



At a Glance

Catalyst for Improving the Environment

Why We Did This Review

We conducted a Quality Assessment Review of the Office of Investigation's Philadelphia office for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Office of Inspector General (OIG). We conducted our review the week of March 8, 2006, and concentrated on case planning, case documentation, and case execution.

Background

The EPA OIG conducts Quality Assessment Reviews of its work products. For this review, we examined 17 open cases, and looked at 369 Memoranda of Interview.

For further information, contact our Office of Congressional and Public Liaison at (202) 566-2391.

To view the full report, click on the following link:
www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2006/20060807-2006-M-00012.pdf

Quality Assessment Review of Office of Inspector General Philadelphia Investigations Office (Redacted)

What We Found

The Quality Assessment Review found that the EPA OIG Office of Investigation's Philadelphia office does a very good job of case management. Case files were in good order and kept in a locked room. Most of the documents were properly filed in the case files and the case files were properly labeled. However, the review disclosed several areas where there could be possible improvement. There was not a consistent practice regarding the timing and documentation of initial and subsequent consultations with prosecutors. In some instances, case predication documentation could have been clearer regarding the source of the complaint. The timeframe for deciding on the merits of opening an investigation, which is currently 3 days, could also be increased. Further, case reviews could sometimes have been conducted in a more timely manner.

What We Recommend

To improve case management in the EPA OIG Office of Investigations, we recommend that the Office of Investigations:

- Establish a requirement that all cases have an Assistant United States Attorney (AUSA) consultation within 90 days of case initiation unless there is a specific investigative reason not to do so. In addition, if the facts of the case change significantly, the AUSA should be recontacted. Consultations with AUSAs should be documented in the case file.
- Ensure all case predication documentation is included in the file and ensure the source of the initial complaint is clear.
- Consider increasing the timeframe that agents and Special Agents in Charge have to decide on the merits of opening an investigation.
- Use the case plan document to document case reviews. For all cases over 1 year old where the AUSA is not already involved, ensure there is documentation that the AUSA is interested in the case.

The OIG Office of Investigations agreed to take the recommended corrective actions.