



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL

June 15, 2021

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Notification of Evaluation:
EPA's January 2021 PFBS Toxicity Assessment
Project No. OSRE-FY21-0207

FROM: Patrick Gilbride, Director *Patrick D. Gilbride*
Implementation, Execution, and Enforcement Directorate
Office of Special Review and Evaluation

TO: Jennifer Orme-Zavaleta, Acting Assistant Administrator and EPA Science Advisor
Office of Research and Development

Michal Ilana Freedhoff, Acting Assistant Administrator
Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention

The Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency plans to begin an evaluation to examine the EPA's actions on the perfluorobutane sulfonic acid, or PFBS, toxicity assessment published on January 19, 2021. This evaluation also addresses the following top management challenge for the Agency, as identified in our [EPA's FYs 2020–2021 Top Management Challenges](#) report, issued July 21, 2020: complying with key internal control requirements (risk assessments, data quality, and policies and procedures).

The OIG's objective is to determine whether the EPA's Office of Research and Development and Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention followed applicable policies and procedures in the development and publication of the January 19, 2021 PFBS toxicity assessment. The OIG plans to conduct work within those two offices. The evaluation will be conducted using *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation*, issued by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency. The anticipated benefits of this evaluation include improved operational efficiency and assurance of scientific integrity.

We will contact you to arrange a mutually agreeable time to discuss our objectives. We would also be particularly interested in any areas of concern that you may have. We will answer any of your questions about the evaluation process, reporting procedures, methods used to gather and analyze data, and what we should expect of each other during the evaluation. Throughout the evaluation, we will provide updates on a regular basis.

We respectfully note that the OIG is authorized by the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, to have timely access to personnel and all materials necessary to complete its objectives. Similarly, EPA Manual 6500, *Functions and Activities of the Office of Inspector General* (1994), requires that each EPA

employee cooperate with and fully disclose information to the OIG. Administrator Michael S. Regan, in an April 28, 2021 email message to EPA employees, conveyed his “expectation that EPA personnel provide OIG timely access to records or other information” and observed that “full cooperation with the OIG is in the best interest of the public we serve.” We will request that you immediately resolve the situation if an Agency employee or contractor refuses to provide requested materials to the OIG or otherwise fails to cooperate with the OIG. We may report unresolved access matters to the administrator and include the incident in the *Semiannual Report to Congress*.

We will post this memorandum on our public website at www.epa.gov/oig.

cc: Janet McCabe, Deputy Administrator
Dan Utech, Chief of Staff, Office of the Administrator
Wesley J. Carpenter, Acting Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Administrator
Avi Garbow, Special Advisor to the Administrator
Rick Keigwin, Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention
Carol Ann Siciliano, Associate Assistant Administrator for Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention
Chris Robbins, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Management, Office of Research and Development
Bruce Rodan, Associate Director for Science, Office of Research and Development
Kelly Van Bronkhorst, Audit Follow-Up Coordinator, Office of Research and Development
Janet Weiner, Senior Audit Advisor, Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention
Andrew LeBlanc, Agency Follow-Up Coordinator
José Kercado, Backup Agency Follow-Up Coordinator
Lindsay Hamilton, Associate Administrator for Public Affairs
Lance McCluney, Director, Office of Administrative and Executive Services, Office of the Administrator
Regional Audit Follow-Up Coordinators, Regions 1–10
Sean W. O’Donnell, Inspector General
Charles J. Sheehan, Deputy Inspector General
Edward S. Shields, Associate Deputy Inspector General
Benjamin May, Counsel to the Inspector General
Kellie J. Walker, Acting Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of Inspector General
Katherine Trimble, Assistant Inspector General for Audit
Rashmi Bartlett, Acting Assistant Inspector General for Special Review and Evaluation
Helina P. Wong, Assistant Inspector General for Investigations
Jee Kim, Acting Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Management
Tom Collick, Deputy Counsel to the Inspector General
Christine El-Zoghbi, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Evaluation
James Hatfield, Associate Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audit
Susan Barvenik, Associate Deputy Counsel to the Inspector General
Jennifer Kaplan, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Congressional and Public Affairs
Jeffrey Lagda, Congressional and Media Liaison, Office of Inspector General
Lori Hoffman, Congressional and Media Liaison, Office of Inspector General