

**FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**

STRATEGIC PLAN



**FISCAL YEARS
2016 - 2020**

**Lynne A. McFarland
Inspector General**

Inspectors General Vision Statement

For the Office of Inspector General

To act as an agent of positive change striving for continuous improvement in the agency's management and program operations and in the Office of Inspector General.

Statement of Principles

We Will:

- Strive to ensure optimal stewardship of taxpayer dollars and endeavor to ensure proper use of public funds through the fulfillment of our statutory duties and responsibilities.
- Work with the agency and the Congress to improve program management, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- Maximize the positive impact and ensure the independence and objectivity of our audits, inspections, investigations, and other reviews.
- Use our work to increase agency integrity, accountability, and recommend improved systems to prevent waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement.
- Use innovative tools and work products to provide the agency with suggested means for improvement.
- Continue to build and improve relationships with agency management and staff based on a shared commitment to improving program operations and effectiveness.
- Strive to continually improve the quality and usefulness of our products.
- Work with our stakeholders to address Government-wide issues.

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

I. Introduction and Background:

To enhance the effectiveness of the Office of Inspector General (OIG) at the Federal Election Commission (FEC), to ensure effective audit and inspection coverage of the Commission's programs and operations, and to ensure that allegations within the OIG's investigative jurisdiction are properly addressed, the OIG has developed the following strategic plan. In conjunction with the strategic plan, the OIG will continue to request audit and inspection ideas from all staff. The OIG will also take into consideration the FEC's strategic plan in making its decisions on areas to audit and inspect to enable the office to address the audit and inspection requirements of its stakeholders.

The FEC OIG was created by the 1988 amendments to the Inspector General Act of 1978 (IG Act). The mission of the OIG, as spelled out in the IG Act, is to:

- conduct and supervise independent and objective audits and investigations relating to agency programs and operations;
- promote economy, effectiveness, and efficiency within the agency;
- prevent and detect fraud, waste and abuse in agency program and operations;
- review and make recommendations regarding existing and proposed legislation and regulations relating to agency programs and operations; and
- keep the agency head and the Congress fully and currently informed of problems in agency programs and operations.

To carry out these responsibilities, the Congress has given the Inspector General:

- access to all records, reports, audits, reviews, documents, papers, recommendations or other material which relate to the programs and operations of the FEC;
- authority to make such investigations and reports that in the judgment of the Inspector General, are necessary;
- authority to request assistance from any Federal, state or local government agency as may be necessary;
- authority to issue subpoenas;
- authority to administer and take oaths, affirmations or affidavits;
- direct and prompt access to the Commission (as head of the agency);
- authority to select, appoint and employ such officers and employees as may be necessary for carrying out the functions, powers, and duties of the OIG;
- authority to obtain expert and consultant services; and
- within the limits of the budget, authority to contract out for audits, studies, analyses, and other services.

The OIG shall also:

- comply with *Government Auditing Standards* and other applicable auditing, investigative, and inspection standards;
- ensure that any work performed by non-federal auditors complies with *Government Auditing Standards*;
- avoid duplication with the U.S. General Accountability Office and ensure effective coordination and cooperation;
- report all suspected violations of criminal law to the Attorney General; and,
- arrange for a review of the OIG by a federal audit entity at least once every three years for the purpose of determining whether *Government Auditing Standards* are being followed.

II. Organization:

The OIG is currently composed of six full time equivalent employees. The staff consists of the Inspector General, Deputy Inspector General, Counsel to the Inspector General and Chief Investigator, two Senior Auditors, and a Special Assistant to the Inspector General. The OIG anticipates adding an additional staff member in early fiscal year (FY) 2016. The OIG has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Staff Director and the Designated Agency Ethics Official.

The OIG takes several steps to ensure that the quality of the work performed and products produced meets or exceeds applicable standards and guidelines. The office hires only qualified and competent staff, and ensures that their expertise and professional competence is maintained by being certain that all staff, at a minimum, receive the amount of training required by the *Government Auditing Standards* and for professional licenses and certifications. A deliberate effort is made to give staff a wide variety of assignments, including special projects, to further increase their knowledge and capabilities. Since the staff size is on a smaller scale, the Inspector General is very involved in the audit and investigative processes.

All products that are produced by the OIG are personally reviewed and signed by the Inspector General or Deputy Inspector General. In addition, every three years, the OIG undergoes a peer review of the audit operation. The investigative operations are also voluntarily peer reviewed on a three year cycle. Peer reviews are conducted by another Office of Inspector General following the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) guidelines. The results of the peer reviews are given to the Commission by the Inspector General, posted on the OIG webpage and published in the Semiannual Report to Congress.

III. Office of Inspector General's Goals and Objectives:

Three major OIG-wide goals, each with related objectives, have been identified. The goals focus on impact, quality, and excellence. Strategies and performance measures for each have been included.

The OIG strategic plan will continue to evolve and will be reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure maximum effectiveness in meeting changing needs, consistent with the OIG's statutory responsibilities. The term "stakeholder" as used in this plan includes, but is not limited to, the Commission, FEC management and staff, Congress, and the Inspector General community.

IMPACT: OIG products and services will be designed to positively impact FEC policies, programs, and operations by promoting integrity, efficiency, and effectiveness.

Objective A: Identify potential fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement, and advise FEC management on ways to implement effective safeguards to improve accountability and reduce risk of loss.

Strategy:

- Conduct annual risk assessment and perform audits, reviews, and inspections to address high risk areas; and
- Perform fraud vulnerability reviews to assess risk in agency programs.

Objective B: Identify internal control deficiencies and inefficient processes and procedures, and make recommendations to the agency to improve program management.

Strategy:

- Perform audits, inspections, and reviews based on risk assessment and report findings and recommendations to FEC management; and
- Incorporate information obtained through complaints and stakeholder feedback and suggestions into work plan.

Objective C: Conduct timely audits, investigations, reviews, and inspections, and take appropriate reporting action.

Strategy:

- Identify appropriate lessons learned to improve timeliness and quality; and,
- Conduct follow-up reviews to determine if intended results have been achieved.

Objective D: Educate the agency on fraud prevention and detection practices.

Strategy:

- Continue existing outreach programs and develop new ones to educate new and current employees.

Objective E: Improve stakeholder engagement.

Strategy:

- Continue to foster a collaborative relationship emphasizing open and honest communication with FEC management and staff (consistent with the independent nature of the OIG);
- Improve Congressional outreach and response;
- Ensure that priorities of IG are effectively communicated; and
- Continue involvement with the Inspector General community.

Objective F: Maintain a dynamic strategic planning process.

Strategy:

- Periodically review and update the strategic plan to address changing OIG, FEC and other stakeholder priorities; and,
- Identify factors that influence organizational change and develop short and long term plans to address them.

Objective G: Ensure the agency follows through with agreed-upon recommendations in a timely manner.

Strategy:

- Work with the agency to ensure adherence to FEC Directive 50 and other appropriate guidance; and,
- Conduct reviews of the implementation of agreed-upon recommendations.

Performance Measures: Determine the impact and effectiveness of OIG products and services in promoting positive change and producing results by following up with management and staff; conduct assessments to determine impact of OIG products on FEC programs and operations; reach agreement with management on at least 95% of recommendations within two months of the report issue date.

QUALITY: OIG products and services provided to the FEC will be of the highest quality and meet or exceed applicable standards.

Objective A: Deliver timely, relevant, high-quality products and services that provide value to our stakeholders.

Strategy:

- Conduct quality assurance programs;
- Comply with applicable statutory requirements and other applicable guidance and standards; and
- Set realistic and appropriate milestones.

Objective B: Assess the effectiveness of OIG activities in fulfilling statutory duties and responsibilities and in meeting stakeholder expectations and needs.

Strategy:

- Solicit and evaluate stakeholder feedback concerning products and services; and
- Participate in required and voluntary peer reviews.

Objective C: Implement and continuously update OIG processes and procedures to ensure they are efficient, effective, and consistent in producing quality products.

Strategy: - Ensure that OIG operational policies and procedures are followed; and
- Ensure that OIG follow-up procedures with stakeholders are optimal.

Performance Measures: Determine the quality and timeliness of OIG products through stakeholder feedback and as measured by CIGIE, GAO, and other applicable standards. Participate in audit and investigative peer reviews.

EXCELLENCE: OIG will maintain a skilled and motivated work force and empower employees to maximize their professional and personal potential by fostering accountability, communication, teamwork, and constant growth and development.

Objective A: Attract and retain well-qualified, diverse and motivated employees.

Strategy: - Develop and implement a comprehensive recruiting program that attracts a broad population with the knowledge, skills, abilities, and expertise necessary to make meaningful contributions to the OIG and stakeholders;
- Assess employee satisfaction and develop strategies to address employee concerns;
- Provide challenging assignments and opportunities for staff;
- Identify reasons for staff departures and develop plans to foster greater staff retention; and,
- Adhere to Equal Employment Opportunity principles and strive to maintain a diverse work force.

Objective B: Provide training and developmental opportunities to employees.

Strategy: - Assess training needs in relation to employee and office needs;
- Ensure that *Government Auditing Standards* and professional license and certification training requirements are met;
- Provide broad based training to increase knowledge in areas not directly related to the employee's area of expertise;
- Enable participation of employees in OIG community projects as much as possible.

Objective C: Assess, recognize, and reward, when possible, performance that contributes to achieving the OIG mission.

- Strategy:**
- Develop and articulate expectations for each employee's performance, including contributions in meeting the mission and goals of the OIG;
 - Ensure that rewards, when possible, are given in recognition of exceptional employee performance; and
 - Look for creative ways to ensure employees are recognized for their contributions.

Objective D: Create and maintain a positive and professional working environment that promotes teamwork and effective communication.

- Strategy:**
- Ensure that communication between employees is open;
 - Provide employees with the tools and incentives they need to adequately perform their duties;
 - Reengineer or streamline OIG procedures to achieve the most effective use of resources; and,
 - Ensure that necessary technologies are made available to staff as needed.

Performance Measures: Within budgetary restraints, all employees meet their required CPEs associated with their ability to do their work and all professional license requirements are met annually. Ensure via budget monitoring that training resources are equitably distributed among the staff. Bi-monthly staff meetings will be held to share assignments, challenges faced and to build a sense of team.