



HIGHLIGHTS

Office of Inspector General
United States Department of State

AUD-CGI-21-36

What OIG Audited

The Department of State (Department) employs more than 10,000 Civil Service employees. The Bureau of Global Talent Management (GTM) has the critical responsibility of hiring, developing, assigning, and supporting the Department's workforce. To accomplish this, for civil service personnel, within GTM, the Office of Talent Services (TS) executes service-level agreements (SLA) that detail expected services and performance timelines for recruitment, classification, and personnel actions at defined levels.

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted this audit to determine whether TS fulfilled human resources services requirements in accordance with client bureau SLAs. To perform the audit, OIG reviewed eight SLAs and corresponding recruitment actions, classification actions, and available status reports for each client bureau between October 1, 2018, and June 30, 2020.

What OIG Recommends

OIG made three recommendations to GTM that are intended to improve TS's ability to fulfill human resources services requirements in accordance with SLAs. On the basis of GTM's response to a draft of this report, OIG considers two recommendations resolved, pending further action, and one recommendation implemented and closed. A synopsis of GTM's response to the recommendations offered and OIG's reply follow each recommendation in the Audit Results section of this report. GTM's response to a draft of this report is reprinted in Appendix D.

July 2021

OFFICE OF AUDITS

CONTRACTS, GRANTS, AND INFRASTRUCTURE DIVISION

Audit of the Bureau of Global Talent Management, Office of Talent Services, Fulfillment of Service-Level Agreement Requirements

What OIG Found

TS did not consistently fulfill human resources services requirements in accordance with the expectations set forth in the eight client bureau SLAs reviewed for this audit. Specifically, OIG reviewed 46 competitive hiring recruitment actions and found that 42 (91 percent) were not completed within the Office of Personnel Management-established 80-day timeframe. In addition, OIG reviewed 79 new position description classification actions and found that 37 (47 percent) did not meet the 20-business day performance goal included in SLAs. Furthermore, neither TS nor the client bureaus could locate and provide OIG with all the weekly, monthly, and quarterly case status reports required by the SLAs. These shortcomings could be attributed, at least in part, to key leadership vacancies in GTM and TS during the period of review for this audit. In addition, TS lacked an action plan to deal with the caseload surge that occurred when the Department lifted its hiring freeze in May 2018. Finally, internal staffing shortages within TS impacted its capacity to process human resources actions in accordance with SLA timeliness metrics.

Before and during this audit, TS took steps to address many of the challenges it encountered after the Department lifted its hiring freeze in May 2018. Specifically, TS began to cross-train personnel to process multiple types of hiring actions, increased the number of TS staff, and worked to reduce the recruitment case backlog. In addition, TS's processes for providing human resources services need further improvement to fulfill SLA timeliness metrics. However, 72 percent of respondents to a September 2020 OIG customer satisfaction survey indicated that they were satisfied with the services provided by TS between September 2019 and September 2020 when compared to the 3 months following the Department hiring freeze. Nevertheless, more needs to be done to consistently fulfill human resources services requirements at the levels set forth in the client bureau SLAs and to help recruit, classify, and fill mission-critical positions within the Department.