



INSPECTOR GENERAL

U.S. Department of Defense



DOD OIG COVID-19 OVERSIGHT PLAN

2021 Q1 UPDATE

INTEGRITY ★ INDEPENDENCE ★ EXCELLENCE



INTRODUCTION

In March 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 Act (CARES Act) to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus disease–2019 (COVID-19), domestically and internationally. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, DoD response efforts remain ongoing.

DoD OIG COVID-19 OVERSIGHT SNAP SHOT (As of January 31, 2021)

DoD Hotline Complaints to Date: 637
Ongoing Oversight Projects: 13
Reports Issued: 9
Best Practices Memorandums Issued: 3

To help ensure the DoD executes these funds in a timely and appropriate manner, the DoD Office of Inspector General (OIG) continues to coordinate across the DoD, the Federal oversight community, and with the Pandemic Response Accountability Committee (PRAC) to conduct relevant and impactful COVID-19 related oversight projects that are responsive to the complex environment in which the DoD operates.

The DoD OIG publicizes the DoD Hotline to encourage individuals to report concerns or complaints related to the DoD’s COVID-19 response and use of CARES Act 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 January 31, 2021, the DoD Hotline had received 637 complaints related to COVID-19. Social distancing continued 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 proactively 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. At the same time, DCIS has assigned investigative resources to participate at the national and regional levels in COVID-19 task forces and working groups to identify potential criminal schemes impacting 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.

On May 12, 2020, the DoD OIG released its COVID-19 Oversight Plan. The plan describes the independent audits, evaluations, and investigations the DoD OIG intends to conduct of DoD programs, operations, and activities being executed in response to COVID-19. In June 2020, the DoD OIG identified the top management challenges related to COVID-19: maintaining readiness and conducting ongoing operations; ensuring access to and quality of healthcare for service members and their families; and ensuring appropriate financial management and accountability of COVID-19 related funds.

ONGOING OVERSIGHT PROJECTS

Evaluation of the Armed Forces Retirement Home Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

The objective of this evaluation is to determine whether the Armed Forces Retirement Home protected the residents, staff, and medical professionals from COVID-19 exposure in accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, state, and local health and safety guidance.

https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jul/27/2002464795/-1/-1/1/D2020-DEV0PC-0158.000_REDACTED.PDF

Audit of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Contract Quality Assurance Controls Over the Conversion of Alternate Care Sites for the COVID-19 Response

The objective of this audit is to determine whether U.S. Army Corps of Engineers officials established quality assurance controls for the Alternate Care Sites constructed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jun/19/2002318550/-1/-1/1/D2020-D000AV-0144.000.PDF>

Evaluation of Access to DoD Information Technology and Communications During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The objective of this evaluation is to determine the extent to which the DoD workforce has adequate connectivity to DoD information technology and communications needed to maintain continuity of operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jun/19/2002318556/-1/-1/1/D2020-D000CU-0125.000.PDF>

Audit of the DoD Military Installations' Public Health Emergency Readiness

The objective of this audit is to determine whether DoD officials implemented measures to prepare for, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies, such as COVID-19, on DoD installations.

<https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jun/16/2002316636/-1/-1/1/D2020-D000RG-0146.000.PDF>

Audit of the Department of Defense Mission Assignments for COVID-19 in the U.S. Northern Command Area of Responsibility

The objective of this audit is to determine whether the U.S. Northern Command and DoD Components identified, tracked, requested, and received reimbursement for COVID-19 mission assignments from the Federal Emergency Management Agency in accordance with Federal and DoD policies.

<https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jun/09/2002313150/-1/-1/1/D2020-D000AU-0143.000.PDF>

Audit of Maintaining Cybersecurity in the COVID-19 Telework Environment

The objective of this audit is to determine whether DoD Components maintained network protections as the DoD workforce maximized the use of telework capabilities during the coronavirus disease pandemic.

<https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jun/09/2002313147/-1/-1/1/D2020-D000CR-0119.000.PDF>

Audit of the Impact of COVID-19 on Basic Military Training

The objective of this audit is to determine whether the DoD followed guidance and implemented procedures to prevent and reduce the spread of COVID-19 at basic training facilities, while maintaining military readiness.

<https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jun/09/2002313143/-1/-1/1/D2020-D000RL-0118.000.PDF>

Evaluation of the Navy's Plans and Response to the COVID-19 Outbreak Onboard Ships

The objective of this evaluation is to determine whether the Navy has implemented policies and procedures to prevent and mitigate the spread of infectious diseases, such as COVID-19, on ships and submarines.

https://media.defense.gov/2020/May/11/2002297866/-1/-1/1/D2020-DEV0SI-127.000_REDACTED.PDF

Evaluation of U.S. Combatant Command Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic

The objective of this evaluation is to determine whether U.S. Combatant Commands and their component commands executed pandemic response plans, and to identify the challenges encountered in implementing the response plans and the impact to operations resulting from COVID-19. The project has generated reports for the U.S. European Command and U.S. Africa Command. Evaluations of U.S. Central Command, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, and U.S. Southern Command continue.

<https://media.defense.gov/2020/May/13/2002298951/-1/-1/1/D2020-DEV0PD-0130.000.PDF>

Audit of Contracts for DoD Information Technology Products and Services Procured by DoD Components in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

The objective of this audit is to determine whether DoD Components used supplemental funding, received in response to the pandemic, to procure information technology products and services in accordance with applicable DoD and Federal requirements.

<https://media.defense.gov/2020/May/27/2002306080/-1/-1/1/D2020-D000CS-0129.000.PDF>

Audit of Dual-Status Commanders for use in Defense Support of Civil Authorities

The objective of this audit is to determine whether DoD Components complied with the process to nominate, certify, and appoint Dual-Status Commanders in accordance with legal authorities and DoD policies for use in Defense Support of Civil Authorities missions in response to the outbreak of COVID-19. Dual-Status Commanders are commissioned officers with the consent of the applicable governor of a state to exercise command on behalf of, and receive separate orders from, a Federal chain of command and exercise command on behalf of, and receive separate orders from, a state chain of command.

<https://media.defense.gov/2020/May/11/2002297479/-1/-1/1/D2020-D000RM-0122.000.PDF>

Audit of Entitlements and Allowances for Deployed Reserve Service Members

The objective of this audit is to determine 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 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 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 and Respirators in Response to the COVID-19 Outbreak (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 COVID-19. The Defense Logistics Agency took initiative to acquire ventilators prior to 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 disease. 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 (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 DoD Facilities in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic (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 the Centers for Disease Control 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 DoD Implementation of Section 3610 Authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (DODIG-2021-031)

This audit determined that in general, 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 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security 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 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 the U.S. European Command’s Response to COVID-19 (DODIG-2021-002)

This is the first of five reports in the ongoing “Evaluation of U.S. Combatant Command Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic” project listed in the Ongoing Oversight section above. 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 COVID-19 (DODIG-2020-132)

This is the second of five reports in the ongoing “Evaluation of U.S. Combatant Command Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic” project listed in the Ongoing Oversight section above. The report is classified. To file a Freedom of Information Act Request, please visit

<https://www.dodig.mil/FOIA/Submit-FOIA/>

Evaluation of Department of Defense Medical Treatment Facility Challenges During the COVID-19 Pandemic (DODIG-2020-133)

This evaluation determined that respondents at 54 Military Treatment Facilities identified challenges with personnel, supplies, testing capabilities, information technology, guidance, and lines of authority. The DoD OIG recommended that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, in conjunction with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs and Secretaries of the Military Departments, establish a working group to address the challenges encountered by MTF personnel during the COVID-19 pandemic that the DoD OIG identified. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness agreed with the recommendation, stating that the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs has already established a formal MHS COVID-19 After-Action Review, comprised of representatives from across the MHS, which they would use to address and respond to the DoD OIG report findings.

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. Based on our observations, Security and Support Squadron personnel checked the temperature of all personnel entering Al Udeid Air Base and implemented all screening procedures for incoming air terminal passengers. Additionally, in nearly every instance Security Squadron personnel wore required facemasks and gloves. However, when conducting screening at the North Gate, Security Squadron personnel did not consistently check travel passes that were required for base re-entry, or require that personnel wear facemasks if more than one passenger was in the vehicle. 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. If a surge in COVID-19 cases develops, ongoing operations and exercises in Qatar and the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility could be canceled, postponed, or impacted by staffing shortages caused by rapid increases in infected personnel. 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 COVID-19-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 coronavirus disease-2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The DHA managed care support contractors also implemented initiatives to identify potential fraud schemes for COVID-19 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>

DoD OIG OUTLOOK

In his Day One Message to the Force, issued on January 22, 2021, Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin stated “doing my job also means helping our country get control of the pandemic.” He stated he is focused on ensuring the DoD does “everything we can to vaccinate and care for our workforce and to look for meaningful ways to alleviate the pressure this pandemic has exerted on you and your families.”

The DoD OIG continues to coordinate across the DoD, the Federal oversight community, and with the PRAC to conduct relevant and impactful COVID-19 related oversight projects that are responsive to the complex environment in which the DoD operates. Completed oversight work indicates the DoD is focused on addressing challenges related to the pandemic.



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For more information about DoD OIG reports or activities, please contact us:

Congressional Liaison

703.604.8324

Media Contact

public.affairs@dodig.mil; 703.604.8324

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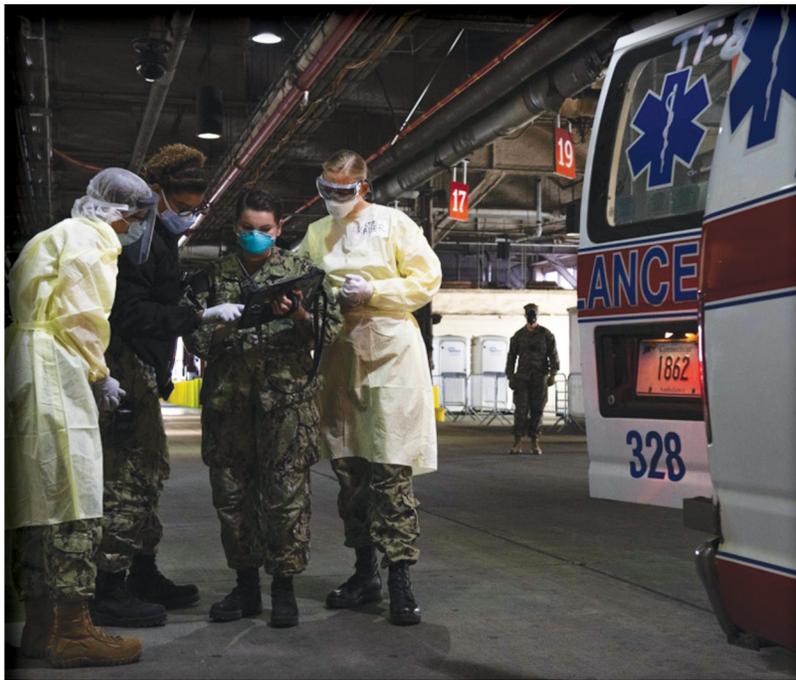
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Alexandria, VA 22350-1500
www.dodig.mil
DoD Hotline 1.800.424.9098