



### Why This Matters

In April 2012, United States Secret Service (USSS) employees were in Cartagena, Colombia, preparing for a Presidential visit to the Summit of the Americas. During these preparations, several USSS employees were suspected of soliciting prostitutes.

While solicitation is legal in Cartagena, USSS considers solicitation a violation of its standards of conduct. Additionally, adjudicative guidelines for revoking access to classified information state, in part, that sexual behavior is a factor when the behavior may subject the individual to coercion, exploitation, or duress, or reflects lack of judgment or discretion. All USSS employees must maintain eligibility to access classified information at the Top Secret level to remain employed.

After USSS removed the employees suspected of soliciting prostitutes, its internal affairs office investigated the alleged solicitation. We assessed USSS' response to the alleged solicitation of prostitutes by its employees.

### For Further Information:

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## Adequacy of USSS' Internal Investigation of Alleged Misconduct in Cartagena, Colombia

### What We Determined

We determined that USSS responded expeditiously and thoroughly to the allegations. Managers in Cartagena began a management inquiry to determine whether USSS employees solicited prostitutes and to ensure that the protective mission was not compromised. The USSS Director relieved 11 employees who allegedly solicited prostitutes from their protective assignments in Cartagena. USSS replaced 5 of the 11 employees and reorganized staff to maintain the integrity of the protective mission.

USSS placed the 11 employees suspected of soliciting prostitutes on administrative leave and suspended their security clearances. USSS' internal affairs organization, the Office of Professional Responsibility, Inspection Division, conducted an investigation. Investigative activities included interviewing 232 subjects and witnesses, sending 4 inspectors to Colombia, reviewing thousands of email messages, and administering 14 polygraph examinations.

On August 29, 2012, USSS issued a report on its investigative activities through May 24, 2012. The report presented a thorough account of employee conduct, and concluded that Presidential security, sensitive information, and equipment were not compromised in Cartagena. On December 27, 2012, the agency issued a second report on the results of its interviews and investigative work conducted after May 24, 2012. That report did not lead us to alter our findings or conclusions.

USSS subsequently established and issued a directive that reiterated agency expectations and policies, and introduced additional guidance regarding briefings, supervision, and off-duty activities on foreign trips. The USSS Director also created a Professional Reinforcement Working Group to assess USSS' organizational behavior, performance, and accountability.

We made no recommendations in this report.