



MONTHLY UPDATE



April 2023

Photo: Deputy IG Shaw prepares to testify before Congress with her OIG counterparts at the Department of Defense, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction on April 19, 2023. (OIG photo.)

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

In April 2023, a former Department of State contractor [pled guilty](#) to three counts for a fraud scheme against the U.S. government that lasted almost 25 years. Under the terms of his plea agreement, the contractor agreed to pay restitution of \$6,588,680 and forfeiture of \$17,795,098. OIG, U.S. Attorney’s Office, and IRS special agents determined that misrepresentations were made to induce the Department into awarding approximately \$100 million in lucrative construction contracts to the contractor’s company. The contractor also allegedly paid a Department employee bribes in exchange for confidential bidding information. That employee was [sentenced](#) in April 2022.

===

Also in April, the OIG Hotline received two separate threats to public safety. The first anonymous threat was submitted online through the OIG website and was related to a bomb threat at an American university in the Midwest. Hotline staff immediately contacted the local police department and the FBI. Close coordination and timely reporting allowed the FBI and local police to identify the threat as having come from a former university student, leading to an arrest. A second threat came as a voicemail to the OIG Hotline phone number in which the caller requested to speak to someone and referenced a possible mass shooting. Using the information provided by Hotline staff, local police contacted the subject and he was [arrested and charged](#).

===

An engineering services company that provides services and personnel to companies in the U.S. agreed to [pay the government nearly \\$10 million](#) to resolve allegations it underpaid visa fees. The company was alleged to have acquired inexpensive B-1 visas, rather than more

RECOMMENDATIONS STATUS

as of April 30, 2023

941*

Open Recommendations

26**

Recommendations Closed During April

[View Recommendations](#)

*Includes 46 recommendations associated with the U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC).

**Includes 3 recommendations closed on OIG’s classified network.

Reports

Ongoing Work

expensive H-1B visas, to send its employees to work in the U.S. In addition, the settlement resolved a lawsuit brought against the company under the qui tam, or whistleblower provisions, of the False Claims Act.

===

In April 2023, two locally employed staff (LES) members had their security clearances revoked and were terminated from employment at a U.S. embassy for unethical behavior and receiving bribes from contractors. OIG and Diplomatic Security special agents determined the corruption spread to multiple programs and contracts being run within the U.S. embassy. Previously, in January 2023, two others had their security clearances revoked and were terminated from employment for similar behavior.

SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

Program Used for Fact Checking and Enhanced Outreach (*Inspection of Embassy Beirut, Lebanon, ISP-I-23-10*)

The *Inspection of Embassy Beirut, Lebanon*, highlighted three Spotlights on Success. Among these, the Public

Diplomacy Section used program evaluation and data analytics to fact-check its strategic planning targets and assumptions and to sharpen social media outreach. The section developed a uniform survey instrument to measure before-and-after opinions of all grant and exchange program participants.

NOTABLE OPEN RECOMMENDATIONS

A recommendation from *Audit of the Department of State Implementation of Policies Intended To Counter Violent Extremism (AUD-MERO-19-27)* remains open since the report was issued in June 2019. OIG is concerned that the Department has not yet provided written guidance to bureaus for developing and implementing programs and projects to promote rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals defecting from extremist organizations.

In the September 2019 report, *Inspection of the U.S. Mission to the Organization of American States (ISP-I-19-37)*, OIG recommended the U.S. Mission to the Organization of American States should implement a records management program in accordance with Department standards. However, as of May 1, 2023, the Department's latest compliance response on this recommendation is overdue by 371 days.

NEW WORK STARTED

- *Audit of Department of State Anti-Corruption Programs and Activities in Eastern Europe*
- *Audit of U.S. Agency for Global Media FY 2023 and FY 2022 Financial Statements*

UKRAINE OVERSIGHT

In April, OIG released two reports related to Ukraine oversight. In *Inspection of the U.S. Mission to the European Union (ISP-I-23-15)*, we recommended that the mission, in coordination with the Bureau of Consular Affairs, should review the need for the Senior Consular Representative position and make adjustments as necessary to meet both U.S. consular policy objectives and Department standards for effective use of resource. *The Department of State Humanitarian Assistance Response To Support Ukraine (AUD-MERO-23-17)* provides details regarding the Department's humanitarian assistance response to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Go [here](#) for more information.

Three Ukraine-related inspections and one Ukraine-related audit were also [announced](#). These are:

- Inspection of Embassy Vienna
- Inspection of the United States Mission to International Organizations in Vienna
- Inspection of the United State Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
- Audit of Department of State Anti-Corruption Programs and Activities in Eastern Europe

REPORTS ISSUED

- *Management Assistance Report: Actions To Address Ongoing Construction Schedule Delays at New Embassy Compound Mexico City Are Needed (AUD-CGI-23-16)*
- *The Department of State Humanitarian Assistance Response To Support Ukraine (AUD-MERO-23-17)*
- *Inspection of Embassy Beirut, Lebanon (ISP-I-23-10)*
- *Inspection of the U.S. Mission to the European Union (ISP-I-23-15)*
- *Inspection of Embassy Juba, South Sudan (ISP-I-23-12)*



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:

- Promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- Prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse.
- Identify vulnerabilities and recommend constructive solutions.

Report waste, fraud, or abuse 24 hours a day to the OIG hotline: www.stateoig.gov/HOTLINE