY) 2009–2015 describes the structure, goals, and strategies for fulfilling these commitments.

Operating independently under the *Inspector General Act of 1978* (Public Law 95-452), OIG seeks to help VA become the best-managed service delivery organization in Government. OIG audits, inspections, evaluations, investigations, contract reviews, and Combined Assessment Program (CAP) reviews recommend improvements in VA programs and operations, and act to detect and deter waste, fraud, and abuse. During FYs 2005-2007, 90 percent of our recommendations for improvement and corrective action were implemented within a year or less of being made.

Over the coming years, OIG planning will focus on the major ongoing management challenges and high-risk areas facing the Department within five strategic goals: health care delivery, benefits processing, financial management, procurement practices, and information management. Our *Strategic Plan 2009–2015* builds upon the strategic goals and outcome-oriented performance measures set out in our *Strategic Plan 2005–2010*. OIG's strategic plans form the basis for developing our annual and month-to-month work plans to help VA achieve its mission, improve customer satisfaction, and protect the interests of veterans and their families, as well as the taxpayer.

We will continue to consult with VA and Congress, using the feedback we receive to keep our planning vital. OIG remains committed to achieving our long-term strategic goals through promoting positive change in VA and, ultimately, improving services to our Nation's veterans.



GEORGE J. OPFER
Inspector General
October 2008

OIG Mission and Organization

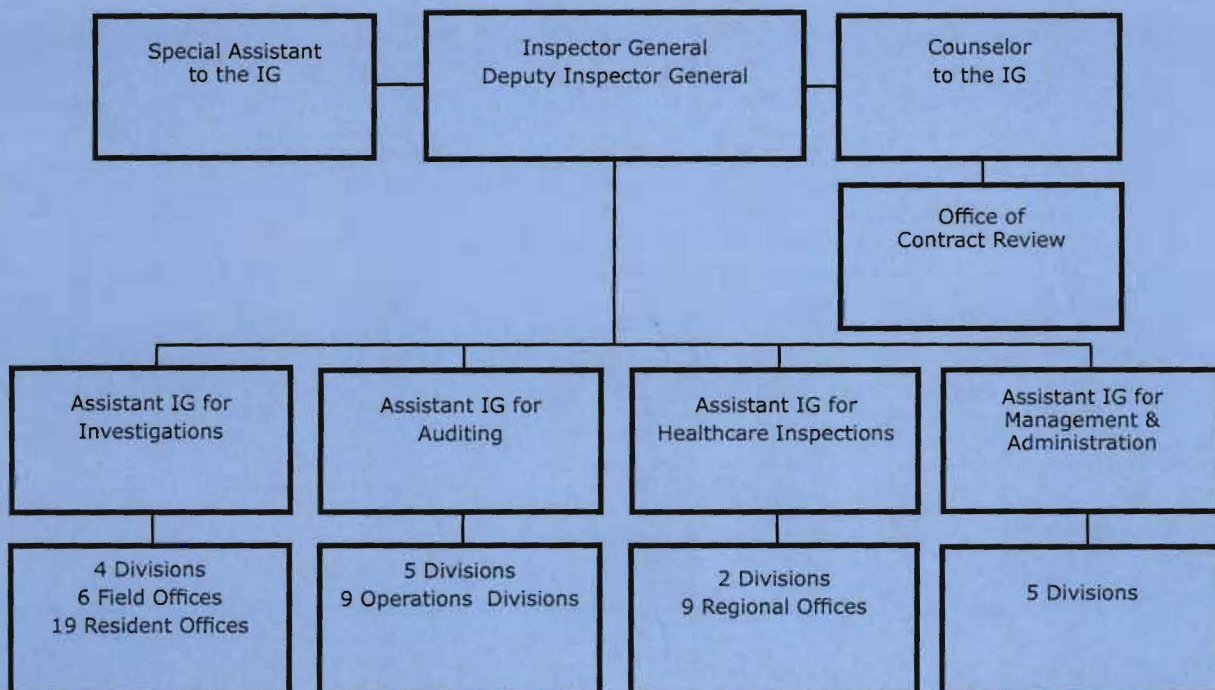
OIG was administratively established on January 1, 1978, to consolidate audits and investigations into a cohesive, independent organization. In October 1978, the *Inspector General Act* was enacted, establishing a statutory Inspector General (IG) in VA. The IG Act states that the IG is responsible for: (1) conducting and supervising audits and investigations; (2) recommending policies designed to promote economy and efficiency in the administration of—and to prevent and detect criminal activity, waste, abuse, and mismanagement in—VA programs and operations; and (3) keeping the Secretary and Congress fully informed about problems and deficiencies in VA programs and operations and the need for corrective action. The IG has authority to inquire into all VA programs and activities as well as the related activities of persons or parties performing under grants, contracts, or other agreements.

Over the past 3 years, OIG work has had significant impact on VA and veterans. A joint criminal investigation including OIG's special agents recovered a personally-owned laptop computer and external hard drive containing sensitive and personal information on approximately 26 million veterans and military personnel, which saved \$150 million in projected additional credit monitoring and other identity theft prevention measures. This investigation also greatly enhanced VA's data handling procedures. Through a series of audits and Congressional testimony, OIG auditors championed the need for VA to improve outpatient scheduling processes and ensure veterans are provided timely health care. OIG healthcare inspectors have developed the first comprehensive database to study and track medical care and treatment of all veterans returning from Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. OIG preaward, postaward, and other contract reviews have identified savings and dollar recoveries of over \$360 million.

OIG Mission Statement

OIG is dedicated to helping VA provide veterans and their families the care, support, and recognition they have earned through service to our country. OIG's vision is to help VA become the best-managed service delivery organization in Government by working as catalysts for positive change, helping VA identify and address issues that are crucial to the veterans we serve.

OIG Organizational Chart





OIG Strategic Goals

Strategic Goal 1—Health Care Delivery

Improve veterans' access to high-quality health care by identifying opportunities to improve the management and efficiency of VA's health care delivery systems, and by detecting, investigating, and deterring fraud and other criminal activity.

Strategic Goal 2—Benefits Processing

Improve the delivery of benefits and services by identifying opportunities to improve the quality, timeliness, and accuracy of benefits processing, while reducing criminal activity in the delivery of benefits through proactive and targeted audit and investigative efforts.

Strategic Goal 3—Financial Management

Assist VA in achieving its financial management mission of providing all VA activities with accurate, reliable, and timely information for sound oversight and decision making, while identifying opportunities to improve the quality, management, and efficiency of VA's financial management systems.

Strategic Goal 4—Procurement Practices

Ensure that VA's acquisition programs support our Nation's veterans, other Government entities, and the taxpayer by providing customers with quality products, services, and expertise delivered in a timely fashion, for a reasonable price, and to the right place.

Strategic Goal 5—Information Management

Assess information systems and policies within VA to ensure that they protect information security and integrity, are cost effective, meet the needs of the user, and are used in a lawful and ethical manner, while investigating fraud and other computer-related crimes against VA.

OIG Performance Measures

OIG will measure its performance by tracking each strategic goal. Our results for FYs 2005-2007 are summarized in parenthesis:

- Number of arrests, indictments, convictions, criminal complaints, pretrial diversions, and administrative sanctions. (7,881)
- Number of reports (audit, inspection, evaluation, contract review, and CAP reports) issued that identify opportunities for improvement and provide recommendations for corrective action. (676)
- Monetary benefits (\$ in millions) from audits, investigations, contract reviews, inspections, and other evaluations. (\$3,811)
- Return on investment (monetary benefits ÷ cost of operations). (17.5:1)
- Percentage of prosecutions successfully completed. (96%)
- Percentage of recommendations implemented within 1 year to improve efficiencies in operations through legislative, regulatory, policy, practices, and procedural changes in VA. (90%)
- Percentage of preaward recommendations sustained during contract negotiations. (68%)
- Customer satisfaction survey scores (based on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is high). (Investigations-4.9, Audit-4.2, and Healthcare Inspections-4.5)



Implementing OIG's Strategic Plan

We believe in transparency and accountability. The OIG Strategic Plan was built from the ground up by soliciting key issue, project, performance goals and outcome measure ideas from all OIG employees. We also consulted with experts in other OIGs, and considered the feedback of VA and other customers and stakeholders. This plan reflects the results of our two previous OIG strategic plans, based on our experience over the past 7 years.

The OIG *Strategic Plan 2005–2010* has moved us from our goals and strategies to measurable outcomes. This OIG *Strategic Plan 2009–2015* draws from our performance measures, which focus primarily on intended outcomes rather than on outputs. Now we can demonstrate the critical linkages in the chain leading from work to results—from effort to effect—and measure our influence on both interim and long-term mission-related outcomes.

The OIG Strategic Plan is rooted in five strategic goals in the areas of health care delivery, benefits processing, financial management, procurement practices, and information management, encompassing the key issues VA will encounter over the next 6 years. At the division level, we establish work plans and performance goals linked to each strategic goal, setting forth strategies and projects to achieve these goals, and follow through by assessing our progress toward achieving them.

This plan will act as a template to direct all OIG audits, proactive investigations, and health care inspections. Our *Semiannual Reports to Congress* (SAR), for example, serve as periodic performance reports to both Congress and the Secretary of VA, outlining our current work on the urgent, significant issues that require review. Each September edition of the SAR also functions as an annual report, summarizing the fiscal year's performance data.

Each year, as required under the *Reports Consolidation Act of 2000* (Public Law 106-531), OIG publishes its *Major Management Challenges* report, identifying the most serious management problems that challenge the Department's ability to achieve its mission of serving veterans in the most effective and efficient manner. VA includes this report with the Department's comments in its annual *Performance and Accountability Report*, along with OIG's own year-by-year performance measure results. These results, too, are reported annually in our budget submissions to the White House through the Office of Management and Budget. All these reports are organized by the five OIG strategic goals.

We use our performance and financial data to make decisions such as allocating human resources, opening new offices, shifting resources, funding awards and training, undertaking travel, modernizing information technology (IT), contracting for services, deciding whether to address a hotline case in-house or refer it to VA, and what proactive initiatives to undertake. In every decision to commit OIG resources, we strive to improve VA programs and operations, provide objective and independent information for better decision-making, eliminate criminal activity, highlight accountability, and keep both the Secretary and Congress fully informed of our findings and recommendations.

Strategic planning is an ongoing process requiring constant measurement and readjustment. OIG is dedicated to remaining proactive in helping VA ensure it is fully prepared to meet the demands of a new generation of veterans, as well as to care for our earlier veterans with their own particular needs. We will continue to demonstrate great flexibility in reacting to changing circumstances, consulting with stakeholders and customers within and outside the Department as necessary, to ensure that we are having maximum impact on helping VA achieve its mission of serving those who have kept our Nation free.



OIG Organizational Responsibilities

Office of Investigations

The Office of Investigations (OI) investigates crimes committed against programs and operations of VA by employees and non-employees, as well as allegations of serious violations of policies and procedures by high-ranking members of the Department. OI is composed of three divisions: Criminal Investigations, Administrative Investigations, and Analysis and Oversight. Criminal investigations focus on fraud against VA committed by beneficiaries, their survivors, fiduciaries, contractors, and VA employees; fraud related to pharmaceutical firms' illegal defective pricing or off-label marketing activities; acts of embezzlement, extortion, and bribery committed by VA employees; theft and diversion of legal drugs by VA staff and others; sale of contraband drugs and pharmaceuticals by and to VA staff and patients; theft of VA resources and data; identity theft; assaults involving VA employees and patients, including homicide, manslaughter, and rape; threats against VA employees, patients, facilities, and computer systems; mortgage fraud; and workers compensation fraud. Administrative investigations focus on violations of policies and procedures, such as misuse of Government resources and official time, preferential treatment, abuse of authority, nepotism, and travel irregularities. Through prosecution, administrative action, and monetary recoveries, these investigations promote integrity, patient safety, efficiency, and accountability.

Office of Audit

The Office of Audit (OA) improves the management of VA programs and activities by providing timely, balanced, credible, and independent financial and performance audits and other reviews that address the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of VA operations. Audit reports identify opportunities for enhancing management of program operations and providing VA with constructive recommendations to improve its services. OA audits veterans' health care and benefits programs, focusing on the effectiveness of services. Audits of financial management operations focus on the adequacy of VA financial management systems in providing managers information needed to efficiently and effectively manage and safeguard VA assets and resources. OA's oversight work satisfies the *Chief Financial Officer Act of 1990* (Public Law 101-576) audit requirements for Federal financial statements and provides timely, independent, and constructive reviews of financial information, programs, and activities. OA's oversight work also satisfies *Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002* requirements, including assessing the effectiveness of information security program compliance with law, and annually tests a representative subset of VA systems to develop meaningful and constructive recommendations that will help improve information security and controls. OA's audits of information management operations and policies have uncovered major information security and management challenges. To improve VA acquisition programs and activities, OA identifies opportunities to make VA national and local acquisitions and supply chain management more economical and effective.

Office of Healthcare Inspections

The Office of Healthcare Inspections (OHI) focuses on quality of care issues in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and assesses VHA services. OHI helps safeguard the quality of VHA medical care for veterans by conducting inspections, evaluations, cyclical CAP reviews (which evaluate quality of care issues in VHA medical facilities), and clinical consultations in support of criminal cases. OHI also conducts oversight of VA quality assurance programs and VHA's Office of the Medical Inspector under Public Law 100-322. OHI promotes the principles of continuous quality improvement and provides effective inspections, oversight, and consultation to enhance and strengthen the quality of VA's health care programs.

Office of Management and Administration

The Office of Management and Administration (OMA) is responsible for a wide range of administrative and operational support functions. OMA's Hotline Division operates a toll-free telephone service and e-mail, mail, and fax access to ensure that all allegations communicated to OIG are effectively monitored and resolved in a timely, efficient, and impartial manner. Many contacts result in investigations of criminal conduct that recover significant sums of money, improve services, or provide veterans help they need. OMA's Information Technology and Data Analysis Divisions provide IT support services to all components of OIG, interfacing with VA IT units nationwide to provide a broad array of IT support, and provide data gathering and analysis support. OMA also provides follow-up on OIG report recommendations, and general administrative support.

Counselor to the IG

The Counselor to the IG provides legal advice and representation on issues arising from the course of OIG activities, and directs OIG's *Freedom of Information Act* (Public Law 104-231) and *Privacy Act* (Public Law 93-579) compliance. The Office of Contract Review (OCR), which is overseen by the Counselor to the IG, operates under a reimbursable agreement with VA's Office of Acquisition, Logistics and Construction (OACL) to provide preaward, postaward, and other requested reviews of vendors' proposals and contracts.



**For more information about OIG, please visit our Web site at:
www.va.gov/oig**

To report waste, fraud, and abuse, please contact the OIG Hotline at:

Telephone: (800) 488-8244

(800) 488-VAIG

To FAX: (202) 565-7936

Internet Homepage: www.va.gov/oig/contacts/hotline.asp

E-mail Address: vaoighotline@va.gov

To Send

**Correspondence: Department of Veterans Affairs
Inspector General Hotline (53E)
P.O. Box 50410
Washington, DC 20091-0410**