



At a Glance

Why We Did This Review

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) is responsible for independently reviewing U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) programs related to national security. We evaluated EPA's classified national security information (NSI) infrastructure. We performed this review as required by the Reducing Over-Classification Act.

Background

Executive Order 13526, *Classified National Security Information*, prescribes a uniform system for classifying, safeguarding, and declassifying national security information. According to the executive order and the related regulations, national security information can be classified as Top Secret, Secret, or Confidential, depending on the damage that may be caused by its release. The Office of Administration and Resources Management manages EPA's NSI program.

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

The full report is at:
www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2012/20120618-12-P-0543.pdf

EPA's National Security Information Program Could Be Improved

What We Found

Under its classified NSI program, EPA has assigned responsibilities and provided guidance, training, and oversight. EPA program offices provide secure equipment and space, following NSI program specifications. EPA has procedures in place so employees can obtain security clearances and classify information. Annual reports are prepared on the status of the program. Thus, EPA can create, receive, handle, and store classified material needed to fulfill its responsibilities related to its homeland security, emergency response, and continuity missions.

We found that EPA's NSI program needs improved internal controls to address the following deficiencies:

- Although EPA keeps three copies of an employee's signed *Classified Information Nondisclosure Agreement*, Standard Form 312, it does not store a copy in the employee's Official Personnel Folder, as provided in guidance from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). OPM's regulation requires that personnel records be maintained in accordance with OPM guidance.
- Not all individuals with an EPA security clearance are completing the required annual refresher training.
- EPA does not always promptly withdraw a clearance when an employee leaves EPA, which may result in a person accessing classified NSI to which he or she is no longer privileged.
- EPA regulation, policies, and basic guidance document for the NSI program do not reflect the current government-wide requirements, and the basic guidance document is currently not an Agency-wide directive even though it impacts the entire EPA.

We did not assess the readiness of EPA's NSI program in the event of an actual national security incident.

Recommendation/Planned Agency Corrective Actions

We recommend that the Assistant Administrator for Administration and Resources Management issue a directive to establish controls that address the deficiencies identified in this report. The Agency partially agreed with our recommendation, and provided alternate corrective actions with completion dates that we consider acceptable. We consider the recommendation resolved.