



INSPECTOR GENERAL

U.S. Department of Defense



DOD OIG COVID-19 OVERSIGHT PLAN

2021 Q3 UPDATE

INTEGRITY ★ INDEPENDENCE ★ EXCELLENCE



INTRODUCTION

In 2020, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) received more than \$10.5 billion in appropriated FY 2020 funds in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus disease–2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, domestically and internationally. Since that time, the DoD has participated in the global response to ensure that life-saving assistance and supplies reach those who need it most. During a press briefing on May 6, 2021, Secretary of Defense Austin reiterated his initial message to the force, stating, “Today, the most urgent challenge that we face is COVID-19, and so the [D]epartment has stepped up to save American lives through vaccination. We’ve been a part of a whole-of-government effort to get shots into arms, and active duty and National Guard troops have administered more than 14 million total shots to the American people.”

DoD OIG COVID-19 OVERSIGHT PANDEMIC SNAP SHOT (As of June 30, 2021)

DoD Hotline Complaints to Date: 1,073
Ongoing Oversight Projects: 6
Reports Issued: 24
Best Practices Memorandums Issued: 3

The DoD Office of Inspector General (OIG) released its initial COVID-19 Pandemic Oversight Plan in May 2020, and continues to publish regular updates listing DoD OIG pandemic-related projects and published reports. Our completed oversight work indicates the DoD is focused on addressing challenges related to the pandemic. The results of our work will assist the DoD in ensuring proper stewardship of pandemic funds and measure the impact of the pandemic on DoD programs and operations. Additionally, the DoD OIG coordinates across the DoD, the Federal oversight community, and with the Pandemic Response Accountability Committee (PRAC) to ensure its oversight related to the COVID-19 pandemic is responsive to the complex environment in which the DoD operates. These efforts are reflected in the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency “Top Management and Performance Challenges Facing Multiple Federal Agencies” and the PRAC’s “UPDATE: Top Challenges in Pandemic Relief and Response,” both released in February 2021. View the reports here:

<https://www.pandemicoversight.gov/news/articles/prac-and-cigie-release-reports-top-challenges-federal-agencies>.

The DoD OIG encourages individuals to use its DoD Hotline to report concerns or complaints related to the DoD’s pandemic-related supplemental funding. The DoD Hotline provides a confidential, reliable means to report fraud, waste, abuse, and other violations of law that involve DoD personnel or operations, without fear of reprisal. Through June 30, 2021, the DoD Hotline had received 1,073 complaints related to the DoD response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Social distancing continues to be the most frequently reported issue.

The Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), the criminal investigative component of the DoD OIG, has initiated investigative projects nationwide to identify fraud in DoD acquisition and health care programs related to the DoD’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These investigative projects

use a variety of tools and techniques to identify fraud, including data mining and analysis. DCIS has assigned investigative resources to participate at the national and regional levels in COVID-19 pandemic task forces and working groups to identify potential criminal schemes affecting the DoD. DCIS works collaboratively with the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the DoD to detect, deter, and disrupt these schemes while seeking the full range of remedies, including criminal prosecution, civil remedies, and, when appropriate, suspension and debarment from Government contracting.

ONGOING OVERSIGHT PROJECTS

Evaluation of Combatant Commands' Communication Challenges With Foreign Nation Partners During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Mitigation Efforts

This evaluation determines how U.S. Africa Command, U.S. Central Command, U.S. European Command, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. Southern Command, and their component commands mitigate communication problems with partner nations during the COVID-19 pandemic, document those mitigation strategies, and consider whether those strategies should be employed in future operations where personal interaction is not possible.

<https://media.defense.gov/2021/Jun/07/2002736596/-1/-1/1/D2021-DEV0PD-0132.000.PDF>

Evaluation of DoD Contracting Officer Actions on Terminated Contract Costs

This evaluation determines the extent to which DoD contracting officers complied with the Federal Acquisition Regulation, DoD policy, and Agency policy when they negotiated the costs on terminated DoD contracts, including those contracts that may have been terminated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

https://media.defense.gov/2021/Apr/13/2002619566/-1/-1/1/D2021-DEV0SO-0113.000_REDACTED.PDF

Audit of DoD Implementation of the DoD Coronavirus Disease–2019 Vaccine Distribution Plan

This audit determines whether DoD officials effectively distributed and administered COVID-19 vaccines to the DoD's workforce in accordance with DoD guidance.

<https://media.defense.gov/2021/Mar/03/2002592442/-1/-1/1/D2021-D000AH-0098.000.PDF>

Audit of the Reliability of the DoD Coronavirus Disease–2019 Patient Health Data

This audit determines the extent to which the DoD can rely on its COVID-19 patient health data to make public health and clinical care decisions.

<https://media.defense.gov/2021/Mar/03/2002592443/-1/-1/1/D2021-D000CT-0096.000.PDF>

Audit of DoD Education Activity Controls Related to the Spread of Coronavirus Disease–2019

This audit determines whether the DoD Education Activity developed and implemented controls in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and DoD guidance concerning the spread of COVID-19.

<https://media.defense.gov/2020/Oct/27/2002524206/-1/-1/1/D2021-D000RM-0021.000.PDF>

Audit of Entitlements and Allowances for Mobilized Reserve Service Members

This audit determines whether the DoD Reserve Components mobilization process ensures that entitlements and allowances are accurately identified and processed prior to Service members' deployment.

<https://media.defense.gov/2020/May/06/2002295156/-1/-1/1/D2020-D000RG-0116.00.PDF>

REPORTS ISSUED

Audit of the Reimbursement for Department of Defense Mission Assignments for Coronavirus Disease–2019 Pandemic Response in the U.S. Northern Command Area of Responsibility (DODIG-2021-091)

This audit determined that DoD tasked-unit personnel did not submit timely reimbursement requests because DoD Component comptroller officials provided incorrect reimbursement guidance to tasked units. Additionally, DoD-tasked unit personnel lacked training and experience in capturing mission assignment costs and providing required documentation to FEMA for reimbursement of those costs. As a result of untimely reimbursement requests, the DoD was not able to use \$221.6 million as intended in the DoD appropriations. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

<https://media.defense.gov/2021/Jun/11/2002739792/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2021-091.PDF>

Audit of the DoD Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act Awards to the Defense Industrial Base (DODIG-2021-081)

This audit determined that the DoD appropriately awarded more than \$200 million of CARES Act funding to sustain or increase the Defense Industrial Base in accordance with Federal regulations and DPA authorities for the six awards we reviewed. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

<https://media.defense.gov/2021/May/24/2002724461/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2021-081.PDF>

Audit of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Use of Unfinalized Contract Actions for the Conversion of Alternate Care Sites in Response to the Coronavirus Disease–2019 Pandemic (DODIG-2021-074)

This audit determined that U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) contracting officers were not operating in a normal contracting environment because of the urgent nature of COVID-19 pandemic response. Therefore, USACE contracting officers exercised the flexibility permitted under the CARES Act and awarded 30 unfinalized contract actions (UCAs) funded up to 100 percent of the not-to-exceed amount to start the conversion of facilities to alternate care sites (ACS) as quickly as possible. USACE contracting officers shortened the amount of time required to complete ACS conversion by awarding the contract actions as UCAs because contractors could begin conversion immediately and subsequently negotiate contract costs. However, USACE contracting officers only finalized 2 UCAs, valued at \$9,524,754, of the 30 total UCAs within the finalization schedules included in the contract actions. For the other 28 UCAs, with a not-to-exceed amount of \$474,356,919 at the time of award, USACE contracting officers finalized the award from 1 to 26 days after the finalization dates they established in the contract actions. According to USACE officials, the delays in finalization were out of USACE contracting officials' control. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

<https://media.defense.gov/2021/Apr/09/2002617432/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2021-074.PDF>

Audit of Public Health Emergency Readiness at Military Installations (DODIG-2021-070)

This audit determined that commanders at eight installations reviewed implemented measures to prepare for public health emergencies and respond to and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of the measures that commanders implemented, installation personnel protected lives and sustained mission-critical operations. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

<https://media.defense.gov/2021/Apr/02/2002613240/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2021-070.PDF>

Audit of the Impact of Coronavirus Disease–2019 on Basic Training (DODIG-2021-069)

This audit determined that despite the challenges of the global pandemic, the DoD and Military Services established procedures to prevent and reduce the spread of COVID 19. However, the audit also determined that the Military Services did not fully implement the procedures at six basic training centers. As a result, the potential for positive COVID 19 cases among recruits and training personnel may increase and could impact the life and safety of military personnel and their families, as well as the DoD’s ability to accomplish its mission. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

<https://media.defense.gov/2021/Apr/02/2002613239/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2021-069.PDF>

Evaluation of the U.S. Southern Command Response to Coronavirus Disease–2019 (DODIG-2021-068)

This evaluation determined the extent to which the U.S. Southern Command responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. The report is classified. To file a Freedom of Information Act Request, please visit: <https://www.dodig.mil/FOIA/Submit-FOIA/>

Evaluation of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Response to Coronavirus Disease–2019 (DODIG-2021-067)

This evaluation determined the extent to which the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. The report is classified. To file a Freedom of Information Act Request, please visit: <https://www.dodig.mil/FOIA/Submit-FOIA/>

Evaluation of the U.S. Central Command Response to Coronavirus Disease–2019 (DODIG-2021-058)

This evaluation determined the extent to which the U.S. Central Command responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. The report is classified. To file a Freedom of Information Act Request, please visit: <https://www.dodig.mil/FOIA/Submit-FOIA/>

Evaluation of the U.S. European Command’s Response to Coronavirus Disease–2019 (DODIG-2021-002)

This evaluation determined the extent to which the U.S. European Command responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. The report is classified. To file a Freedom of Information Act Request, please visit: <https://www.dodig.mil/FOIA/Submit-FOIA/>

Evaluation of the U.S. Africa Command’s Response to Coronavirus Disease–2019 (DODIG-2020-132)

This evaluation determined the extent to which the U.S. Africa Command responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. The report is classified. To file a Freedom of Information Act Request, please visit: <https://www.dodig.mil/FOIA/Submit-FOIA/>

Evaluation of Access to Department of Defense Information Technology and Communications During the Coronavirus Disease–2019 Pandemic (DODIG-2021-065)

This evaluation determined that the DoD took the necessary action to address the initial challenges personnel faced when transitioning maximum telework. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, DoD personnel reported problems accessing DoD Component networks, voice and video teleconference applications, and shortfalls in Government-furnished equipment. The DoD’s initial challenges occurred because some DoD Components had not fully tested whether their information systems could support Government-wide mandated telework and had not conducted telework exercises with their personnel before March 2020, as required by the DoD Implementation Plan and the DoD Telework Policy. Therefore, some DoD Components were unprepared for the network and communications limitations, as well as equipment and application shortfalls, uncovered by the transition to maximum telework. However, these problems lessened over time as the DoD increased its network availability and capacity, added voice and video conferencing applications, and purchased and distributed computer and communications equipment. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

<https://media.defense.gov/2021/Apr/01/2002612366/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2021-065.PDF>

Audit of Maintaining Cybersecurity in the Coronavirus Disease–2019 Telework Environment (DODIG-2021-064)

This audit determined that the DoD Components that were assessed did not consistently implement required cybersecurity controls to protect DoD networks during maximum telework. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

<https://media.defense.gov/2021/Mar/31/2002611501/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2021-064.PDF>

Evaluation of the Armed Forces Retirement Home Response to the Coronavirus Disease–2019 Pandemic (DODIG-2021-055)

This evaluation determined that Armed Forces Retirement Home officials generally complied with CDC guidance for protecting residents, staff, and healthcare personnel from COVID-19 exposure. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

https://media.defense.gov/2021/Feb/18/2002584285/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2021-055_REDACTED.PDF

Audit of Contracts for DoD Information Technology Products and Services Procured by DoD Components in Response to the Coronavirus Disease–2019 Pandemic (DODIG-2021-050)

This audit determined that the Army, Navy, Air Force, Defense Health Agency, and Defense Information Systems Agency procured information technology products and services in accordance with the CARES Act and other Federal and DoD requirements. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

<https://media.defense.gov/2021/Feb/17/2002583537/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2021-050.PDF>

Audit of Dual Status Commanders for Use in Defense Support of Civil Authorities Missions in Support of the Coronavirus Disease–2019 Pandemic (DODIG-2021-048)

This audit determined that DoD Components managed and coordinated the nomination, certification, and appointment of Dual Status Commanders (DSCs) in support of COVID-19 pandemic relief efforts in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Specifically, all appointed DSCs met eligibility and qualification requirements, required DSC appointment documents were complete, and DSCs were appointed, on average, within 2 days of receipt of the governor’s state and territory appointment memorandums. In addition, the 14 states that did not have appointed DSCs to coordinate COVID-19 pandemic response efforts had eligible and qualified officers assigned to their National Guards that could serve as a DSC in the event one was required. Furthermore, we identified three best practices that state or territory National Guards can apply to improve their responsiveness and ability to employ DSCs to support DSCA missions. Specifically, National Guards from each state or territory should consider maintaining more than one qualified and trained DSC, identifying a primary and successor DSC in state and territory appointment memorandums, and updating the NGB registry of DSCs on a regular basis. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

<https://media.defense.gov/2021/Feb/09/2002578680/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2021-048.PDF>

Evaluation of the Navy’s Plans and Response to the Coronavirus Disease–2019 Onboard Navy Warships and Submarines (DODIG-2021-049)

This evaluation determined that the DoD and the Navy had policies, plans, and procedures to mitigate the spread of pandemic influenza and infectious disease. Additionally, the Navy issued additional policies, plans, and procedures, and collected and disseminated lessons learned to specifically prevent and mitigate, or combat, the COVID-19 pandemic. These lessons learned can assist in updating existing policies. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

https://media.defense.gov/2021/Feb/08/2002577798/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2021-049_REDACTED.PDF

Audit of Contracts for Equipment and Supplies in Support of the Coronavirus Disease–2019 Pandemic (DODIG-2021-045)

This audit determined that the DoD paid fair and reasonable prices on 19 of 23 contracts for the eight items reviewed: four items categorized as laboratory equipment and medical supplies, and four items categorized as personal protective equipment. Laboratory equipment and medical

supplies included reagents, viral transport tubes, thermometers, and hand sanitizer. Personal protective equipment included nitrile gloves, gowns, coveralls, and N95 masks. In addition, contracting personnel evaluated price reasonableness and determined that prices for all 23 contracts were fair and reasonable in accordance with DoD and Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) guidance. However, using commercially available and historical pricing, the DoD OIG identified four contracts for which the DoD did not pay fair and reasonable prices. This occurred because the COVID 19 pandemic caused an increase in demand for medical supplies that were not always available for purchase at the time contracting personnel made their determinations. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

<https://media.defense.gov/2021/Jan/21/2002567755/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2021-045.PDF>

Evaluation of Defense Logistics Agency Oversight of Contracts for Ventilators in Response to the Coronavirus Disease–2019 (DODIG-2021-042)

This evaluation determined that the Defense Logistics Agency took proactive measures to acquire ventilators by contacting six vendors already on contract in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Defense Logistics Agency initiated the acquisition of ventilators before receiving customer requests, due to projected national shortages. As a result, the Defense Logistics Agency's actions reduced delivery delays which could have resulted from a high demand for ventilators in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

https://media.defense.gov/2020/Dec/29/2002558017/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2021-042_REDACTED.PDF

Audit of Infectious Disease Medical Treatment Capabilities at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar (DODIG-2021-040)

This audit determined that the 379th Expeditionary Medical Group had the capabilities to treat patients infected with COVID 19 and isolate or quarantine suspected infected Service members, civilians, and contractors. The 379th EMDG developed response plans, established procedures to screen Al Udeid Air Base personnel attempting to enter medical treatment facilities, and initiated COVID 19 testing. Additionally, the 379th Expeditionary Medical Group increased its on hand inventory of personal protective equipment and acquired COVID 19 testing kits to detect infected Service members, civilians, and contractors. As a result, the 379th Expeditionary Medical Group was able to quickly identify COVID 19 patients, expedite restriction of movement measures, and conduct contact tracing to prevent the spread of the virus throughout Al Udeid Air Base. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

<https://media.defense.gov/2020/Dec/23/2002556738/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2021-040.PDF>

Audit of the Disinfection of Department of Defense Facilities in Response to the COVID-19 (DODIG-2021-036)

This audit determined that for the 21 cases at eight DoD installations we reviewed from April 1, 2020, through June 30, 2020, DoD and contractor personnel disinfected areas occupied by individuals who tested positive for COVID 19 in accordance with CDC guidance. As a result, DoD personnel reduced the risk of exposure to COVID 19 and protected DoD personnel from the spread of COVID 19 in DoD workspaces. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

<https://media.defense.gov/2020/Dec/22/2002556075/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2021-036.PDF>

Audit of Department of Defense Implementation of Section 3610 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (DODIG-2021-030)

This audit determined that DoD contracting officers complied with the Office of Management and Budget and DoD guidance to support rational decisions that were in the best interest of the Government when approving requests related to section 3610 of the CARES Act. Section 3610 of the Act authorized agencies to reimburse contractors for any paid leave, including sick leave, they provide to keep their employees or subcontractor employees in a “ready state.” This authorization includes protecting the life and safety of Government and contractor personnel. However, the DoD faced some challenges implementing section 3610 that extended beyond the audit sample, such as contracting officers having to rely on the contractor’s self-certification of the use of other COVID-19 relief measures, tracking and identifying section 3610 in DoD contracts, and the lack of a specific appropriation for section 3610. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

<https://media.defense.gov/2020/Dec/11/2002550337/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2021-030.PDF>

Evaluation of Department of Defense Medical Treatment Facility Challenges During the Coronavirus Disease–2019 Pandemic (DODIG-2020-133)

This evaluation summarized the COVID-19-related challenges Medical Treatment Facilities had with personnel, supplies, testing capabilities, information technology, guidance, and lines of authority. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

https://media.defense.gov/2020/Oct/02/2002510008/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2020-133_REDACTED.PDF

Audit of Screening and Quarantine Procedures for Personnel Entering Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar (DODIG-2020-128)

This audit determined that the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing Security and Support Squadrons developed screening and quarantine procedures for personnel entering Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar, in accordance with applicable guidance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The squadrons implemented most procedures; however, improvements are needed. If screening procedures are not consistently applied to all personnel entering AUAB, there is a risk that U.S. military, civilian, and contractor personnel may contract and spread COVID-19. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

<https://media.defense.gov/2020/Sep/28/2002506514/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2020-128%20REDACTED.PDF>

Special Report: Controls Implemented by the Defense Health Agency to Control Costs for TRICARE Coronavirus Disease–2019 Pandemic Related Services (DODIG-2020-125)

This special report determined that Defense Health Agency (DHA) managed care support contractors planned and took actions to control health care claims payments related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The DHA managed care support contractors also implemented initiatives to identify potential fraud schemes related to COVID-19-related services and maintained open communication lines. These efforts enabled consistent efforts among all stakeholders to ensure TRICARE beneficiaries and providers received the same information on DHA policies and procedures for health care and claims processing. Through these actions, the DHA reduced the risk of providers exploiting the pandemic for personal gain and potentially prevented improper payments. In addition, these actions provided greater flexibility for providers and beneficiaries, which helped beneficiaries receive the care they needed. The full report and recommendations can be found at:

<https://media.defense.gov/2020/Sep/08/2002492289/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2020-125.PDF>

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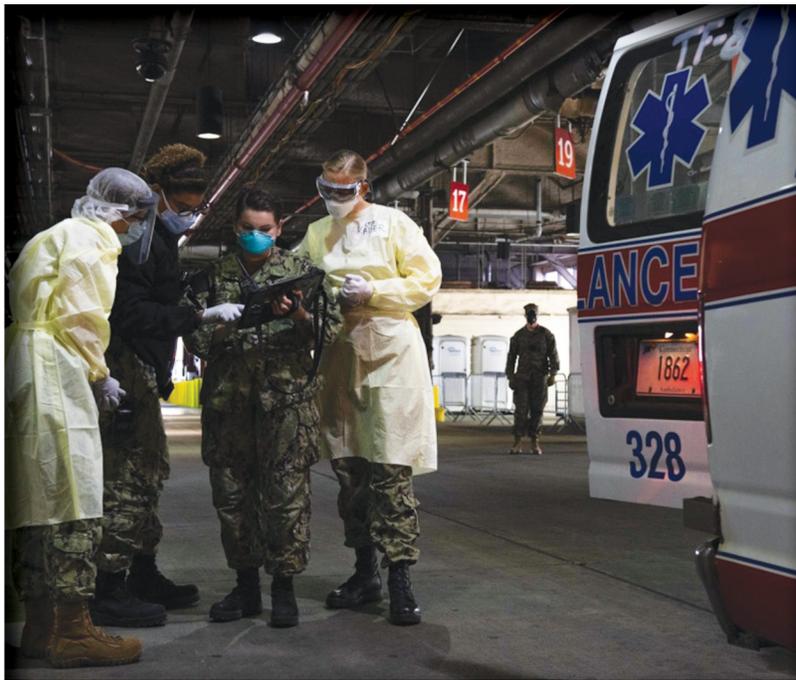
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