OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EVALUATION REPORT TITLED *U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR'S VIDEO TELECONFERENCING USAGE* (WR-EV-MOA-0004-2010)

Memorandum

To: Allen Lawrence
           Division Chief, Internal Control and Audit Follow-Up
           Office of Financial Management

From: Michael P. Colombo
           Western Regional Manager for Audits, Inspections, and Evaluations

Subject: Verification Review – Recommendations for the Evaluation Report Titled
           U.S. Department of the Interior's Video Teleconferencing Usage (WR-EV-MOA-
           0004-2010)
           Report No. 2018-WR-055

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) has completed a verification review of three recommendations presented in the subject report (Recommendations 2 – 4). Our objective was to determine whether the U.S. Department of the Interior implemented the recommendations as reported to the Office of Financial Management (PFM), Office of Policy, Management and Budget (PMB). On February 26, 2016, the PFM reported to us that it had closed the recommendations. Based on our review, we concur that all three recommendations are resolved and implemented.

Background

Our December 2011 evaluation report titled *U.S. Department of the Interior's Video Teleconferencing Usage* contained five recommendations designed to help the Department maximize its use of video teleconferencing (VTC).

On September 30, 2011, the PMB responded to our draft report on behalf of the Department, concurring with Recommendations 1 – 4 and not concurring with Recommendation 5. In a memo dated June 4, 2013, we referred the recommendations to the Assistant Secretary of Policy, Management and Budget to track implementation. We verified that Recommendations 1 and 5 had been satisfied on July 10, 2015.

Scope and Methodology

We limited the scope of this review to determining whether the Department took sufficient action to implement Recommendations 2 – 4. To accomplish this objective, we reviewed the PFM's documentation supporting its closure of the three recommendations.

We did not test internal controls, perform any site visits, or conduct fieldwork to determine whether the Department had corrected the underlying deficiencies that we initially

identified. As a result, this review was not conducted in accordance with the Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States or the Quality Standards for Inspections and Evaluations issued by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency.

Results of Review

We found that the Department has resolved and implemented all three recommendations.

Department officials told us that the current VTC equipment may not be the same equipment used when the report was issued and that older VTC equipment is being phased out in favor of current technology. Because of this, they expressed concern about meeting the recommendations. We informed the officials that we could consider a recommendation implemented if the existing support showed that the actions taken met the original intent.

> **Recommendation 2:** Strategically align VTC equipment with the Department's most frequent flight departure and destination cities and flight costs to maximize the use of the equipment, and periodically re-evaluate the Department's frequent flight patterns for continuous realignment of the VTC equipment.

> **Actions Taken:** In its response to our draft report, the PMB told us that the Department concurred that strategic alignment of its VTC equipment across organizational boundaries is necessary. The Department did not concur that VTC equipment and shared VTC services should be aligned to cities with frequent flight departures and arrivals without additional analysis. The Department stated that there are many reasons for official travel, including attendance at third-party conferences and training courses that may not support VTC. Highly traveled locations may not correlate with locations where the Department has a large presence, adequate network capabilities, and available IT personnel to service and maintain VTC equipment.

> The Department anticipates that the VTC systems in place at the time of our evaluation will be phased out over the next few years as the service life of the equipment is realized. Given that older VTC equipment will be phased out, the Department has employed commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) products (e.g., WebEx, Join Me, and Live Meeting) to allow individuals or groups to share desktops and interact face-to-face on a regular basis.

> Based on the information provided, we conclude that the Department took the necessary steps to determine viable locations for VTC capabilities, which included an analysis of employee proximity and network capabilities. We therefore consider the recommendation to be resolved and implemented.

> **Recommendation 3:** Develop and implement a plan to make VTC equipment compatible and interconnected Department-wide, including exploring options to acquire video bridging technology for existing VTC equipment and ensuring compatibility for future VTC equipment purchases.

Actions Taken: In its response to our draft report, the PMB told us that the Department concurred with standardizing its VTC capabilities to maximize use, but did not concur that simply interconnecting existing equipment would most efficiently solve the issue. The Department had a variety of equipment of various ages, connection requirements, and bridging technology challenges.

The Department determined that the best way to address our recommendation while phasing out outdated VTC equipment was to incorporate COTS products such as WebEx and Live Meeting. These platforms allow individuals or groups to share desktops and interact face-to-face. The Department has also implemented Google Apps, which includes Google Hangouts and Google Chat, for additional flexibility.

Based on the information provided, we conclude that the Department took the necessary steps to meet the intent of the recommendation. We consider it resolved and implemented.

Recommendation 4: Post available VTC equipment information on the Department intranet to encourage cooperative sharing of VTC equipment and develop and implement a VTC scheduling system capable of searching the database of VTC sites and showing available times for the equipment. Information on the Department intranet should include the following:

- Location of equipment

- Type of equipment

- Bridging technology availability

- Maximum capacity of VTC site location

- Pricing schedule (if applicable)

- Bureau or office contact name and telephone number or email address

- IP address and ISDN connection number of VTC endpoint

Actions Taken: In its response to our draft report, the PMB told us that the Department concurred that a strategy and supporting capabilities are necessary to fully develop a shared services VTC capability.

On October 5, 2012, as a part of its ongoing IT Transformation Initiative (launched by Secretarial Order No. 3309 on December 14, 2010), the Department issued guidance to all bureau and office Associate Directors of Information Resources on acquisition, installation, configuration, and maintenance of VTC systems owned, leased, or managed by the Department. It created a VTC reservations Google site and posted available VTC equipment information on the Department's intranet. The reservation site allows

employees across the Department to identify and reserve VTC sites based on location and maximum capacity.

Based on the information provided, we consider the recommendation resolved and implemented.

Conclusion

We conclude that Recommendations 2 – 4 are resolved and implemented.

We informed Department officials of the results of this review via email on August 21, 2018. Department officials concurred with our findings and declined an exit conference.

If you have any questions about this report, please contact me at 916-978-5620.

cc: Grayford Payne, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Budget,
        Finance, Performance, and Acquisition
        Douglas Glenn, Director, Office of Financial Management
        Nancy Thomas, DOI/GAO Liaison, Office of Financial Management
        Alexandra Lampros, Audit Liaison Officer, Office of Financial Management
        Sharon Blake, GAO Liaison, Office of Financial Management
        Pete Brownell, Audit Liaison Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer

Report Fraud, Waste, and Mismanagement

Fraud, waste, and mismanagement in Government concern everyone: Office of Inspector General staff, departmental employees, and the general public. We actively solicit allegations of any inefficient and wasteful practices, fraud, and mismanagement related to departmental or Insular Area programs and operations. You can report allegations to us in several ways.

By Internet: www.doioig.gov

By Phone: 24-Hour Toll Free: 800-424-5081
                  Washington Metro Area: 202-208-5300

By Fax: 703-487-5402

By Mail: U.S. Department of the Interior
                 Office of Inspector General
                 Mail Stop 4428 MIB
                 1849 C Street, NW.
                 Washington, DC 20240