

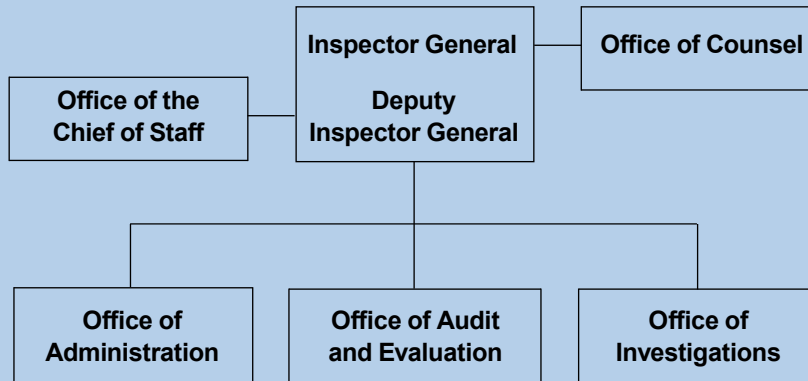


U.S. Department of Commerce
Office of Inspector General

Semiannual Report to Congress

September 2025

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL



Oversight Areas

Office of the Secretary
Bureau of Economic Analysis
Bureau of Industry and Security
U.S. Census Bureau
U.S. Economic Development Administration
Economics and Statistics Administration
First Responder Network Authority
International Trade Administration
Minority Business Development Agency
National Institute of Standards and Technology
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Technical Information Service
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
United States Patent and Trademark Office

OIG Main Number

Inspector General 202-793-3331

OIG Hotline

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More Information

Visit www.oig.doc.gov to learn more about our activities. We are also on LinkedIn and X through our social media handle @CommerceOIG. Email website comments to oigweb@oig.doc.gov.

Cover photo

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FROM THE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

I am pleased to present the U.S. Department of Commerce Office of Inspector General's (OIG's) Semiannual Report to Congress. This report summarizes oversight work that we completed during the 6-month period ending September 30, 2025, on important Department programs and operations.

OIG issued 12 investigative reports and 15 audit and evaluation reports. We've summarized significant projects in the Completed Works section of this report, grouped under the top three challenge areas the Department faces: modernizing technology and systems, providing core services and data, and managing spending.

OIG prioritizes establishing and maintaining collaborative, productive working relationships with Department and bureau leadership. Over the last year, OIG's leadership has met with and maintained open communications with the Department's Deputy Secretary and General Counsel and leaders from various bureaus. We've also conducted meet-and-greets on the arrival of new bureau leadership or a new Acting Inspector General.

We also recognize the importance of keeping Congress informed of our work. In this reporting period, we held over 30 briefings and meetings with congressional staff across eight House and Senate committees. We presented the results of our oversight work, discussed our office's management and operations, and underscored OIG's net return to the government and taxpayers. We provided briefings on our completed and ongoing work, including First Responder Network Authority's management of the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network, the status of CHIPS Act programs, strategic planning for the Public Wireless Supply Chain Innovation Fund, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's efforts to replace its aging "hurricane hunter" aircraft, and our completed investigative work, among other areas.

We are steadfast in our mission to provide independent and objective oversight of the Department and its programs. The work highlighted in this report reflects the high value we place on that mission. I thank Secretary Lutnick, senior officials throughout the

Highlights for This Period



\$25,915,786
Recoveries and Potential Savings

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Department, and members of Congress and their staffs for supporting our work and sharing our commitment to improve departmental programs and operations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Duane E. Townsend", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Duane E. Townsend
Performing the Duties of Inspector General

COMPLETED WORKS

Our completed works section is divided into four subsections. Three of these broadly reflect the Department's most serious management and performance challenges in fiscal year (FY) 2025: (1) modernizing technology and systems, (2) providing core services and data, and (3) managing spending.¹ The fourth section lists our other significant reports. For information on our ongoing work, please visit the [Audits Initiated page](#) on our website.



Modernizing Technology and Systems

Strengthening IT security posture and modernizing IT systems and operations.



Providing Core Services and Data

Providing essential information to stakeholders on such varied subjects as trade, weather and environment, intellectual property, and population data.



Managing Spending

Funding and managing major programs while protecting funds from risk, fraud, and waste.

¹ For more details on these challenge areas, please see [Top Management and Performance Challenges Facing the Department of Commerce in FY 2025](#). U.S. Department of Commerce. October 16, 2024.

Modernizing Technology and Systems

The Department and its bureaus need up-to-date technology, systems, and equipment to safeguard data and provide valuable services. This is particularly important as the Department continues to implement critical programs intended to ensure American innovation, progress, and prosperity. The following reports discuss our work in this area.

Audit of USPTO's Governance of Its Artificial Intelligence Tools (OIG-25-018-A)

To deliver reliable intellectual property rights, the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) is leveraging emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) that may enhance the quality of patent and trademark examinations and improve efficiency in its operations. However, these tools come with inherent risks that USPTO must manage to ensure accountability and responsible use.

Our audit objective was to determine whether USPTO had an effective governance structure and processes in place to manage its AI tools. To meet our objective, we tested two of the six AI tools USPTO had in use when we began our audit. Overall, we found that USPTO has begun developing its AI workforce but should strengthen key organizational and system-level governance practices needed to effectively manage and oversee its AI tools.

We made five recommendations to help USPTO govern its current and future AI tools. Once implemented, these recommendations will help further its mission of driving U.S. innovation and global competitiveness through the efficient delivery of reliable intellectual property rights.

Evaluation of the Bureau of Industry and Security's Cyber Incident Detection and Response (OIG-25-022-I)

Cyberattacks frequently compromise government and business networks. After attackers gain access to a network, they often bypass traditional security measures, leveraging trusted access to compromise sensitive data and systems. Therefore, defending against threats inside the network, such as insider threats, is as crucial as securing its perimeter.

The Bureau of Industry and Security's (BIS's) oversight of export controls helps restrict the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means of delivering them. This makes BIS and the Department attractive targets for sophisticated state-sponsored adversaries.

Our evaluation objective was to assess the adequacy of actions taken by BIS when detecting and responding to cyber incidents in accordance with federal and departmental requirements. We found that BIS could not effectively detect and respond to our simulated malicious activities and that it mishandled privileged credentials. If BIS does not improve

its current capabilities, advanced adversaries could significantly harm sensitive U.S. export control efforts, which in turn affects national security.

We made 13 recommendations to BIS to increase network protection, proactively seek and mitigate threats, establish procedures to respond to incidents, restrict network and user access, and improve the security of network credentials. BIS concurred with our recommendations and is working to implement them.

[Audit of Grants Enterprise Management System Program Implementation \(OIG-25-025-A\)](#)

The Grants Enterprise Management System (GEMS) project was established in 2020 to replace legacy grants management systems used by the Department's seven grantmaking bureaus with a modern, enterprise-wide solution. However, the transition to GEMS has been delayed, leading some bureaus to contract for separate grants management solutions. These alternative solutions have increased costs for grants management systems to more than four times higher than planned.

Our objective was to assess the Department's management and implementation of the GEMS project. We found that inadequate coordination and ineffective planning early in the project significantly affected the Department's ability to deliver an enterprise-wide grants management solution as intended. In procuring multiple grants management systems, bureaus did not follow information technology (IT) investment review and governance processes. We also found that the GEMS project should better manage requirements, cost, and schedule and that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) transition to GEMS provided lessons for future transitions.

We made 10 recommendations to the Department to reconcile the extent to which GEMS can meet the bureaus' grants management requirements, consolidate those functions in GEMS where possible, improve IT investment controls, train personnel on IT investment policy and procedures, assess the GEMS project's workforce needs, and incorporate lessons learned from NOAA's GEMS implementation. The Department concurred with our recommendations and is working to implement them.

[Department Contractor Agrees to Pay \\$9.8 Million for Violating False Claims Act](#)

On September 19, 2025, OIG closed an investigation into allegations that a Department contractor made false statements to regulators and government customers when it knowingly failed to identify, mitigate, and correct material cybersecurity failures in genomic sequencing systems it sold to federal agencies. The contractor entered into a civil settlement agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) in which it agreed to pay the U.S. government \$9.8 million to resolve allegations that it violated the False Claims Act.

Providing Core Services and Data

The Department manages a great variety of services that are essential to the nation and the world. Our trade with other countries, our inventions and creations, our weather data and environmental observations, our population and demographic data—all of these rely on the Department and its bureaus. The following reports discuss our work in this area.

[Audit of Office of Marine and Aviation Operations Aircraft Program \(OIG-25-023-A\)](#)

NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO) operates NOAA's fleet of specialized environmental data-collecting aircraft, including three "hurricane hunter" aircraft: one Gulfstream-IV-SP (G-IV) that is 29 years old and flies high-altitude storm surveillance missions and two Lockheed WP-3D aircraft that are 48 and 49 years old and fly directly into tropical cyclones (low-altitude storm reconnaissance). The G-IV has exceeded its original estimated service life, and the WP-3Ds will reach the end of their estimated service lives in 2030.

NOAA has initiated replacement efforts for its aging hurricane hunter aircraft and Congress has appropriated funds for replacement aircraft. NOAA will replace the G-IV with two modified Gulfstream 550s and will replace the WP-3Ds with Lockheed C-130Js. The objective of our audit was to assess NOAA's progress replacing its hurricane hunter aircraft.

We found that (1) hurricane hunter replacement programs started late, delayed definition of requirements, and did not identify and manage key risks; (2) hurricane hunter replacement programs need more effective management and executive oversight; and (3) technically complex acquisition and development programs require mature systems engineering practices.

We made seven recommendations to help NOAA apply effective program management and oversight to these major acquisitions.

[Minority Business Development Center and Leadership Agree to Pay \\$30,000 for Submitting Fraudulent Information](#)

On June 20, 2025, OIG closed an investigation into allegations that a business development center that received a grant from the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) misrepresented program numbers and outcomes in performance progress reports. The investigation substantiated that two individuals in leadership positions conspired to submit (1) fraudulent information for the center to obtain a \$650,000 MBDA grant and (2) fraudulent reports to obtain a 1-year extension of that grant. MBDA terminated the center's grant award, resulting in cost savings of \$410,000. On April 1,

2025, the center and the two individuals entered into a civil settlement agreement with DOJ in which they agreed to pay \$30,000 in restitution to MBDA.

Evaluation of NOAA's NWS Tornado Forecasting and Warning Performance (OIG-25-026-I)

We contracted with the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA), an independent firm, to perform this evaluation. Our objective was to assess National Weather Service (NWS) tornado forecasting and warning performance and identify potential opportunities for enhanced effectiveness.

The goal of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 was to improve NOAA's weather forecasts and predictions of high-impact weather events, including tornadoes. Section 103 of the act mandated the creation of a Tornado Warning Improvement and Extension Program. The IDA evaluation measured NOAA's progress toward meeting the program's goal to "reduce the loss of life and economic losses from tornadoes through the development and extension of accurate, effective, and timely forecasts, predictions, and warnings, including the prediction of tornadoes beyond one hour in advance."

We made six recommendations to improve NOAA's plan for achieving the program goal defined in the act.

Grantee Loses Funding for Misrepresenting Grant Performance Metrics

On August 18, 2025, OIG closed an investigation into allegations that an MBDA grantee submitted inaccurate performance data to the Department in connection with a federally funded cooperative agreement. OIG's investigation substantiated that the organization misrepresented key performance metrics, overstated the value of contracts and loans obtained by clients, inaccurately reported job creation and retention figures, and claimed credit for outcomes that occurred prior to the grant. The DOJ declined the case for civil remedies, and OIG subsequently referred it to the Department for administrative remedies. As a result, funding for the grantee was cancelled for unsatisfactory performance.

Audit of USPTO's Quality Reviews of Continuing Patent Applications (OIG-25-029-A)

USPTO issues patents based on its examination of applications for compliance with Patent Act statutes and relevant case law.

USPTO's Office of Patent and Quality Assurance (OPQA) performs independent quality reviews of examiner office actions to ensure decisions to either allow or reject a patent claim comply with all legal requirements. OPQA's reviews are used to generate and report USPTO's statutory compliance measures for quality. Our objective was to determine the effectiveness of quality reviews of continuing patent applications completed in FYs 2021–2023.

We found that USPTO needs to strengthen its quality review program to be more effective at improving patent quality. Specifically, (1) USPTO did not consistently use the results of OPQA reviews to improve the quality of continuing application examination, (2) OPQA did not ensure quality assessments were performed on compliant quality review findings, and (3) USPTO did not report certain patent examination quality errors in its annual performance reports.

We made six recommendations to help ensure consistent review processes and effective internal controls, as well as accurate reporting of patent examination quality performance measures to Congress and other stakeholders.

Audit of the Census Bureau's Progress in Meeting Workforce Hiring Goals for the 2026 Census Test (OIG-25-030-A)

The U.S. Census Bureau's planning for the 2030 census includes multiple phases. As part of the development and integration phase, the bureau will conduct its first census test in 2026, which is a trial run of activities and operations to help prepare for the decennial census.

Conducting a census test requires recruiting and hiring temporary employees, such as enumerators, census field supervisors, outreach assistants, and census trainers. For the 2026 Census Test, the bureau's Field Division planned a more thorough approach to preparing the staffing estimates than had been done in the past. According to Field Division management, it decided to develop a more detailed staffing plan because of proposed scope changes to field infrastructure and hiring that require robust staffing estimates.

Our audit objective was to assess the bureau's staffing plans and progress in meeting workforce hiring goals for the 2026 Census Test. We found that the bureau did not finalize its staffing plan for the census test. The bureau expected to finalize and approve the staffing plan and cost model by January 31, 2025, but did not because (1) data needed to prepare the plan was received later than expected or had not yet been provided and (2) the bureau did not have a procedure that documents staffing plan requirements and methodology to ensure workforce planning is done in a consistent and timely manner and according to management's expectations.

We made four recommendations to help the bureau improve its workforce planning and field staffing operations for the 2026 Census Test.

Managing Spending

In recent years, the Department has been at the forefront of efforts to strengthen the American economy and global competitiveness. This has led to many new programs and initiatives for the Department to manage. As the Department's funding for these programs and initiatives has grown, so has its ongoing challenge of ensuring the proper oversight and management of contracts, grants, and financial assistance awards. The Department must manage many high-dollar award programs and procurements while ensuring that it spends taxpayer dollars prudently and safeguards programs from fraud, waste, and abuse. The following reports discuss our work in this area.

Audit of the Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture's Costs Claimed Through CARES Act and CAA Funds (OIG-25-016-A)

We audited the Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture's (PR DOA's) use of Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act of 2020 (CARES Act) and Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA) of 2021 funds. Our audit objective was to determine whether PR DOA's costs claimed through the CARES Act and CAA funds were allowable, allocable, and reasonable in accordance with federal cost principles. We conducted this audit as part of a response to a congressional request.

We found that PR DOA claimed costs that were generally allowable, allocable, and reasonable but did not expend all CAA funds. As of October 2024, PR DOA had expended approximately 63 percent of the total CARES Act and CAA funds. Although PR DOA had expended almost all of the CARES Act funds, it had expended only 51 percent of the CAA funds.

Based on the results of our review and the similar finding and recommendation in our January 22, 2025, report on [expending fishery disaster assistance funds](#), we did not make any recommendations in this report. We recommended in the prior report that NOAA document all project monitoring activities in the official award files in accordance with the *Department of Commerce Grants and Cooperative Agreements Manual*.

Evaluation of NTIA's Implementation of the Public Wireless Supply Chain Innovation Fund (OIG-25-017-I)

The Public Wireless Supply Chain Innovation Fund aims to support the United States' leading position in the telecommunications ecosystem. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) awards Innovation Fund grants.

Congress appropriated \$1.5 billion for the fund on August 9, 2022, and NTIA was required to begin issuing grants within a year of receiving this funding. Despite the tight timeline, NTIA issued three grants in August 2023. As of February 25, 2025, NTIA has issued 35 grants, totaling over \$550 million.

Our evaluation objective was to assess NTIA's implementation of the program. We found that although NTIA has taken steps to mitigate some of the challenges it faced while implementing the program, it would benefit from developing a comprehensive strategic plan. NTIA did not have a sufficient strategy for anticipating emerging industry challenges, had not fully developed program goals and strategic objectives that align with the program's statutory objectives, and did not develop a comprehensive staffing plan before it began awarding grants.

We made six recommendations to develop and implement a comprehensive strategic plan to help measure the program's performance and mitigate future challenges.

[Audit of CARES Act Grants Recipients Through EDA's Revolving Loan Fund Program \(OIG-25-019-A\)](#)

In March 2020, the President declared the COVID-19 pandemic a national emergency and signed into law the CARES Act to respond to the pandemic. The U.S. Economic Development Administration's (EDA's) role in disaster recovery is to facilitate the timely and effective delivery of federal economic development assistance. EDA provides investments through its Economic Adjustment Assistance program to support a wide range of activities, including revolving loan funds (RLFs).

Through the RLF program, EDA provides grants to eligible recipients (also referred to as "RLF operators") to operate a lending program that offers low-interest loans primarily to small businesses in the geographic areas that these organizations support that cannot get traditional financing (for example, from banks). By the end of September 2023, RLF operators used these awards to issue 5,484 loans, totaling approximately \$595 million in CARES Act RLF funding.

Our objective was to determine whether costs claimed by CARES Act RLF grant recipients were allowable, allocable, and reasonable. Specifically, we determined whether (1) RLF recipients of CARES Act awards ensured that funds were loaned to eligible borrowers and (2) borrowers used the RLF loans for the intended purpose.

Overall, we found that loan costs claimed by the RLF operators were not allowable, allocable, and reasonable. Specifically, we found that the four operators awarded 11 of the 19 loans (58 percent), totaling \$4,020,050, to ineligible borrowers that did not meet the eligibility criteria in the operators' respective RLF operational plan, and borrowers did not use the RLF funds for the purpose intended by the CARES Act. As a result, we questioned \$4,020,050 in loan funds. In addition, we found RLF operators with 20 percent or more loans that were delinquent, in default, or written off, and EDA did not identify this as an area of concern. We made four recommendations aimed at improving oversight of RLF loans.

Former NOAA Grant Recipient Agrees to Return \$185,217 in Overpaid Funds

On May 1, 2025, OIG closed an investigation alleging CARES Act fraud. A company filed two applications for financial assistance based on its total loss of income during COVID-19. OIG's investigation determined that although the owners did not file a false claim and the allegation of fraud was unsubstantiated, the owners were overpaid. They voluntarily agreed to return the \$185,217 overpayment, and the investigation was closed without further action.

Evaluation of the Department's Fiscal Year 2024 Compliance With Payment Integrity Information Act Requirements (OIG-25-020-I)

We conducted this review to determine whether the Department complied with the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019 (PIIA), which is intended to improve efforts to identify and reduce government-wide improper payments. Broadly defined, improper payments are those the federal government has made in an incorrect amount or to the wrong recipient. Improper payments can negatively impact the public's trust in the government and distract from the benefits of federal programs.

Our objective was to determine the Department's compliance with PIIA for FY 2024. We also assessed the Department's efforts related to preventing and reducing improper payments and unknown payments. We concluded that the Department complied with PIIA's criteria in FY 2024, and we did not identify any further actions the Department needed to take to improve its prevention and reduction measures.

CARES Act Funds Recipient Agrees to Pay More Than \$90,000 for Misrepresenting Revenue

On August 27, 2025, OIG closed an investigation into allegations that a company submitted false information to NOAA for federal fisheries assistance under the CARES Act. The recipient stated that it suffered revenue loss in 2020 when its actual revenue was 4 percent more than the previous 5-year period. As a result of the alleged misrepresentation, NOAA paid the recipient more CARES Act funds than it was entitled to receive. On December 20, 2024, the recipient agreed to pay the United States \$90,559 to settle claims related to the falsely reported revenue.

Contractor Agrees to Pay NOAA More Than \$841,000 for Submitting Inaccurate Pricing Data

On September 11, 2025, OIG closed an investigation identifying defective pricing indicators in a NOAA contract. The investigation revealed evidence indicating the contractor submitted certified pricing data that was not current, accurate, or complete and contained significant discrepancies within the proposed labor and subcontractor costs. In May 2025,

the contractor signed a settlement agreement to return \$841,408.05 to NOAA, hire compliance staff, and implement changes to its training, policies, and procedures.

Reviews of Single Audits

Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (“Uniform Guidance”) (2 C.F.R., Part 200, Subpart F) currently requires nonfederal entities that expend \$1,000,000 or more per year in federal awards to obtain an annual independent financial audit, referred to as a “single audit” (2 C.F.R. § 200.501).² We conducted desk reviews on a judgmental sample of single audit reporting packages for which the Department is the cognizant or oversight agency. The objectives of the desk reviews included identifying quality issues that may warrant follow-up work, revisions to the reporting package, or appropriate management official attention. During the desk reviews, we examined the audit reporting packages, which included financial statements, federal award expenditures, and auditors’ reports, but not the auditors’ underlying documentation. We then determined whether the audit met Uniform Guidance, generally accepted government auditing standards (GAGAS), and American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) audit standards.

During this period, we conducted desk reviews of 43 single audit reporting packages. The audits covered approximately \$647 million in total federal expenditures, including \$385 million in the Department’s expenditures. We found that 23 of the 43 audit reporting packages (about 53 percent) fully met federal reporting requirements, whereas the remaining 20 (about 47 percent) did not meet all requirements.

Additionally, during this reporting period, AICPA informed us that as a result of a single audit desk review we previously completed, AICPA found an auditing firm in violation of ethical standards and required the firm to complete remedial action. Remedial action is taken when the matter is not considered egregious and the AICPA believes disciplinary action is not necessary.

² Prior to October 1, 2024, the threshold for conducting single audits was \$750,000. Because the single audits we reviewed were completed prior to that date, the \$750,000 threshold applied.

Additional Significant Reports

In addition to the work summarized in the top challenge areas, we completed other important projects during this reporting period. These projects represent our commitment to detecting and preventing fraud, waste, and abuse and improving the Department's programs and operations.

Former Federal Employee Pleads Guilty to Concealment of Material Facts

On June 30, 2025, OIG closed an investigation into allegations that a former USPTO employee previously applied for over 200 federal jobs using resumes that contained fraudulent work history and experience and supplied this fraudulent information to USPTO during the pre-employment process. On May 29, 2025, the former employee pleaded guilty to one count of concealment of material facts. The employee was sentenced to 36 months of probation and ordered to pay \$75,000 in restitution and perform 500 hours of community service. The USPTO terminated the employee's appointment.

Defendant Sentenced to Probation and Ordered to Pay Restitution for False Statements

On August 15, 2025, OIG closed a Pandemic Response Accountability Committee Task Force investigation into allegations that an individual received a U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Paycheck Protection Program loan totaling \$19,842 for a fictitious sole proprietorship and used the funds for personal gain. OIG participates in the task force, providing critical support to agencies working together to investigate the significant volume of pandemic-related fraud allegations. In March 2025, the individual pleaded guilty in the U.S. District Court for the District of South Dakota to one count of making false statements. In June 2025, the individual was sentenced to 2 years of probation and 80 hours of community service and was ordered to pay \$19,842 in restitution to the SBA.

EDA Official Misuses Position to Help Personal Associates

On August 18, 2025, OIG closed an investigation into allegations of potential contracting improprieties involving a senior EDA official. The complaint stated that the official misused their position to assist a company led by former personal associates in securing Department contracts. The investigation substantiated that the official failed to recuse themselves from involvement in the contract award process despite an undisclosed, preexisting personal relationship with executives at the company. The official also engaged in inappropriate communications with the company during multiple stages of the procurement process and used personal communication channels to conduct official government business in violation of federal records management policies. The investigation further found that the official lacked candor during their interview with OIG investigators. EDA placed the official on unpaid suspension, and the official subsequently resigned from federal service.

NOAA Employee Resigned Following Sexual Harassment Investigation

On September 3, 2025, OIG closed an investigation into allegations of sexual assault and harassment by a former NOAA employee. The investigation substantiated the allegations of sexual harassment. The DOJ declined the case for prosecution, and OIG referred it to NOAA for administrative action. The subject then resigned and agreed not to apply for any positions within the Department in the future.

USPTO Patent Examiner Terminated for Disclosing Nonpublic Patent Information

On September 9, 2025, OIG closed an investigation into allegations that a USPTO employee attempted to outsource their official duties to a non-government individual using a freelance website. The investigation determined that the employee misused their official position by disclosing nonpublic patent information to a suspected foreign national. The USPTO employee paid \$40 to the suspected foreign national and transmitted nonpublic patent application information in violation of federal law. The DOJ declined the case for prosecution. The employee was terminated from federal service due to poor performance on January 13, 2025, before the completion of the investigation.

Defendants Sentenced to Prison and Ordered to Pay Fines for Destruction of NOAA-Protected Wetlands

On September 12, 2025, OIG closed an investigation alleging Clean Water Act and Rivers and Harbors Act violations by five individuals. The individuals were charged with destroying approximately 5.4 acres of protected wetlands by removing mangrove and seagrass habitat at a national estuarine research reserve in Puerto Rico. The defendants also damaged the wetlands by building structures within the navigable waters of the United States that caused the discharge of pollutants, soil, and fill material. All five individuals pleaded guilty and were sentenced to a total of 90 months in prison and 38 months of probation. They were also ordered to pay a total of \$14,000 in fines and perform a total of 50 hours of community service.

Department Contractor Agrees to Pay \$3.1 Million for Violating False Claims Act

On September 23, 2025, OIG closed a joint investigation into allegations that a Department contractor violated the civil False Claims Act by providing false information in their contract bid proposals related to numerous small business set-aside contracts awarded by NOAA, NTIA, and multiple other federal agencies. The allegations were substantiated, and the contractor signed a settlement agreement with the DOJ in which they agreed to pay the United States \$3.1 million, of which \$1 million was restitution.

STATISTICAL DATA

Consistent with the Inspector General Act of 1978 (IG Act), as amended, OIG is providing the following statistical data:

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Table 1. Office Of Investigations Statistical Highlights for This Period

Investigative activities cover investigations opened and closed by OIG; arrests by OIG agents; indictments and other criminal charges filed against individuals or entities as a result of OIG investigations; and convictions secured at trial or by guilty plea as a result of OIG investigations.

Allegations received presents the number of complaints from employees, stakeholders, and the general public that were handled by our Compliance and Ethics unit. Of these, some resulted in the opening of investigations; others were referred to bureaus for internal administrative follow-up. Others were unrelated to departmental activities or did not provide sufficient information for any investigative follow-up and were not accepted for investigation or referral.

The metrics used for the statistical data referenced in this table include the following: ensure data input is completed accurately; obtain data extraction via reports generated in OIG's case management system; and complete quality assurance with supporting documentation in the case files and discussions with individual investigative personnel.

Allegations Received	
Total hotline contacts	754
Contacts related to departmental programs	527
Number of hotline referrals to departmental management	221
Reports	
Total number of investigative reports issued during the reporting period ^a	12
Prosecutive Actions	
Total number of individuals or entities referred to DOJ for criminal prosecution	9
Total number of entities referred to state/local prosecuting authorities	1
Indictments/Informations/Criminal Complaints	3
Convictions	3
^a This figure consists of reports of investigation, case closure memorandums to the Department/bureaus (investigative summaries), and notice of concern memorandums.	

Table 2. Resolution and Follow-Up

The IG Act requires us to present in this report information concerning reports issued before the beginning of the reporting period (April 1, 2025) for which no management decision had been made by the end of the period (September 30, 2025). There are 2 reports with a recommendation that remains unresolved for more than 6 months for this reporting period.

Audit resolution is the process by which the Department reaches an effective management decision in response to audit reports. **Management decision** refers to management’s evaluation of the findings and recommendations included in the report and the issuance of a final decision by management concerning its response.

Department Administrative Order 213-5, *Audit and Evaluation Resolution and Follow-up*, provides procedures for management to request a modification to an approved action plan or for a financial assistance recipient to appeal an audit resolution determination. The following table summarizes modification and appeal activity during the reporting period.

Report Category	Modifications	Appeals
Actions pending (April 1, 2025)	11	0
Submissions	9	0
Decisions	13	0
Actions pending (September 30, 2025)	0	0

Table 3. Audit and Inspection Statistical Highlights for This Period

Audits comply with standards established by the Comptroller General of the United States for audits of federal establishments, organizations, programs, activities, and functions.

Inspections include evaluations, inquiries, and similar types of reviews that do not constitute an audit or a criminal investigation.

Questioned costs ^a	\$4,020,050
Value of audit recommendations that funds be put to better use ^b	\$0
Total potential monetary benefits	\$4,020,050
Value of audit recommendations agreed to by management ^c	\$1,707,357

^a **Questioned cost:** This is a cost questioned by OIG because of (1) an alleged violation of a provision of a law, regulation, contract, grant, cooperative agreement, or other agreement or document governing the expenditure of funds; (2) a finding that, at the time of the audit, such cost is not supported by adequate documentation; or (3) a finding that an expenditure of funds for the intended purpose is unnecessary or unreasonable.

^b **Value of audit recommendations that funds be put to better use:** This results from an OIG recommendation that funds could be used more efficiently if Department management took action to implement and complete the recommendation. Such actions may include (1) reductions in outlays; (2) deobligation of funds from programs or operations; (3) withdrawal of interest subsidy costs on loans or loan guarantees, insurance, or bonds; (4) costs not incurred by implementing recommended improvements related to the Department, a contractor, or a grantee; (5) avoidance of unnecessary expenditures identified in pre-award reviews of contracts or grant agreements; or (6) any other savings specifically identified.

^c **Value of audit recommendations agreed to by management:** This is the sum of (1) disallowed costs and (2) funds to be put to better use that are agreed to by management during resolution. Disallowed costs are the amount of costs that were questioned by the auditors or the agency action official and subsequently determined—during audit resolution or negotiations by a contracting officer—not to be charged to the government.

Table 4. Reports with Questioned Costs

See table 3 for a definition of “questioned cost.” An **unsupported cost** is a cost that is not supported by adequate documentation at the time of the review. Questioned costs include unsupported costs.

Report Category	Number	Questioned Costs	Unsupported Costs
A. Reports for which no management decision had been made by the beginning of the reporting period	1	\$834,774,467	\$834,774,467
B. Reports issued during the reporting period	1	\$4,020,050	\$0
Total reports (A+B) requiring a management decision during the period		\$838,794,517	\$834,774,467
C. Reports for which a management decision was made during the reporting period	2	\$838,794,517	\$834,774,467
i. Value of disallowed costs		\$0	\$0
ii. Value of costs not disallowed		\$838,794,517	\$834,774,467
D. Reports for which no management decision had been made by the end of the reporting period		\$0	\$0

Table 5. Reports with Recommendations That Funds Be Put to Better Use

See table 3 for a definition of “recommendations that funds be put to better use.”

Report Category	Number	Value
A. Reports for which no management decision had been made by the beginning of the reporting period	2	\$3,411,413
B. Reports issued during the reporting period	0	\$0
Total reports (A+B) requiring a management decision during the period	2	\$3,411,413
C. Reports for which a management decision was made during the reporting period	1	\$1,956,869
i. Value of recommendations agreed to by management		\$1,707,357
ii. Value of recommendations not agreed to by management		\$249,512.46
D. Reports for which no management decision had been made by the end of the reporting period	1	\$1,454,544

Tables 6, 6-A, 6-B, 6-C, and 6-D. Report Types for This Period

Performance audits provide findings or conclusions based on an evaluation of sufficient, appropriate evidence against criteria. Performance audits provide objective analysis to assist management and those charged with governance and oversight in using the information to improve program performance and operations, reduce costs, facilitate decision making by parties with responsibility to oversee or initiate corrective action, and contribute to public accountability.

Inspections include evaluations, inquiries, and similar types of reviews that do not constitute an audit or investigation. An inspection is defined as a process that evaluates, reviews, studies, or analyzes the programs and activities of a department or agency to provide information to managers for decision making; makes recommendations for improvements to programs, policies, or procedures; and identifies where administrative action may be necessary.

Financial statement audits are primarily to provide an opinion about whether an entity's financial statements are presented fairly in all material respects in conformity with an applicable financial reporting framework. Reporting on financial statement audits performed in accordance with GAGAS also includes reports on internal control over financial reporting and on compliance with provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements that have a material effect on the financial statements.

Other public releases from this period include two letters to Congress and a peer review report.

Table 6. Summary of Report Types for This Period

Type	Number of Reports	Table Number
Performance Audits	8	Table 6-A
Inspections/Evaluations	7	Table 6-B
Financial Statement Audits	N/A	Table 6-C
Other Public Releases	3	Table 6-D
Total	18	

Table 6-A. Performance Audits

Report Title	Report Number	Date Issued	Funds to Be Put to Better Use	Amount Questioned	Amount Unsupported
<i>Audit of the Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture's Costs Claimed Through CARES Act and CAA Funds</i>	OIG-25-016-A	04.02.2025	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Audit of USPTO's Governance of Its Artificial Intelligence Tools</i>	OIG-25-018-A	04.22.2025	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Audit of CARES Act Grants Recipients Through EDA's Revolving Loan Fund Program</i>	OIG-25-019-A	04.30.2025	\$0	\$4,020,050	\$0
<i>Audit of Office of Marine and Aviation Operations Aircraft Program</i>	OIG-25-023-A	06.17.2025	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Audit of Grants Enterprise Management System Program Implementation</i>	OIG-25-025-A	06.30.2025	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>FY 2025 FISMA Compliance Audit (Not Public)</i>	OIG-25-028-A	07.31.2025	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Audit of USPTO's Quality Reviews of Continuing Patent Applications</i>	OIG-25-029-A	08.28.2025	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Audit of the Census Bureau's Progress in Meeting Workforce Hiring Goals for the 2026 Census Test</i>	OIG-25-030-A	09.16.2025	\$0	\$0	\$0

Table 6-B. Inspections/Evaluations

Report Title	Report Number	Date Issued	Funds to Be Put to Better Use	Amount Questioned	Amount Unsupported
<i>Evaluation of NTIA's Implementation of the Public Wireless Supply Chain Innovation Fund</i>	OIG-25-017-I	04.09.2025	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Evaluation of the Department's Fiscal Year 2024 Compliance With Payment Integrity Information Act Requirements</i>	OIG-25-020-I	05.27.2025	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Commerce CHIPS Act Programs Status Report</i>	OIG-25-021-I	06.02.2025	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Evaluation of BIS's Cyber Incident Detection and Response</i>	OIG-25-022-I	06.11.2025	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>FY 2025 Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act Evaluation (Not Public)</i>	OIG-25-024-I	06.20.2025	\$0	\$0	\$0

Report Title	Report Number	Date Issued	Funds to Be Put to Better Use	Amount Questioned	Amount Unsupported
<i>Evaluation of NOAA's NWS Tornado Forecasting and Warning Performance</i>	OIG-25-026-I	09.24.2025	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>NTIA Broadband Programs: Semiannual Status Report</i>	OIG-25-031-I	09.24.2025	\$0	\$0	\$0

Table 6-C. Financial Statement Audits

There were no financial statement audits for this period.

Table 6-D. Other Public Releases

Report Title	Report Number	Date Issued
<i>Acting Inspector General Response to 11 House of Representatives Members re: National Weather Service Oversight</i>	Letter	07.17.2025
<i>Acting Inspector General Response to Senator Schumer re: National Weather Service Oversight</i>	Letter	07.17.2025
<i>Report of PBGC OIG Peer Review of Commerce OIG Inspections and Evaluations</i>	Letter	07.31.2025

Tables 7, 7-A, and 7-B. Unimplemented and Unresolved Recommendations by Operating Unit

All tables concerning unimplemented or unresolved recommendations do not include recommendations from (a) recurring, annual audits (such as financial statement audits) or (b) single audits.

Recommendations from all performance audit, evaluation, and inspection reports issued prior to FY 2019 have been implemented.

Resolved but unimplemented recommendations are those for which (a) the operating unit(s) agreed to OIG recommendations and (b) OIG approved the action plan. Columns 2 through 5 of table 7 provide details on resolved but unimplemented recommendations.

Unresolved recommendations include those with no approved action plan as of September 30, 2025, or those for which the action plans are not due until after September 30, 2025. Columns 6 and 7 of table 7 provide details on unresolved recommendations.

Table 7-A, which is shown in appendix 1, provides details on FYs 2019–2025 performance audit, evaluation, or inspection reports that have resolved but unimplemented recommendations. During those FYs, we issued 118 audits and evaluations (excluding financial statement audits). As of September 30, 2025,

- 49 of the 118 reports (42 percent) had resolved but unimplemented recommendations.
- 170 of 682 total recommendations (25 percent) were resolved but unimplemented.
- 11 of these resolved but unimplemented recommendations had potential monetary benefits of \$1,261,845,997.

Table 7-B, which is shown in Appendix 2, provides the full list of 7 reports with 35 unresolved recommendations, including those for which an action plan is not due until after September 30, 2025. See figure 2 for a snapshot of unresolved recommendations from 5 reports with action plans submitted by September 30, 2025.

Table 7. Summary of Unimplemented and Unresolved Recommendations by Operating Unit

Operating Unit	FYs 2019–2022 Unimplemented Recs (Resolved)	Potential Monetary Benefits of FYs 2019–2022 Unimplemented Recs	FYs 2023–2025 Unimplemented Recs (Resolved)	Potential Monetary Benefits of FYs 2023–2025 Unimplemented Recs	Unresolved FYs 2023– 2025 Recs	Potential Monetary Benefits of Unresolved FYs 2023– 2025 Recs
Bureau of Economic Analysis				\$0		
Bureau of Industry and Security		\$0	14	\$0	1	\$0
U.S. Census Bureau		\$0	17	\$363,083,441	4	
U.S. Economic Development Administration			4	\$4,020,050		
First Responder Network Authority						
International Trade Administration			8	\$0		
Minority Business Development Agency						
National Institute of Standards and Technology		\$0	17	\$7,391,132	1	\$1,454,544
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	5	\$11,895,000	25	\$33,114,000	13	
National Technical Information Service						
National Telecommunications and Information Administration			35	\$834,774,467		\$
Office of the Secretary	8	\$0	23	\$7,567,907	10	\$0
United States Patent and Trademark Office	2	\$0	12	\$0	6	\$0
Total	15	\$11,895,000	155	\$1,249,950,997	35	\$1,454,544

Table 7-A. Unimplemented Recommendations from Audit, Evaluation, and Inspection Reports

Table 7-A, which is in appendix 1, does not include recommendations (a) from financial statement audits or (b) addressed to specific non-federal entities in connection with audits of financial assistance awards. For the full list of reports with unimplemented recommendations, see appendix 1.

Recommendations from all performance audit, evaluation, and inspection reports issued prior to FY 2019 have been implemented. Figure 1 is a snapshot of unimplemented recommendations by year.

Figure 1. Snapshot of Unimplemented Recommendations by Year

Year	Reports Issued	Total Recommendations	Total Unimplemented Recommendations	Potential Monetary Benefits
2019	12	79	1	\$0
2020	16	76	3	\$11,895,000
2021	14	72	2	\$0
2022	19	112	9	\$0
2023	15	112	18	\$38,234,263
2024	24	127	74	\$1,200,120,515
2025	18	104	63	\$11,596,219

Table 7-B. Unresolved Recommendations from Audit, Evaluation, and Inspection Reports

Table 7-B, which is in appendix 2, includes audit, evaluation, and inspection reports with unresolved recommendations (i.e., OIG has not yet approved auditees' action plans). Either the submitted action plan is in the review process, or the action plan is not due until after September 30, 2025. Figure 2 shows unresolved recommendations for reports with action plans submitted.

Figure 2. Snapshot of Unresolved Recommendations for Reports with Action Plans Submitted by September 30, 2025

Report Date	Report Number	Short Title	Unresolved Recommendations
03.13.2023	OIG-23-014-I	NIST MEP Monitoring	1
09.23.2024	OIG-24-036-A	BIS Export License Approval	1
06.17.2025	OIG-25-023-A	NOAA Hurricane Hunter Missions	7
06.30.2025	OIG-25-025-A	Department Grants Management System	10
07.08.2025	OIG-25-026-I	NWS Tornado Forecasting	6

For the full list of reports with unresolved recommendations, including those for which an action plan is not due until after September 30, 2025, see appendix 2.

Table 8. Reports on Investigations Concerning Alleged Misconduct by Senior Government Employees

OIG Case No.	Narrative Description of Investigations Involving Senior Government Employees Where Allegations of Misconduct Were Substantiated
22-0135	On August 18, 2025, OIG closed an investigation into allegations of potential contracting improprieties involving a senior EDA official. The complaint stated that the official misused their position to assist a company led by former personal associates in securing Department contracts. The investigation substantiated that the official failed to recuse themselves from involvement in the contract award process despite a preexisting personal relationship with executives at the company. The official also engaged in inappropriate communications with the company during multiple stages of the procurement process and used personal communication channels to conduct official government business, in violation of federal records management policies. The investigation further found that the official lacked candor during their interview with OIG investigators. EDA placed the official on an unpaid suspension, and the official subsequently resigned from federal service.

Table 9. Description of Closed and Non-Public Inspections, Evaluations, Audits, and Certain Investigations

OIG is required to describe (a) any inspection, evaluation, and audit conducted that is closed and not disclosed to the public and (b) any investigation conducted involving a senior government employee that is closed and not disclosed to the public. During this semiannual period, we issued one evaluation and one audit that were not disclosed to the public. We also terminated three audits. We closed three investigations involving senior government employees that were not disclosed to the public.

OIG Report/Case No.	Narrative Description of Closed and Non-Public Inspections, Evaluations, Audits, and Certain Investigations
N/A	On November 7, 2024, we initiated an audit of USPTO’s management and utilization of real property. Our objective was to determine whether USPTO effectively utilizes and manages real property. On April 1, 2025, we issued a memorandum to inform USPTO that we had decided to terminate this audit.
Fiscal Year 2025 Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act Evaluation (OIG-25-024-I)	The Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act of 2015 requires the inspectors general of the Departments of Commerce, Defense, Energy, Homeland Security, Justice, and Treasury, and of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence to jointly submit a biennial report to Congress on actions over the most recent 2-year period to carry out the Act’s requirements. The joint committee of inspectors general developed questions to gather the needed information from each Department. This report presents our responses to those questions for the Department of Commerce for calendar years 2023 and 2024, which will inform the development of the interagency biennial report.
FY 2025 Federal Information Security Modernization Act Annual Report (OIG-25-028-A)	To meet OIG obligations under the Federal Information Security Modernization Act, we assessed the effectiveness of the Department’s information security program and practices against metrics issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the Office of Management and Budget, and the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency. Specifically, we reviewed the operational information technology systems across the Department and its bureaus recorded in the Cyber Security Assessment and Management system. We assessed each of the six functional areas (govern, identify, protect, detect, respond, and recover) against the metrics and found that the Department’s overall maturity level for FY 2025 is Defined (level 2). Therefore, the Department’s information security program is not fully effective. Because the assessment discusses sensitive aspects of Department IT systems, it is not publicly released.
25-0895	On August 18, 2025, OIG closed an investigation into an allegation that a NOAA senior government employee engaged in digital voyeurism. The allegations were unsubstantiated, and the investigation was closed without further action.
N/A	On December 20, 2024, we initiated an audit of NOAA’s NWS Radar Next Program. Our objective was to assess the adequacy of NWS planning for continuity of national radar coverage. On August 20, 2025, we issued a memorandum to inform NOAA that we had decided to terminate this audit.

OIG Report/Case No.	Narrative Description of Closed and Non-Public Inspections, Evaluations, Audits, and Certain Investigations
24-0056	On September 5, 2025, OIG closed an investigation involving an allegation that a NOAA scientist took an adjunct professor position at a university and attempted to establish a lab for the work he did with NOAA without approval. The allegations were unsubstantiated, and the DOJ declined to prosecute.
25-0895	On September 11, 2025, OIG closed an investigation into allegations that NOAA scientists improperly shared budget and task data resulting in the improper issuance of cooperative agreements or grants for work that should have been awarded as contracts in violation of the Procurement Integrity Act. The allegations were unsubstantiated.
N/A	On June 27, 2025, we initiated an audit of the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) Joint Venture Partnership program. Our objective was to determine whether NTIS is administering the program in accordance with applicable regulations and policy. On September 25, 2025, we issued a memorandum to inform NTIS that we had decided to terminate this audit.

ADDITIONAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Review of Legislation and Regulations

This section requires the inspector general of each agency to review existing and proposed legislation and regulations relating to that agency's programs and operations. Based on this review, the inspector general is required to make recommendations concerning the impact of such legislation or regulations on (1) the economy and efficiency in the administration of programs and operations administered or financed by the agency or (2) the prevention and detection of fraud and abuse in those programs and operations. Some of OIG's audits examine compliance with existing laws, regulations, and other legal requirements. OIG's reports of such audits describe findings and include recommendations on any action necessary to address such findings. OIG is also a participant in the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) and its regular review of legislative and regulatory items that affect the inspector general community at large and individual departments. During this reporting period, our office reviewed class deviations and other information related to the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

Information Required by the Federal Financial Management Improvement Act

No matters to report.

Description of Interference or Delays

No matters to report.

APPENDIX 1. TABLE 7-A, REPORTS WITH UNIMPLEMENTED RECOMMENDATIONS

Date Report Issued	OIG Report No. and Title	Total Recommendations Made	Unimplemented Recommendation(s)	Potential Monetary Benefits of Unimplemented Recommendations
06.13.2019	OIG-19-014-A , <i>Audit of USPTO's Active Directory</i>	8	Recommendation 4	0
11.12.2019	OIG-20-006-A , <i>Audit of NOAA's OMAO Ship Fleet Acquisition Planning</i>	7	Recommendation 1	\$11,895,000
07.20.2020	OIG-20-037-A , <i>Audit of the Department's Fleet Management Practices</i>	7	Recommendations 2 and 4	0
10.01.2020	OIG-21-001-A , <i>Audit of the Department's Compliance with the Geospatial Data Act of 2018</i>	6	Recommendation 3	0
05.25.2021	OIG-21-027-I , <i>Evaluation of NOAA's Ship Fleet Requirements Management Processes</i>	7	Recommendation 1	0
11.08.2021	OIG-22-003-A , <i>Audit of the Department's Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014 Submission for the First Quarter of Fiscal Year 2021</i>	9	Recommendations 7	0
12.16.2021	OIG-22-014-I , <i>Review of the Department of Commerce's Processes for Responding to Hotline Complaints</i>	2	Recommendations 1 and 2	0
06.08.2022	OIG-22-022-A , <i>Audit of the Next-Generation Satellite System Architecture Planning and Implementation</i>	7	Recommendations 1, 4, and 6	0
06.15.2022	OIG-22-023-I , <i>Evaluation of the Department of Commerce's and Its Bureaus' Management of National Security Systems</i>	5	Recommendation 2	0
07.20.2022	OIG-22-026-A , <i>Audit of USPTO's Efforts to Retire Patent Legacy Systems</i>	6	Recommendation 1	0

Date Report Issued	OIG Report No. and Title	Total Recommendations Made	Unimplemented Recommendation(s)	Potential Monetary Benefits of Unimplemented Recommendations
09.22.2022	OIG-22-033-A , <i>Performance Audit of the U.S. Department of Commerce's Working Capital Funds</i>	5	Recommendation 2	0
01.09.2023	OIG-23-008-I , <i>Review of the Bureau of Industry and Security's Law Enforcement Function</i>	7	Recommendation 5	0
03.01.2023	OIG-23-012-A , <i>Audit of FirstNet Authority's Reinvestment Process</i>	6	Recommendations 1, 2, and 4	0
03.13.2023	OIG-23-014-I , <i>Evaluation of NIST's Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program</i>	5	Recommendations 1, 2, 4, and 5	\$5,434,263
08.30.2023	OIG-23-025-A , <i>Audit of the U.S. Census Bureau Demographic Programs Directorate's Reimbursable Survey Data Quality and Reliability</i>	15	Recommendations 1, 5, 7, 12, 13, and 15	0
09.05.2023	OIG-23-027-A , <i>Audit of PWS Program Execution</i>	5	Recommendation 4	0
09.20.2023	OIG-23-028-A , <i>Audit of NOAA's GeoXO Program Formulation</i>	4	Recommendations 1 and 2	\$32,800,000
09.28.2023	OIG-23-030-A , <i>Audit of the Department's Identification and Remediation of Vulnerabilities for High Value Assets</i>	4	Recommendation 1	0
10.23.2023	OIG-24-003-I , <i>Evaluation of Single Audit Findings Impacting Department of Commerce Programs</i>	2	Recommendation 2	0
11.01.2023	OIG-24-004-A , <i>Audit of ITA's Efforts to Resolve Foreign Trade Barriers</i>	8	Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8	0
01.22.2024	OIG-24-009-A , <i>Audit of the Department's Implementation of Multi-Factor Authentication on High Value Assets</i>	8	Recommendation 4	0
02.05.2024	OIG-24-011-I , <i>Independent Evaluation of the 2020 Decennial Census EAE Operation</i>	10	Recommendations 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 10	0

Date Report Issued	OIG Report No. and Title	Total Recommendations Made	Unimplemented Recommendation(s)	Potential Monetary Benefits of Unimplemented Recommendations
02.14.2024	OIG-24-013-I , <i>Evaluation of Ethics Oversight in Preventing Financial Conflicts of Interest by USPTO Patent Examiners</i>	8	Recommendations 4, 7, and 8	0
02.22.2024	OIG-24-014-A , <i>Audit of the Department's Implementation of the Business Applications Solution Program</i>	6	Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6	\$1,905,622
04.04.2024	OIG-24-018-I , <i>Independent Program Evaluation of NOAA Fisheries Pandemic Relief Program</i>	3	Recommendation 2	\$ 314,000
05.08.2024	OIG-24-021-A , <i>Audit of the 2020 Census Paid Advertising Campaign</i>	6	Recommendations 3, 5, and 6	\$363,083,441
05.20.2024	OIG-24-023-I , <i>Evaluation of CHIPS Workforce Management</i>	2	Recommendations 1 and 2	0
05.30.2024	OIG-24-024-A , <i>Audit of FirstNet Authority's NPSBN Device Connection Targets (Contract Modifications)</i>	9	Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9	0
06.03.2024	OIG-24-025-A , <i>Audit of Departmental Employee Locality Pay</i>	4	Recommendations 1, 2, 3, and 4	\$42,985
06.05.2024	OIG-24-026-A , <i>Audit of FirstNet Authority's NPSBN Coverage</i>	5	Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5	\$834,774,467
06.12.2024	OIG-24-027-A , <i>Audit of FirstNet Authority's NPSBN Device Connection Targets (Contract Oversight)</i>	3	Recommendations 1, 2, and 3	0
06.20.2024	OIG-24-028-A , <i>Audit of Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources' Administering of NOAA Grants</i>	5	Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5	0
06.24.2024	OIG-24-029-I , <i>Evaluation of USPTO's Response to the Exposure of Trademark Filers' Sensitive PII</i>	10	Recommendations 8, 9, and 10	0

Date Report Issued	OIG Report No. and Title	Total Recommendations Made	Unimplemented Recommendation(s)	Potential Monetary Benefits of Unimplemented Recommendations
07.30.2024	OIG-24-031-A , <i>Audit of NOAA's Office of Space Commerce SPD-3 Activities</i>	5	Recommendations 3, 4, and 5	0
08.27.2024	OIG-24-034-A , <i>Audit of NESDIS' Transition of Ground System Capabilities to its Common Cloud Framework</i>	11	Recommendations 3, 9, and 10	0
09.19.2024	OIG-24-035-A , <i>Biennial Audit of the Department's Compliance with Geospatial Data Act Requirements</i>	1	Recommendation 1	0
09.25.2024	OIG-24-037-I , <i>Evaluation of NIST's Manufacturing Extension Partnership Economic Impact Reporting</i>	8	Recommendations 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8	0
10.24.2024	OIG-25-002-A , <i>Audit of USPTO's Management of Trademark Pendency</i>	6	Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6	0
12.5.2024	OIG-25-004-A , <i>Audit of the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network's Services During the Maui Wildfires</i>	11	Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11	0
12.17.2024	OIG-25-006-A , <i>Audit of the Department's ECDM Program</i>	7	Recommendations 1, 2, and 7	\$5,619,300
01.06.2025	OIG-25-007-A , <i>Audit of NOAA's Implementation of Weather Act Requirements</i>	8	Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8	0
02.25.2025	OIG-25-011-I , <i>Evaluation of NIST's Manufacturing Extension Partnership Economic Impact Reporting</i>	4	Recommendations 1, 2, 3, and 4	\$1,956,869
02.27.2025	OIG-25-012-I , <i>Evaluation of the National Weather Service's Protection of Operational Technology</i>	4	Recommendations 2, and 4	0
03.13.2025	OIG-25-013-I , <i>Evaluation of U.S. Census Bureau Workforce Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention</i>	1	Recommendation 1	0

Date Report Issued	OIG Report No. and Title	Total Recommendations Made	Unimplemented Recommendation(s)	Potential Monetary Benefits of Unimplemented Recommendations
03.25.2025	OIG-25-015-A , <i>Audit of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020 Post-Enumeration Survey Results</i>	1	Recommendation 1	0
04.09.2025	OIG-25-017-I , <i>Evaluation of NTIA's Implementation of the Public Wireless Supply Chain Innovation Fund</i>	6	Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6	0
04.22.2025	OIG-25-018-A , <i>Audit of USPTO's Governance of Its Artificial Intelligence Tools</i>	5	Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5	0
04.30.2025	OIG-25-019-A , <i>Audit of CARES Act Grants Recipients Through EDA's Revolving Loan Fund Program</i>	4	Recommendations 1, 2, 3, and 4	\$4,020,050
06.11.2025	OIG-25-022-I , <i>Evaluation of the Bureau of Industry and Security's Cyber Incident Detection and Response</i>	13	Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13	0

APPENDIX 2. TABLE 7-B, REPORTS WITH UNRESOLVED RECOMMENDATIONS

Date Report Issued	OIG Report No. and Title	Total Recommendations Made	Reason	Potential Monetary Benefits of Unresolved Recommendations
03.13.2023	OIG-23-014-I , <i>Evaluation of NIST's Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Program</i>	5	Recommendation 3, for NIST to establish policy limits on executive compensation for MEP, remains unresolved. However, NIST recently updated MEP's terms and conditions to restrict the amount of compensation paid under its cooperative agreements and subawards and informed us that it will submit a revised action plan.	\$1,454,544
09.23.2024	OIG-24-036-A , <i>Audit of BIS's Efforts to Counter China's Military-Civilian Fusion Strategy</i>	1	BIS submitted an action plan to us on 11/25/2024. We met with BIS to discuss the plan on 1/23/2025 and 3/12/2025. Further BIS activities to update the action plan and implement the recommendation are on hold as BIS continues to assess the implications of the America First trade policy on the deemed export policy decisions we described in our report.	0

Date Report Issued	OIG Report No. and Title	Total Recommendations Made	Reason	Potential Monetary Benefits of Unresolved Recommendations
06.17.2025	OIG-25-023-A , <i>Audit of Office of Marine and Aviation Operations Aircraft Program</i>	7	NOAA submitted an action plan to us on 8/22/2025. We met with NOAA to discuss the plan on 9/15/2025 and are awaiting submission of a revised plan.	0
06.30.2025	OIG-25-025-A , <i>Audit of GEMS Program Implementation</i>	10	The Department submitted the action plan to us on 8/28/2025 and responded to our comments on 9/23/2025. We have scheduled a meeting with the Department to discuss the plan.	0
07.08.2025	OIG-25-026-I , <i>Independent Evaluation of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service Tornado Forecasting and Warning Services</i>	6	We are reviewing the action plan NOAA submitted to us on 9/22/2025.	0
08.28.2025	OIG-25-029-A , <i>Audit of USPTO's Quality Reviews of Continuing Patent Applications</i>	6	We are reviewing the action plan USPTO submitted to us on 10/16/2025.	0
09.16.2025	OIG-25-030-A , <i>Audit of the Census Bureau's Progress in Meeting Workforce Hiring Goals for the 2026 Census Test</i>	4	Action plan due 12/11/2025.	0

APPENDIX 3. PEER REVIEWS

OIGs play an important role in preventing waste, fraud, and abuse, and conduct peer reviews to help them fulfill their role. To accomplish peer reviews, [CIGIE](#) provides policies and procedures, including the *Guide for Conducting Peer Reviews of Audit Organizations of Federal Offices of Inspector General*, *Quality Assurance Review Guidelines for Offices of Investigations of Federal Offices of Inspector General*, and *Guide for Conducting External Peer Reviews of Inspection and Evaluation Organizations of Federal Offices of Inspector General*.

Results of Peer Reviews Conducted by Another OIG

On July 30, 2025, the Office of Audit and Evaluation received official notification of the peer review of its inspection and evaluation operations by the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation OIG (PBGC OIG). PBGC OIG's External Peer Review Report covered the 3-year period ending March 31, 2025, and its report of our inspection and evaluation operations is available on our [website](#). We received a Pass rating, the highest available rating.

On March 19, 2025, OIG's Office of Investigations (OI) received official notification that the system of internal safeguards and management procedures for OIG's investigative function was in compliance with the quality standards established by CIGIE and the applicable Attorney General Guidelines. The Federal Reserve Board OIG conducted the peer review.

We do not have any outstanding recommendations from any peer review.

Peer Reviews Conducted of Another OIG and List of Outstanding or Not Fully Implemented Recommendations from Any Peer Review

We did not conduct a peer review of another OIG during this reporting period.

APPENDIX 4. ALL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The IG Act specifies reporting requirements for semiannual reports. The requirements are listed below and indexed to the applicable pages of this report.

TOPIC	PAGE(S)
Review of Legislation and Regulations	35
Significant Problems, Abuses, and Deficiencies Relating to the Administration of Programs and Operations; Associated Reports and Recommendations for Corrective Action	3
Recommendations Made Before the Reporting Period for Which Corrective Action Has Not Been Completed and Potential Cost Savings Associated with the Recommendation	36
Significant Investigations Closed	17
Convictions Resulting from Investigations	17
Audit, Inspection, and Evaluation Reports with Questioned Costs, Unsupported Costs, and Funds Put to Better Use; Associated Management Decisions	20, 21
Management Decisions Regarding Audits, Inspections, or Evaluations Issued During a Previous Reporting Period	18
Information Required by the Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996	N/A
Results of Peer Reviews Conducted by Another OIG	43
Status of Any Outstanding Recommendations from Peer Reviews Conducted by Another OIG and Why Implementation Is Not Complete	43
Prior Peer Reviews Conducted of Another OIG and List of Outstanding or Not Fully Implemented Recommendations from Any Peer Review	43
Statistical Tables Regarding Investigations	17
Description of Metrics Used for Determining the Data in the Statistical Tables Regarding Investigations	17
Investigations Concerning Senior Government Employees or Officials in Which Allegations of Misconduct Were Substantiated	31
Description of Whistleblower Retaliation Instances ³	N/A
Description of Interference or Delays	N/A
Description of Closed and Non-Public Inspections, Evaluations, and Audits; Investigations Involving a Senior Government Employee	32
Statistical Tables Showing Audit, Inspection, and Evaluation Reports for Which Final Action Had Not Been Taken Before the Commencement of the Reporting Period	36
Statement on Why Final Action Has Not Been Taken with Respect to Each Audit, Inspection, and Evaluation Report in Which a Management Decision Has Been Made but Final Action Has Not Been Taken	41

³ For this semiannual reporting period, there were no reports on investigations concerning whistleblower retaliation by senior government employees.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AI	Artificial Intelligence	IDA	Institute for Defense Analyses
AICPA	American Institute of Certified Public Accountants	IG Act	Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended
BIS	Bureau of Industry and Security	IT	Information Technology
CAA	Consolidated Appropriations Act	ITA	International Trade Administration
CARES Act	Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act	MEP	Manufacturing Extension Partnership
CDM	Continuous Diagnostics and Mitigation	MBDA	Minority Business Development Agency
Census Bureau	U.S. Census Bureau	MEP	Manufacturing Extension Partnership
C.F.R.	Code of Federal Regulations	NESDIS	National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service
CHIPS	Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors	NIST	National Institute of Standards and Technology
CIGIE	Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency	NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019	NPSBN	Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network
DOJ	U.S. Department of Justice	NTIA	National Telecommunications and Information Administration
EAE	Evaluations and Experiments	NTIS	National Technical Information Service
ECDM	Enterprise Continuous Diagnostics and Mitigation	NWS	National Weather Service
EDA	U.S. Economic Development Administration	OI	Office of Investigations
FirstNet Authority	First Responder Network Authority	OIG	Office of Inspector General
FY	Fiscal Year	OMAO	Office of Marine and Aviation Operations
GAGAS	Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards	OMB	Office of Management and Budget
G-IV	Gulfstream-IV-SP	OPQA	Office of Patent and Quality Assurance
GEMS	Grants Enterprise Management System	OT	Operational Technology
GeoXO	Geostationary Extended Observations	PBGC	Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation

PES	Post-Enumeration Survey	Uniform Guidance	<i>Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards</i>
PII	Personally Identifiable Information		
PIIA	Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019		
PR DOA	Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture	U.S.	United States
PWS	Polar Weather Satellites	U.S.C.	United States Code
RLF	Revolving Loan Fund	USPTO	United States Patent and Trademark Office
SBA	U.S. Small Business Administration	Weather Act	Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017
SPD-3	Space Policy Directive-3		

REPORT

FRAUD & WASTE ABUSE



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Our Mission

To conduct independent and objective audits, evaluations, and investigations that promote economy, efficiency and effectiveness—and deter fraud, waste, and abuse—in the programs and operations of the Department of Commerce.