



U.S. OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL

1730 M Street, N.W., Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20036-4505

May 9, 2005

The Special Counsel

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Re: OSC File No. DI-03-0714

Dear Mr. President:

I received disclosures from a whistleblower at the Department of the Navy, Naval Air Depot (NADEP), North Island (NI), California, regarding a significant threat to our nation's military preparedness. Specifically, the whistleblower Kristin Shott, a welder, alleged that there are critical welding defects on the catapult hydraulic piping systems on the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk. Catastrophic failure of these welds could result in loss of aircraft and possible loss of life. As discussed in the attached report, an agency investigation substantiated Ms. Shott's allegations regarding the USS Kitty Hawk. Ms. Shott also alleged that NADEP NI artisans in several different trades are performing work that they are not qualified or certified to perform. These allegations were partially substantiated by the agency investigation.

I required the Honorable Gordon R. England, Secretary of the Navy, to conduct an investigation into Ms. Shott's disclosures pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 1213(c) and (d). The Office of the Naval Inspector General (OIG) conducted an investigation, and the Secretary submitted an initial report to this office on August 24, 2004. Because the agency was unable to address all of the allegations in the initial report, the OIG sent a supplemental report on January 18, 2005. Ms. Shott commented on the agency reports; her comments are attached. As required by law, 5 U.S.C. § 1213(e)(3), I am now transmitting the reports to you.

We have reviewed the original disclosures and the agency report and supplemental report as well as Ms. Shott's comments. We have determined that the agency report contains all of the information required by statute and the findings appear to be reasonable.

As required by § 1213(e)(3), I have sent a copy of the report and supplemental response and Ms. Shott's comments to the Chairmen of the Senate and House Committees on Armed

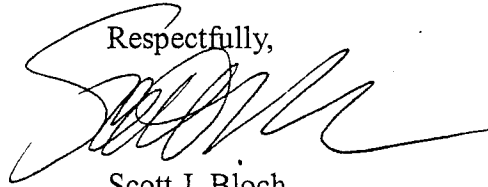
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Services. We have also filed a redacted version of the report and supplemental response and a copy of the whistleblower's comments in our public file and closed the matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Bloch', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Scott J. Bloch

Enclosures