

Management Assistance Report: Open Audit Recommendations Awaiting Final Action and Closure, AUD-AOQC-19-35, September 2019
Summary of Review

The purpose of this Management Assistance Report (MAR) is to facilitate the prompt closure of selected open, unclassified Office of Audits recommendations by bringing them to the attention of the Under Secretary for Management (Under Secretary). As of June 10, 2019, 22 unclassified Office of Audits report recommendations—made to 9 Department of State (Department) entities that had not responded to Office of Inspector General (OIG) inquiries concerning the status of actions to implement those recommendations—remain open. In each instance, a response from the Department entity was overdue by 4 months or longer.¹ Furthermore, 6 of these 22 recommendations had been previously reported in a 2018 MAR.²

The recommendations concern deficiencies related to contract and grant oversight, the Department's travel card program, conference reporting, the armored vehicle program, Antiterrorism Assistance program, fee-setting methodologies for consular services, data published on public websites, and the administration of working capital funds. Without current information on the status of implementation efforts regarding the 22 open recommendations, OIG has no assurance that corrective actions are being or have been completed. Each open recommendation addresses a deficiency within the Department, its resources, and its programs.

The Under Secretary, as the Department's Audit Follow-up Official, ensures that timely responses are made to all OIG recommendations and that, regardless of implementation responsibilities, corrective actions are taken.³ Therefore, OIG provides monthly reports on open OIG recommendations to the Under Secretary and provided 2 MARs in 2017 and 2018 on 29 recommendations made to 10 action entities that did not respond to OIG inquiries regarding implementation status. In response to the latest MAR in 2018, the Under Secretary sent a Directive in March 2019 to the delinquent action entities to prompt responses and the implementation of corrective actions. However, two of the action entities with overdue responses in the 2018 report did not respond to OIG on the status of those recommendations.

After issuing a draft of this report, OIG received responses from 2 bureaus that relate to 4 of the 22 recommendations discussed in this report. On the basis of the responses and information provided, OIG was able to close 4 of the 22 recommendations. However, OIG has not received any information pertaining to the remaining 18 recommendations. As a result, OIG requests that the Under Secretary intervene and monitor the status of corrective actions

¹ These 22 recommendations from 10 reports reflect only those open recommendations with responses that are overdue for 120 days or longer and are unclassified. The 22 recommendations are not the totality of open recommendations and reports addressed to Department entities.

² Management Assistance Report: Further Attention Needed to Address Overdue Responses on Selected Open Recommendations (AUD-ACF-18-51, August 2018).

³ 1 FAM 044.1(10).

for the 18 recommendations referenced in this report until the actions have been completed and the recommendations closed.

With respect to the single recommendation made to the Under Secretary for Management, OIG considers this recommendation resolved, pending further action. The recommendation will be closed when OIG receives documentation demonstrating that the Under Secretary for Management (a) directed the Department entities responsible for the recommendations in this report to respond to OIG within 30 days to explain the status of actions taken to implement the recommendations and (b) will periodically follow up with those entities concerning the status of their corrective actions until the recommendations are closed. A synopsis of management's response to the recommendation made by the Under Secretary and OIG's reply is presented in the Conclusion section of this report. Management's response to a draft of this report, received August 13, 2019, is reprinted in its entirety in Appendix A.