



U.S. Embassy Rome, Italy

May 2019

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

In April 2019, a Department contracting officer (CO) was arrested and charged with conspiracy, bribery, honest services fraud, and making false statements. OIG and FBI special agents determined that from November 2012 to early 2017, the CO and the owner of a Turkish construction firm allegedly engaged in a bribery and procurement fraud scheme in which the CO received at least \$239,300 in cash payments from the business owner. In return, the CO allegedly supervised multimillion-dollar construction contracts awarded to the owner’s business partners. The CO allegedly concealed the unlawful relationship by making false statements on financial disclosure forms and during background reinvestigations. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security has suspended the employee’s security clearance.

In April 2019, a Department grant recipient and former professor at several major U.S. academic institutions was debarred for failure to perform in accordance with multiple grant provisions. OIG auditors and special agents determined that, while managing various awards, the grant recipient sub-contracted work to both his spouse and stepson. In addition, while managing a separate award supporting the exchange of American, Tanzanian, and Kenyan trainers working on sports programs for young adults with disabilities, approximately \$38,288 worth of receipts submitted by the recipient were unsupported by proper documentation. The unallowable costs were returned in full to the Department.

In April 2019, the U.S. District Court ordered forfeiture in the amount of \$312,734 to recover the illegal proceeds of wire fraud, to which a former employee had pleaded guilty. In January 2019, the former Department employee was sentenced to 15 months in prison followed by a three-year term of supervised release and ordered to pay

RECOMMENDATIONS STATUS

as of April 30, 2019

1,061

Open
Recommendations

33

Recommendations
Closed During April

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\$244,884 in restitution for fraudulently discharging over \$250,000 in student loan debt. The former employee applied through the Department of Education for a Total and Permanent Disability discharge of student loan debt, affirming that he was disabled and unable to work. OIG special agents determined, however, that he earned over \$331,000 from two full-time jobs from May 2013 to October 2016.

In response to a May 2018 audit report, *Audit of Food Safety Controls Under Baghdad Life Support Services Task Order SAQMMA14F0721*, the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs implemented a quality assurance surveillance plan for a food services task order at Embassy Baghdad. By establishing a methodology for evaluating the contractor’s actual performance to determine compliance with contractual requirements, this quality assurance surveillance plan improves Department oversight of the task order, which had an obligated value of nearly \$300 million as of December 2017.

SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

Innovative Use of Geospatial Mapping Software (Inspection of Embassy Bogota, Colombia, ISP-I-19-14)

Embassy Bogota personnel under Chief of Mission authority often travel to areas throughout Colombia that require prior approval by the Regional Security Office. The office's Senior Foreign Service National Investigator consolidated up-to-date threat information and security incidents obtained from the Colombian military and security forces and from internal embassy sources to populate interactive geospatial mapping software. Specific characteristics include visual representations of active criminal and terrorist organizations' areas of operation, reported security incidents, and locations of U.S. Government projects and areas visited by embassy personnel. The map provides the Regional Security Office with a quick reference to show current areas of concern and is used as a risk management tool when coordinating official travel within Colombia. The Regional Security Officer told OIG he plans to share the tool with other U.S. embassies in the region, security counterparts at other foreign missions in Colombia, and the Overseas Security Advisory Council.

NEW WORK STARTED

- Audit of the Information Security Program for Sensitive Compartmented Information Systems at the Department of State
- Audit of the Information Security Program at the Department of State
- Audit of the United States Agency for Global Media Information Security Program

REPORTS ISSUED

- *Lessons Learned From Office of Inspector General Audits Concerning the Review and Payment of Contractor Invoices Supporting Overseas Contingency Operations* (AUD-MERO-19-19)
- *Audit of the Office of Nonproliferation and Disarmament Fund Financial and Contract Activities During FY 2016 and FY 2017* (AUD-FM-19-22)
- *Classified Inspection of Embassy Kigali, Rwanda** (ISP-S-19-15)
- *Independent Auditor's Report on the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico, U.S. Section, 2018 and 2017 Financial Statements* (AUD-FM-19-05)
- *Targeted Inspection of the Governance of the U.S. Agency for Global Media* (ISP-IB-19-22)
- *Inspection of Embassy Bogota, Colombia* (ISP-I-19-14)
- *Management Assistance Report: Noncompliance With Federal and Department Procurement Policy at U.S. Embassy Kabul, Afghanistan, Needs Attention* (AUD-MERO-19-25)
- *Classified Inspection of Embassy Bogota, Colombia** (ISP-S-19-14)
- *Management Letter Related to the Audit of the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico, U.S. Section, 2018 Financial Statements* (AUD-FM-19-21)
- *Work Plan for Fiscal Years 2019-2020* (OIG-ERM-19-02)
- *Management Letter Related to the Department of State's FY 2018 Financial Statements Audit* (AUD-FM-19-16)
- *Management Assistance Report: Results of 2014 Audit of Bureau of Diplomatic Security Worldwide Protective Services Contract Task Orders 2, 9, and 11* (AUD-MERO-19-23)

*Report is classified or Sensitive But Unclassified.



The Office of Inspector General conducts independent oversight of the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for Global Media on behalf of American taxpayers to:

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