MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Project Notification:
   EPA’s Processes for Preserving Emails and Text Messages, and Responding to Freedom of Information Act Requests
   Project No. OA&E-FY18-0217

FROM: Rudolph M. Brevard, Director
      Information Resources Management Directorate

TO: Andrew Wheeler, Deputy Administrator
    Steven Fine, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator
    Office of Environmental Information

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) plans to begin fieldwork to follow up on significant information technology security findings and recommendations noted in OIG reports issued between fiscal years 2013 and 2017, as well as to look into a hotline allegation received in fiscal year 2018. This project is the result of a congressional request and is not included in our annual audit plan.

The OIG’s objectives are to determine whether the EPA took action to complete OIG recommendations regarding the preservation of email and text messages, and the improvement of the agency’s Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) process. The OIG plans to conduct work at headquarters and at regional offices as needed. Applicable generally accepted government auditing standards will be used in conducting the project. The anticipated benefits of this project are ensuring the effectiveness of EPA processes for preserving electronic records and responding to FOIA requests.

We will contact you to arrange a mutually agreeable time to discuss our objectives and the purpose of our project. We would also be particularly interested in any areas of concern that you may have. We will answer any of your questions about the project process, reporting procedures, methods used to gather and analyze data, and what we should expect of each other during the course of the project. Throughout the project, we will provide updates on a monthly basis and, further into the project, on a bi-weekly basis.
For the following audit reports, in addition to the information entered into the agency’s Management Audit Tracking System, please provide, to the extent possible before or at the kickoff meeting: documented evidence on completed recommendations, access to data systems or databases, and personnel to be interviewed:


- **Congressionally Requested Inquiry into the EPA’s Use of Private and Alias Email Accounts** (Report No. 13-P-0433), issued September 26, 2013.

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. We will request that you resolve the situation if any agency employee or contractor refuses to provide requested records 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 *Semianual Report to Congress*.

The project will be supervised by me and the Project Manager will be Jeremy Sigel. Any information related to the project should be addressed to me at (202) 566-0893 or brevard.rudy@epa.gov, or Jeremy Sigel at (202) 566-0852 or sigel.jeremy@epa.gov.

cc: Ryan Jackson, Chief of Staff
    Henry Darwin, Chief of Operations
    Harvey Simon, Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Environmental Information
    Bobbie Trent, Agency Follow-Up Coordinator
    Nancy Grantham, Acting Principal Deputy Associate Administrators for Public Affairs
    Regional Audit Follow-Up Coordinators, Regions 1–10
    Arthur A. Elkins Jr., Inspector General
    Charles Sheehan, Deputy Inspector General
    Alan Larsen, Counsel to the Inspector General
    Kevin Christensen, Assistant Inspector General for Audit and Evaluation
    Patrick Sullivan, Assistant Inspector General for Investigations
    Edward Shields, Assistant Inspector General for Management
    Richard Eyermann, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audit and Evaluation
    Christine El-Zoghbi, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audit and Evaluation
    Jennifer Kaplan, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Congressional and Public Affairs
    Jeffrey Lagda, Congressional and Media Liaison, Office of Inspector General
    Tia Elbaum, Congressional and Media Liaison, Office of Inspector General