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OSC Releases Report Detailing Retaliation Against Port Mortuary Whistleblowers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Today, the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) released its investigative report on whistleblower retaliation, which was presented to the U.S. Air Force in late January. The report finds that three U.S. Air Force officials at the Port Mortuary in Dover, Delaware, retaliated against four mortuary employees who disclosed, or were believed to have disclosed, wrongdoing at the Mortuary, and it calls for disciplinary action against those supervisors.

As reported earlier, one of the three supervisors has since resigned from the Air Force. The Air Force has begun disciplinary procedures against the remaining two. In addition, corrective actions for the whistleblowers are now complete.

Special Counsel Carolyn Lerner also said the Air Force has committed to improving its internal investigation procedures and the way it remedies whistleblower retaliation claims. OSC applauds this effort.

"I am pleased the Air Force has agreed to take further disciplinary action and institute training to prevent whistleblower retaliation in the future," Lerner said. "The Port Mortuary whistleblowers provided an important service to our country. They courageously stepped forward to report malfeasance and misconduct in the care of our fallen service members. Their actions have resulted in significant improvements at the Mortuary. The Office of Special Counsel will continue to work with government agencies to ensure that whistleblowers are protected from retaliation."

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) is an independent federal investigative and prosecutorial agency. Our basic authorities come from four federal statutes: the Civil Service Reform Act, the Whistleblower Protection Act, the Hatch Act, and the Uniformed Services Employment & Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). OSC's primary mission is to safeguard the merit system by protecting federal employees and applicants from prohibited personnel practices, especially reprisal for whistleblowing. For more information, please visit our website at www.osc.gov.