

## Principles of Army Inspections: AR 1-201

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The Inspector General (TIG) of the Army has identified fourteen principles that apply to all Army inspections for which TIG is the proponent. These principles guide commanders/The Adjutants General (TAGs), staff principals, and inspectors general (IGs) in the conduct of inspections.

1. **Tailored:** All inspections should be tailored to meet the needs of the commander with special emphasis on being relevant and responsive. Inspections must provide practical, accurate feedback to allow the commander and his staff to make timely, informed decisions.
2. **Mission Oriented:** Like all unit activities, inspections should relate to mission accomplishment.
3. **Purposeful:** Inspections will have a specific purpose that is approved by the commander.
4. **Coordinated:** Inspections should avoid duplication and complement other inspection activities. To reduce the inspection burden on unit commanders, these events should be integrated within the command to ensure efficient use of inspection resources.
5. **Officer in Charge(OIC):** Unity of effort is important, no matter the make-up of the inspection team. If inspectors from several agencies combine their efforts into one inspection, then they must ensure that one individual is charged with coordinating their activities.
6. **Performance Oriented:** Every inspection must start with an evaluation of performance against the recognized standard to identify compliance with the standard. Deviation below the standard should result in exploration of whether the deviation is the result of training deficiencies, poor resource allocations, imperfectly understood requirements, or lack of motivation.
7. **Reality Check:** All inspectors should determine the magnitude of problems uncovered during the inspection. To avoid wasting precious resources on inconsequential shortcomings, inspectors should assess the severity of the problem. If the deficiency significantly affects mission accomplishment, then appropriate measures should be taken to address the problem.
8. **Root Causes:** Inspection procedures should allow for identification of the root cause of a deviation and for determination of where in the overall functional process or organizational structure the root cause lies.
9. **Teaching:** - Teaching is an essential element of all inspections and is the major purpose of all staff assistance visits. No inspection can be considered complete if those inspected have not been taught the goals and standards and how to achieve them.
10. **Corrective Action:** - The ultimate purpose of all inspections is to help commanders correct problems. While inspectors alone do not always fix deficiencies, every inspection will bring shortcoming to the attention of those who can correct them.
11. **Verbal or Written Reports:** - Inspection reports (verbal or written) for a key element in a successful inspection program. Recommendations should identify the persons or staff element responsible for making corrective actions. Inspection results may be held until the outbriefing or provided as the inspection progresses. The results may go directly to the commander or to staff and subordinate commanders, as appropriate. When inspection deficiencies indicate that violations of Federal Statute or public law have occurred, a formal written response will always be required.
12. **Strengths and Shortcomings:** Inspections should identify strengths as well as shortcomings. Sustaining strengths is an important aspect of commanding, leading and managing. Formally recognizing excellence help motivate soldiers and civilians to maintain high standards of performance.

13. Lessons Learned: Inspections can provide a vehicle for widespread improvement by evaluating successful techniques and providing feedback to units beyond those inspected. The spirit of cooperation and sharing strengthens the Army.
14. Follow-up Procedures: Inspection expend valuable resources and are not considered complete unless a follow-up plan is developed and executed to ensure corrective action is implemented. To reduce the administrative burden on inspected units, the requirement for a formal response to inspection reports must be carefully considered. The anticipated benefits from such replies should clearly exceed the effort associated with their preparation.