



Summary of Investigation

Subject: Alleged Contract Fraud, EAC, DC
Case No.: OI-VA-22-0967-I
Report Date: January 10, 2023

What Was Investigated

The Election Assistance Commission (EAC) Office of Inspector General (OIG) requested that the Department of Interior (DOI) OIG investigate allegations that an administrative officer for EAC improperly signed contracts for EAC when she did not have a contracting officer warrant. There were three awards that the officer signed from 2019 to 2021, totaling \$491,183. EAC OIG learned of these awards during oversight of an audit by an independent public auditing firm in 2022.

What DOI OIG Found

- The administrative officer was not a contracting officer and the actions she took in signing off on contracts violated the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) stating that “[n]o contract shall be entered into unless the contracting officer ensures that all requirements of law, executive orders, regulations, and all other applicable procedures . . . have been met.¹”
- The administrative officer’s actions violated the EAC Procurement Handbook, dated March 2018, which states that only the contracting officer can “obligate the Commission in procurement activities,” and only the contracting officer is authorized to “enter into, administer, and/or terminate contracts.”

Report Outcome

The Department of Interior OIG briefed EAC OIG on its findings. EAC OIG provided a [Management Advisory](#) outlining results of the investigation and concerns regarding the Commission’s procurement policies and practices.

EAC OIG Actions

- We advised EAC to ratify any unauthorized contracts and ensure that no one other than an authorized contracting officer enter into future contracts.
- Our management advisory stated that if the agency determined that other EAC personnel should have contracting authority that this authority should be delegated using specifications outlined in FAR and Office of Management and Budget guidance.
- We announced in November 2022 that we are planning to audit EAC’s contracting and procurement activities.

¹ 48 Code of Federal Regulations § 602-1(b), “Career Development, Contracting Authority, and Responsibilities.”