



At a Glance

Why We Did This Review

On August 27, 2013, a member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works requested that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Inspector General (OIG), initiate work in connection with a fraud committed by John C. Beale, a former Senior Policy Advisor with the EPA's Office of Air and Radiation. One of the areas audited was the agency's vetting process for new employees. We also audited the process for official passports. The audit disclosed issues that impact the OIG and require immediate attention.

This report addresses the following EPA theme:

- *Embracing EPA as a high performing organization.*

For further information, contact our public affairs office at (202) 566-2391.

The full report is at:
www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2014/20140501-14-B-0244.pdf

EPA OIG's Compliance With EPA Passport Guidance

What We Found

The EPA OIG is not in compliance with EPA guidance governing the control and security of official passports issued to OIG employees. The total number of OIG employees with an official passport is unknown.

The EPA OIG needs to ensure that it complies with EPA passport guidance to protect sensitive PII.

The OIG does not have any policies and procedures associated with official passports (i.e., the issuance, control and security of official passports). The conditions occurred due to a lack of knowledge within the OIG concerning official passport requirements, and a lack of guidance and oversight from the OIG and the EPA's Office of International and Tribal Affairs (OITA). The lack of compliance with OITA guidance may put the OIG in the position where sensitive personally identifiable information (PII) is not being adequately protected. The lack of control could also result in the release of sensitive PII due to missing, misused or improperly destroyed official passports.

Recommendations

We recommend that the OIG identify all official passports issued to OIG employees and request that all official passports be returned to the OITA for proper storage or cancellation. We also recommend that the OIG provide the OITA with the names and available passport numbers of OIG employees whose passports have not been located, and request that the OITA notify the U.S. Department of State. In addition, we recommend that the OIG develop and implement one OIG-wide policy and procedure for the issuance and control of official passports and designate an international travel coordinator position.