



HIGHLIGHTS

Office of Inspector General
United States Department of State

AUD-SI-21-39

(U) What OIG Audited

(U) The Department of State (Department) Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS), Office of Physical Security Programs, Defensive Equipment and Armored Vehicle Division (DEAV), directs the development of standards, policies, and procedures related to Special Protective Equipment (SPE), including body armor. The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) sets standards that define minimum performance requirements for body armor.

(U) The Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted this audit to determine whether DS's internal control processes and activities were sufficient to verify that procured body armor complied with contractual requirements and NIJ standards. This audit focused on body armor items acquired by DS during FY 2019 and FY 2020.

(U) What OIG Recommends

(U) OIG made one recommendation to address the deficiency noted with the body armor acquired by DS's Office of Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) in FY 2018. On the basis of DS's response to a draft of this report, OIG considers the recommendation resolved, pending further action. A synopsis of DS's response to the recommendation offered and OIG's reply follow the recommendation in the Audit Results section of this report. DS's response to a draft of this report is reprinted in its entirety in Appendix B.

(U) August 2021

(U) OFFICE OF AUDITS

(U) SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE DIVISION

(U) Audit of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security's Process To Verify That Purchased Protective Equipment Complied With Performance and Contractual Requirements

(U) What OIG Found

(U) DS implemented an internal control process and related activities to effectively verify that procured body armor complied with contractual requirements and NIJ standards, as applicable. Specifically, OIG found that DS implemented a sound control environment and corresponding control activities to reduce the risk of obtaining fraudulent or inadequate quality body armor. For example, DS created the Special Protective Equipment Review Board in April 2013 to develop and recommend policies, procedures, and tactics on the authorities and use of SPE. Additionally, DEAV assumed responsibility for managing body armor and gained an embedded Contracting Officer to support its body armor program in early 2019. DEAV also vetted body armor vendors in advance of purchases, implemented contract mechanisms to ensure compliance with body armor standards, and conducted additional body armor testing through various Government partners. OIG physically inspected 54 body armor items (helmets, soft armor, and hard armor) warehoused in Virginia and designated for use overseas. OIG did not identify any deficiencies; specifically, OIG confirmed that each item had a serial number, was manufactured in the United States, and had stitching, weight, and craftsmanship that appeared sufficient. However, OIG noted that ATA acquired 400 body armor items in FY 2018, prior to DEAV assuming responsibility for managing body armor, that did not have required serial numbers. Because these items did not have required serial numbers in accordance with NIJ standards, DS will need to inspect these items to determine whether they are of sufficient quality or need to be disposed of or replaced.

(U) OIG determined that the internal control process used by DEAV to manage the body armor program was effective because it followed the principles of the *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*. As a result, DEAV designed, implemented, and operated an effective system of internal control that significantly decreases the risk that fraudulent or inferior body armor could be procured and distributed among Department personnel.