OFFICE *of the*
INSPECTOR GENERAL
U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

FALL 2022

SEMIANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS

April 1, 2022-September 30, 2022

ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

The U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) was established in 1861 and is the Federal Government's primary resource for producing, procuring, cataloging, indexing, authenticating, disseminating, and preserving the official information products of the U.S. Government in both digital and tangible formats. GPO is responsible for producing and distributing informational products and services for all three branches of the Federal Government, including U.S. passports for the Department of State as well as official publications of Congress, the White House, and other Federal agencies. In addition to publication sales, GPO provides permanent public access to Federal Government information at no charge through *GovInfo.gov* and via partnerships with libraries nationwide participating in the Federal Depository Library Program.[1]

ABOUT THE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

The GPO Office of the Inspector General (OIG) helps GPO carry out its responsibilities by promoting economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the administration of GPO programs and operations. Our efforts are designed to prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse in those programs and operations.

The GPO Inspector General Act of 1988, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3901-3903, along with the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended (IG Act), 5 U.S.C. App., establishes the responsibilities and duties of the OIG. The Legislative Branch Inspectors General Independence Act of 2019 enhanced the OIG's independence and expanded our office's duties by, among other things, granting us independent law enforcement authority, human capital, and budget independence.

The OIG, located in Washington, D.C., is allocated 25 employees and is organized into three main divisions: Audits, Inspections, and Investigations. Through these and other activities, the OIG conducts independent and objective reviews of GPO programs and operations in order to help keep the Director, Congress, and the public informed of potential issues or deficiencies relating to administering and operating GPO.

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[1] https://www.gpo.gov/who-we-are/our-agency/mission-vision-and-values

MISSION/VISION/VALUES

OUR MISSION

To prevent fraud, waste, and abuse, and improve agency efficiency and effectiveness. Provide insight into GPO programs and operations to stakeholders through independent and objective oversight.

OUR VISION

Our work offers value that helps GPO improve. Based on transparency, communication and trust, OIG stakeholders—GPO, Congress, and the public—welcome and respect our products and services.

OUR VALUES

PROFESSIONALISM

We belong to a community dedicated to the highest standards and practices. We hold ourselves accountable.

OBJECTIVE

We conduct our work with fairness and free from bias. We base our findings and recommendations on reliable and verifiable evidence.

INDEPENDENT

The core value of our work stems from the freedom to offer counsel unencumbered by external pressure or undue influence.

RELEVANT

All of our work is focused on supporting GPO to accomplish its mission, and takes into account all our stakeholders' concerns and priorities.

ETHICAL

We perform our work through a principled, diligent, and reliable practice that engenders trust.

INSPECTOR GENERAL MESSAGE

I am pleased to present this U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) Office of the Inspector General Fall 2022 Semiannual Report to Congress (SARC). Over the past six months, despite staff shortages, my office has successfully kept its commitment to focus on production across all lines of business to include outreach efforts to our stakeholders both virtually and when safe, in person. We continued the hybrid work model established this past April, a model that I believe maximizes flexibility while maintaining team collaboration.

During this reporting period, we completed several investigations and published multiple audit and inspection reports. These ranged from a comprehensive examination of GPO's transformation efforts to how GPO manages employees' time spent on union activities. We also published a report resulting from our whole-of-office effort to visit each GPO location across the country. These reports contain over $2.5 million in monetary Return On Investment (ROI) and also continue our commitment to reporting significant non-monetary ROI as a tool for our stakeholders to understand the comprehensive value of our work. In addition to the completed reports, we initiated a new contracted study to inform stakeholders on how GPO manages its relationship with the various unions that represent GPO employees. We also began an inspection into GPO's top ten safety issues.

We continued to implement the mandate of the Legislative Branch Inspectors General Independence Act of 2019 to strengthen our independence by, among other things, seeking a separate budget appropriation for FY 2023, as well as requesting appropriated funds for Human Capital and Information Technology Support from a third-party federal agency. As I have consistently made clear to our Congressional stakeholders, I believe that a direct appropriation to my office is necessary to safeguard our independence in conducting rigorous and objective oversight. I also continue to believe that, due to conflict-of-interest concerns, using a third-party federal entity for Human Capital is essential. I look forward to a positive resolution to these concerns.

I continue to have frequent and regular interactions with our oversight and appropriations committees regarding the ongoing actions and challenges that my office faces. Keeping Congress fully and appropriately informed while maintaining necessary independence is an enduring focus.

Michael P. Leary
Inspector General

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SELECTED STATISTICS AND HIGHLIGHTS

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Return on Investment (ROI) is a commonly used profitability ratio that measures the amount of return, or profit, an investment generates relative to cost.[2] The ROI for an OIG is the most quantifiable metric of performance and considers the cost of doing business and the revenues it collects.[3] The reporting requirements of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, can be seen to prioritize quantitative results rather than qualitative work. Therefore, Inspectors General may be inclined to focus on metrics that may not accurately reflect the most pressing matters at the agency they oversee.[4] This can lead to a misplaced emphasis in the work of an OIG, because it tends to focus on money lost, whereas much of the value of an OIG comes from money saved, or better yet, value gained, *i.e.*, proactive savings versus reactive losses.

For OIG work, ROI is usually defined in terms of monetary impact and savings associated with audits, investigations, and other actions that allow the Government to recoup funds owed, correct practices to ensure more efficient spending, and prevent misappropriation of funds.[5] Examples of these type of monetary benefits are included in the appendices to this report and in some cases are required by law to be reported.

While dollar value is the traditional baseline for ROI, there are other quantitative and qualitative ways to show positive impact on an agency – that is, to expand the definition of "value." Examples of ways to measure value can be in savings over time, better decision making and reporting, increased level of service, and timely regulatory compliance.[6]

Inclusion of this expanded concept of ROI in reporting to GPO, Congress, and the public is important to OIG operations because although difficult to measure, determining non- monetary ROI impacts and benefits allows the OIG to show value to the agency and identify areas where dollar savings potential is possible. The results and impact of OIG work can oftentimes provide an alternative to the traditional monetary ROI and give the flexibility to develop tailored approaches for determining the efficiency, effectiveness, or sustainability of agency operations, or improving programs or policies. Examples of non-monetary or non-traditional benefits are listed below.

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[2] Speights, "Return on Investment: What to Expect", *The Motley Fool* (Mar. 17, 2021), available at: https://www.fool.com/investing/how-to-invest/stocks/good-return-on-investment/

[3] Hudak and Wallack, "Sometimes cutting budgets raises deficits: The curious case of inspectors general return on investment", *Center for Effective Public Management at Brookings* (April 2015), available at: https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CEPMHudakWallackOIG.pdf

[4] Letter to Senator Johnson, Senator Peters, Representative Cummings, and Representative Jordan, from ACORN8, Government Accountability Project, National Taxpayers Union, Project on Government Oversight, Public Citizen, R Street Institute, and Taxpayers Protection Alliance (May 16, 2019), available at: https://www.rstreet.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Bipartisan-Coalition-Support-Letter-for-IG-reform.pdf

[5] IBID.

[6] "Calculating Non-Traditional Return on Investments", VUEWorks (Feb. 26, 2018), available at: https://www.vueworks.com/calculating-non-traditional-return-on-investments/

List of Non-Monetary Benefits

01) Improve management controls

02) Improve systems and processes

03) Avoid violations of law or regulation

04) Validate existing processes

05) Initiate best business practices

06) Provide analysis and data to decision-makers

07) Improve safety, morale, health, and security

08) Ensure compliance with a prescribed standard

09) Enhance stakeholder confidence

10) Other

Reporting non-monetary/non-traditional ROI is an iterative process and will continue to evolve in future Semiannual Reports to Congress. For this report, in the OIG division- specific sections, we provide a narrative of each project's ROI with a summary of the OIG's non-monetary ROI provided in Appendix A.

JOINT OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL PROJECTS

In keeping with our strategic direction, all efforts in our Divisions will be "team based." Every inspection, audit, or investigation will have two or more assigned members. In addition, our office will work on joint projects and products using team members from each division. These latter projects and products are as follows.

Ongoing Projects this Reporting Period

Oversight and Monitoring GPO's Joint Priority Projects.

In furtherance of our statutory oversight mission, we sought to better understand how GPO's Priority Projects are selected and managed through completion, and how the Priority Projects are associated and linked with GPO's strategic planning.

During this reporting period, our joint team reviewed the *U.S. Government Publishing Office FY2023 Annual Performance Plan FY2021 Annual Performance Report*, dated April 2022.[7] We asked GPO to further clarify questions that arose from our review of the above and of the June 2021 data call. GPO provided a substantial response to our data call regarding strategic planning and priority projects, where we asked for information and documents that describe the project from inception through completion, which may have included the original proposal, business case, project management milestones, decision briefings, and periodic progress updates. However, in some cases, we did not receive all the information we asked for, or additional information is needed. As such, we completed an additional data call. In August 2022, GPO provided a comprehensive and informative data call response addressing our additional questions and concerns.

This is a continuous oversight project that will produce periodic updates for our stakeholders.

Completed this Reporting Period

Special Report, GPO Regional Site Visits, Report No. 22-05

Starting in May 2021 and ending in March 2022, our office sent joint teams of auditors, inspectors, and investigators to better understand the purpose, operations, and management of GPO's regional offices. We physically visited 11 out of 15 regional facilities and conducted virtual site visits for the four remaining. The purpose of the site visits was to first provide a level of oversight not exercised in the history of our office by physically visiting each site. Second, we endeavored to understand the mission and purpose of each location. Lastly, we sought to educate remote site employees about our office in order to deter fraud, waste, and abuse. Ultimately, based on feedback from the sites we visited, we believe the visits were mutually beneficial.

At the time we began the project, GPO operated 15 regional facilities located throughout the country. These facilities consisted of two warehouse and distribution centers, one secure production facility, and twelve regional procurement offices. Of the 12 regional procurement offices, the Chicago office closed in December 2021. At the time of the review, these facilities employed 178 personnel (11 percent) of GPO's workforce.

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[7] FY2023 Annual Performance Plan FY2021 Annual Performance Report (gpo.gov)

Regarding what we observed, at the distribution centers (Laurel, MD and Pueblo, CO), managers expressed a desire for additional warehouse space. According to one distribution center manager, the operation had grown so much that having additional space would allow further expansion of their operation. Similarly, at Pueblo, we learned that the facility was at its maximum storage and production capacity, and as a result, it could not take on any new customers or store any additional publications. Further, employees described challenges with technology and hiring. At the secure production facility (Stennis, MS), employees expressed concerns regarding the hiring process. There were also concerns about routine communication between the staff and management, and about weather-related emergency notifications as a tenant of NASA's Stennis Space Center.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, our visits to the regional procurement sites came at a time of transition to telework and remote work. After closing the Chicago site (December 2021) GPO started a 6-month pilot program using a shared work space. GPO also stated that any future changes to leased spaces for any other regional procurement office would be contingent upon the outcome of the pilot program. In the 8 months since the update to the telework program (June 2021) through the start of the pilot program (December 2021), GPO spent approximately $448,000 in lease payments; funds which we think could have been put to better use. Finally, as a result of updating the telework program, eight (of 11) offices (72 percent) remained largely empty after 2 years. At the current FY2022 lease rates, GPO would spend $2,034,387, at a minimum, over the remaining lease terms if it does not terminate any leases.

In August 2022, the Director of GPO announced that the physical regional offices will close.

Requests for Information (RFIs)

Each reporting period we make inquiries into potential GPO issues in furtherance of our statutory oversight mission and in accordance with the GPO Inspector General Act of 1988 and the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended. These requests for information allow GPO to answer discrete questions in a timely manner and can, in some cases, alleviate the need to conduct a full audit, inspection, or investigation. Answers to our RFIs also inform our annual audit and inspection planning and contracted project selection. Below are the following RFIs for this reporting period.

Note: each audit and inspection project will have their own request for information not included in this section.

FY 2023 Annual Planning Solicitation, April 20, 2022 and Follow-up Data Call, July 11, 2022

Every year, Federal Inspectors General publish a plan detailing their intended audit and inspection projects for the coming year. The specific audit and inspection focus areas are identified through a combination of internal deliberations and inputs from stakeholders. As we started our FY 2023 annual project planning in April, we offered all GPO employees the opportunity to provide input. In July we requested additional information to inform our final project selection.

GPO's Priority Projects Follow-up Data Call, July 13, 2022

As previously stated, in June 2021 GPO provided a substantial response to our data call regarding strategic planning and priority projects. We asked for information and documents that describe the project from inception through completion, to include the original proposal, business case, project management milestones, decision briefings, and periodic progress updates. However, in some cases, we did not receive all the information we asked for, or additional information is needed. As such, we completed an additional data call.

GPO's Contingent Liabilities Follow-up Data Call, September 21, 2022

We asked GPO to provide an update of GPO's contingent liabilities covering the Calendar Years (CYs) 2020, 2021 and, if available, 2022. In 2020, the GPO Office of General Counsel provided us with a copy of their 2019 report titled *Disclosures of Liabilities 2019*. We are seeking the updated iterations (or equivalent information) to that report. This data call will enable us to better understand GPO's approach to claims against it made by employees.

AUDITS

The Audits Division helps improve the management of GPO programs and activities by providing timely, balanced, credible, and independent financial and financially-related audits that address the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of GPO operations. Audit reports identify opportunities for enhancing management of program operations and provides GPO with constructive recommendations to improve its services. OIG audits are performed in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

Ongoing Audit(s) this Reporting Period

Payments to Employees Covered by the Federal Employees' Compensation Act, Project No. A-2021-002

We initiated an audit to examine GPO's controls over the program paying employees who have sustained work related injuries covered by the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA). The FECA program provides coverage for and assistance to GPO employees who have sustained work-related injuries by providing monetary and medical benefits and assistance in returning to work. This audit was put on temporary hold January 2022 in order for our staff to gain access to third-party databases at the Department of Labor. This project was restarted in May 2022.

Completed this Reporting Period

Management of Official Time for Union Activities, Report No.22-08, September 16, 2022

Our objective was to assess the management of the use of official time for union activities by GPO employees in bargaining units. The Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute (Statute), enacted in 1978 allows for the use of official time in the federal government. Official time, as authorized by the Statute, is paid time spent by GPO employees performing representational work for bargaining units.

The legal obligation to grant official time reinforces the need for oversight and accountability for GPO's 11 labor unions representing about 900 bargaining unit employees eligible to use official time. It is important that adequate controls, processes, and guidance are in place to provide reasonable assurance that official time:

- is used as intended;

- is consistent with applicable Statute, CBA provisions, and GPO policies;

- is recorded in GPO's official time and attendance system;

- informs management and labor decision-making; and

- provides public transparency.

Accordingly, GPO management has a responsibility to ensure that official time is authorized and used appropriately.

We found that the use of official time has improved relations between management and labor unions because it enables working jointly to develop solutions or improvements to address workplace challenges. However, GPO lacked adequate controls, processes, and guidance to ensure that official time used was accurately recorded in the time and attendance system or had met activities authorized by the Statute or provisions of collective bargaining agreements (CBA). Based on our analysis of time and attendance data, documentation reviews, and interviews, official time was under-

reported or unsupported as required. We determined employees and supervisors followed practices that were not always consistent with CBA provisions; that recording and/or reporting official time differed from one business unit to the next; challenges existed with using a "reasonable and necessary" time approach; and monitoring the use of official time for compliance was not required. Absent adequate controls and processes, GPO cannot determine the overall costs to support union activities, the amount of official time used, the number of people using official time, and whether official time was used as intended. In our test of employees that took 8+hour days for representational activities in just one year, we questioned 488 of the 560 hours a cost of $20,008.

Recommendations: The report contained six recommendations designed to improve controls, processes, and guidance for requesting, approving, reporting, recording, and monitoring official time.

Return on Investment: When fully implemented, our recommendations will improve management controls, systems, and processes. For example, requiring employees to use the official time and attendance system to request, approve, record, and report all work and leave hours should improve data quality and enable a more efficient process for the agency to collect, track, and report the use of official time. Also, evaluating, identifying, and remedying any practices not consistent with the Statutes and CBA provisions are essential to ensure official time is requested, approved, and recorded appropriately. Further, providing training and program guidance is essential to educate employees and supervisors on official time procedures, rights, and responsibilities to

ensure that provisions for official time are administered as specified in relevant CBAs. Lastly, implementing monitoring activities will provide the agency an opportunity to strengthen its internal controls and increase transparency and accountability of official time.

INSPECTIONS

The Inspections Division conducts proactive inspections of GPO programs and operations to identify opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness. These inspections are systematic and independent assessments of the design, implementation, and/or results of GPO's operations, programs, or policies. They provide information that is timely, credible, and useful for agency managers, policymakers, and others. The GPO OIG's inspections are performed in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation issued by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE).

Ongoing Inspection Projects this Reporting Period

Environmental Programs Office Processes and Procedures to Address Environmental Violations, Project No. 21-02

On September 11, 2018, GPO received notification of alleged violations resulting from an U.S. Environmental Protection Agency inspection conducted at GPO's Washington D.C. location on July 11-14, 2016, and was cited a civil penalty of $140,000. Subsequent civil penalties were also imposed by the D.C. Department of Energy & Environment for a total of $11,000. We are evaluating if GPO is addressing identified violations and determining if the Environmental Programs Office is effectively organized, staffed, and trained to fulfill its responsibilities.

Top Ten Safety Hazards, Project No. 22-02

The GPO Security Services Safety Branch conducts annual safety assessments on all GPO facilities and ultimately publishes a Top 10 Safety Hazards list. Many of the priority hazards have remained on the Top 10 list for years. We initiated an inspection to review GPO's Top 10 Safety Hazards program. The review will determine how GPO develops the Top 10 Safety Hazards list, determine how GPO plans, schedules, and supports Top 10 Safety Hazards repairs, and analyze the status of each item on the Fiscal Year 2022 Top Ten Safety Hazards list.

Completed this Reporting Period

GPO's Organizational Transformation Evaluation, Report No. 22-06, May 19, 2022

We contracted with CG Strategy, Inc. to evaluate GPO's transformation from a print-centric to a content-centric organization. The evaluation was conducted in alignment with GPO's commitment to organizational transformation and focused on the status of GPO's transformation into a modern, world-class, and trusted source of published products and information. The baseline for this evaluation stemmed from GAO transformation recommendations that were adopted by GPO in reports from 2001, 2003, and 2004 as well as from recommendations by the National Academy of Public Administration's (NAPA) 2013 report. The report noted that while GPO endeavored during the last 20 years to improve both their financial viability and their overall performance with some success, GPO still has much to do in order to transform strategically in order to meet the future needs of GPO's customers. While GPO has made targeted progress in modernizing its products and services and simultaneously improved its financial health, the agency continues to face challenges in meeting its current commitments and taking the bold steps needed to truly transform into a modern, digital publishing organization. Many of the vulnerabilities identified in

prior reviews, particularly those related to human capital management and acquisitions functions remain vulnerabilities for GPO today.

Recommendations: The report contained four findings, and made 17 recommendations to address the agency's ability to execute its existing mission, as well as its capacity to transform into a modern publisher and information disseminator. We adopted 15 of the 17 recommendations to follow-up with GPO. Management concurred in full with 13 recommendations, concurred in part with 2 recommendations, and non-concurred with 2 recommendations. The majority of GPO's comments were responsive to meeting the recommendations' intent even in cases where they did not concur.

Return on Investment: When fully implemented, the recommendations will help to improve the cohesion of GPO's business model, mission space and budget, facilitate consistent goals and vision across all business units and leaders, create consistent processes, and enhance human capital sustainability. Implementation of the recommendations will also help GPO remain on the cutting-edge of technology and maintain a forward-thinking mindset. For example, conducting a strategic, enterprise-wide, forecasting initiative will allow GPO to discern where it needs to be in the next decade and beyond, capitalize on its strengths, and refocus agency priorities as needed. In addition, an environmental scan of the private sector and other government publishing entities, to discover newly available technology, will likely aid in proactively anticipating the needs and future requirements of GPO's customers.

GPO's Privacy Program, Report No. 22-07, July 29, 2022

We reviewed the effectiveness and efficiency of GPO's Privacy Program and its management of personally identifiable information (PII). Specifically, we focused on alignment to Federal laws, regulations, guidance and best practices, PII life cycle management, privacy breaches and incident response, and training. GPO stated that its Privacy Program is aligned with Federal law and oversight guidance, specifically from the Privacy Act, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). We found that GPO omitted the inclusion of Systems of Records Notices, a basic privacy practice from the Privacy Act. GPO also lacked transparency in what privacy laws and guidance it follows and why. We determined GPO needed to improve recordkeeping and PII management compliance for the 24 PII systems identified. GPO's privacy incident response procedures should incorporate NIST Special Publication 800-122 in order to provide more detailed implementation guidance when responding to privacy incidents. GPO should ensure that all employees receive PII training.

Recommendations: We made 13 recommendations designed to improve the effectiveness of GPO's Privacy Program. The recommendations focused on compliance, incident response, and training. GPO concurred with all 13 recommendations and the proposed actions were generally responsive to the recommendations.

Return on Investment: When fully implemented, our recommendations help GPO avoid costs due to violations of the Privacy Act and should improve management controls, systems, and processes. For example, identifying federal privacy laws

and oversight guidance, including the specific sections that GPO intends to follow as definitive guidance, will help GPO and its employees avoid Privacy Act violations that can cost $5,000 per incident. Additionally, documenting the reasoning for following some sections but not others, will help guide GPO's future decision-making and privacy practices. Clear documentation and reasoning will help ensure controls are in place and that appropriate parties have been advised of GPO's practices. Developing privacy impact assessments and confidentiality impact levels will help ensure that safety measures, processes, and controls are in place, helping to avoid data breaches, which cost an average of $4.4 million each in 2022.[8]

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[8] https://www.opm.gov/cybersecurity/cybersecurity-incidents/
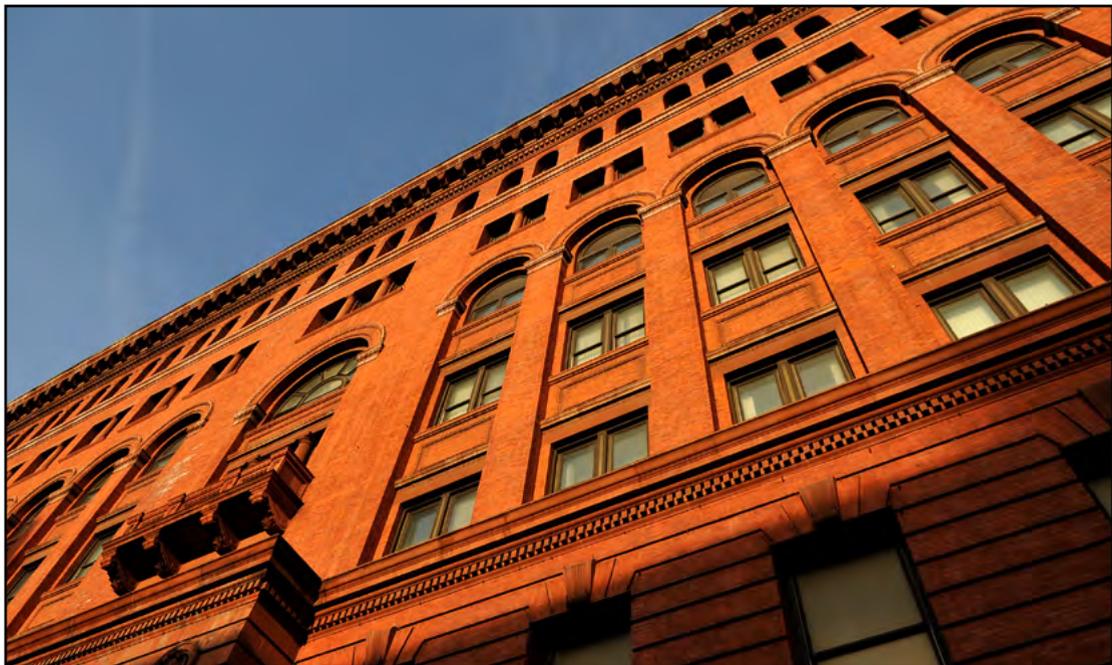
INVESTIGATIONS

The Investigations Division is responsible for conducting and coordinating investigative activities related to fraud, waste, and abuse in GPO programs and operations. While concentrating efforts and resources on major fraud investigations, activities investigated may include possible wrongdoing by GPO contractors, employees, program participants, and others who commit crimes against GPO. Through prosecution, administrative action(s), and monetary recoveries, these investigations promote integrity, efficiency, and accountability.

The Investigations Division (INV) employs special agents who are duly appointed criminal investigators with statutory authority to carry firearms, conduct arrests, execute search and seizure warrants, and perform other law enforcement duties. The INV team works collaboratively with internal and external OIG counterparts as well as other law enforcement partners. To ensure continued operational quality, INV developed a stratified investigative approach intended to direct resources toward investigations that yield a positive return on investment. To that end, INV is diversifying its workforce seeking employees specializing in procurement fraud and forensic auditing. We recently contracted forensic auditing support and training services for at least the next year. With an emphasis on systemic fraud, INV continues to work on a proactive initiative designed to identify fraud indicators in GPO's procurement programs, services, and financial equities.

OIG INVESTIGATIONS SYSTEMIC FRAUD OVERVIEW

During this reporting period, as part of its strategic plan for FY2022, the Investigations Division updated its investigative approach to detect and address systemic fraud. To advance the operational model developed during the first half of the fiscal year, INV initiated a proactive proposal designed to examine high-dollar value contracts at GPO. The end goal of this proactive initiative is to identify potential fraud impacting the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of GPO procurement programs and projects. While the proactive initiative is ongoing, INV has recognized the need to include the skillset of a forensic auditor/analyst and other investigative resources in its operational structure. As mentioned above, we have also contracted a forensic auditor to support the Investigations Division in August 2022.
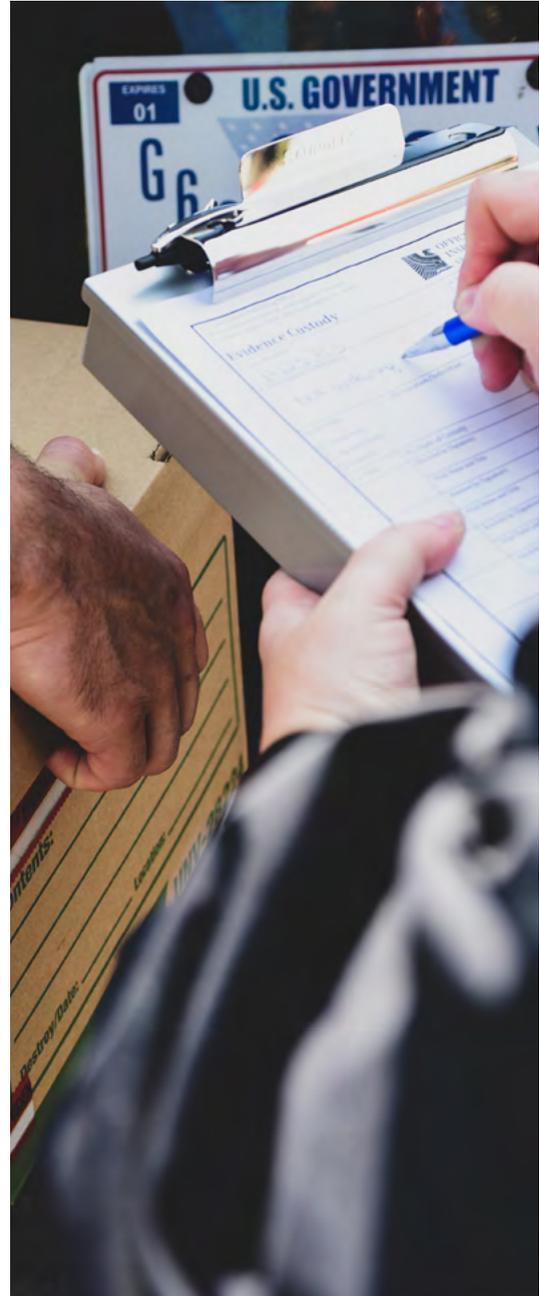
OIG Hotline

The OIG receives allegations of wrongdoing via email, telephone, mail, employee drop-box, and walk- ins. These are referred to collectively as "Hotline" intakes. INV reviews these allegations to determine whether the complaint should be the subject of an investigation, audit, inspection, or referred to the GPO or another entity. During this reporting period, the Investigations Division received a total of 24 Hotline intakes.

Summary of OIG Hotline Intakes

Item(s)	No.
Hotline Intakes Open at the Beginning of the Reporting Period	6
New Hotline Intakes Received During the Reporting Period	24
Hotlines Closed (no further action)	11
Hotlines Closed (referred to other OIG Division)	0
Hotlines Closed (referred to GPO management)	3
Hotlines Closed (referred to other law enforcement)	8
Hotlines Closed (referred to other agency)	2
Hotlines Converted to Preliminary Inquiries	0
Hotlines Converted to Complaints	0
Hotlines Converted to Investigations	0

Distribution of Hotline Intakes to the OIG

Hotlines Received

Legend:
- IG Hotline Email (67%)
- IG Hotline Phone (21%)
- IG Hotline PO Box (4%)
- In Person (4%)
- Mail (4%)
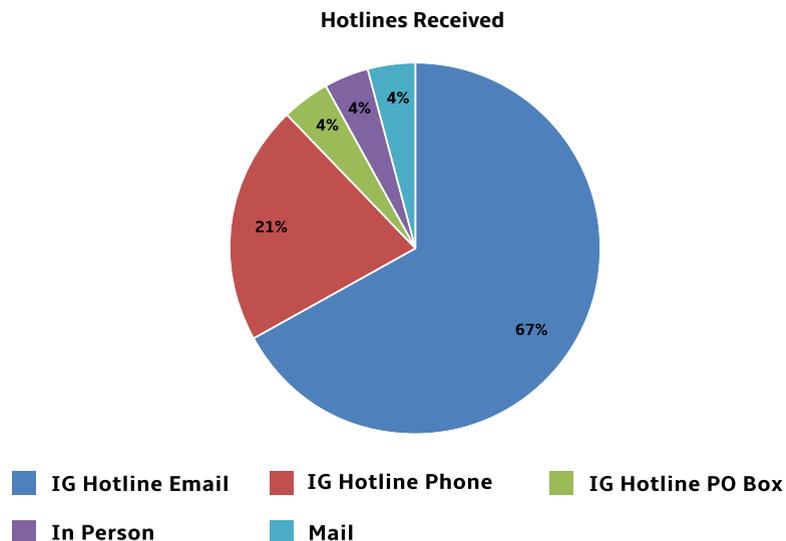
CASE HIGHLIGHTS

Debarred Vendor Doing Business with GPO (22-0002-I)

On March 23, 2021, we received a request to investigate whether a debarred company (Vendor 1), owned by a convicted and debarred felon (Owner), attempted to do business with GPO under the guise of another company (Vendor 2). In response, we investigated the alleged link between Vendor 1, Owner, and Vendor 2.

The investigation disclosed that while debarred, Vendor 1 and Owner used Vendor 2 to solicit GPO contracts impacting at least 65 contracts for an aggregate total of $96,833.12.

We presented this case to the U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Florida. Subsequently they filed a probation violation against Owner, who at the time was serving a 3-year probation sentence for defrauding GPO in a separate case.

On June 8, 2022, the overseeing U.S. District Court found Owner guilty of violating the conditions of probation. Consequently, the Court sentenced the Owner to 6 months of home confinement, and 50 hours of community service. We also referred this case to GPO to consider extending Vendor 1 and Owner's debarment as well as to debar Vendor 2. On August 25, 2022, GPO's Suspension and Debarment (S&D) Official notified Vendor 1, Owner, and Vendor 2 of their proposed debarment extension and proposed debarment respectively.

Return on Investment: The results of this case protect the agency's financial and operational interests by preventing fraud. Additionally, the investigative work provided critical insights on how bad actors could engineer a fraud scheme that put agency equities at risk. The lessons learned further provide pragmatic value to GPO decision-makers on how to improve preventive measures and management controls of GPO contracts.

Status: Closed.

Outside Investigation Conducted by GPO OIG (22-0001-I)

In October 2021, INV opened an investigation based on a referral from the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE). Specifically, CIGIE's Integrity Committee received an allegation that personnel at another OIG engaged in conduct potentially undermining the integrity expected from government employees with respect to credential handling.

During the course of the investigation, INV conducted numerous interviews, document reviews, computer data reviews, and on-site visits. The results of the investigation were inconclusive. However, the investigation disclosed that an employee failed to account for missing credentials for an extended period of time. We were able to determine that credentials were not controlled for approximately 1 year (between at least December 2020 through August 2021).

On April 8, 2022, we provided the requesting office with our report of investigation.

Return on Investment: This case provided investigative support to the Inspector General community by helping another OIG address an internal matter. INV helped a CIGIE counterpart identify a vulnerability with credential management.

Status: Closed.

OTHER INFORMATION

Significant Revised Management Decisions. [9]
None

Significant Management Decision with which the Inspector General Disagreed.
None

Audits, Inspections, and Investigations involving Senior Government Employees that were Not Disclosed to the Public or Where Allegations of Misconduct Were Substantiated. None

All product titles are listed on **https://www.gpo.gov/who-we-are/our-agency/inspector-general**.

Where possible, the reports are also posted at **www.oversight.gov**.

Whistleblower Retaliation Investigations.
None

Instances of GPO Refusing to Provide Information or Assistance or Interfering with the OIG's Independence. None

Statutory Certification

In accordance with the Legislative Branch Inspectors General Independence Act of 2019, as codified in 44 U.S.C. § 3903(c)(3), the Inspector General certifies that the GPO OIG has adequate safeguards and management procedures in place to ensure that the Investigations Division is in compliance with the standards established by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, which incorporate Department of Justice guidelines, to ensure proper exercise of the statutory law enforcement authority granted under section 3903.

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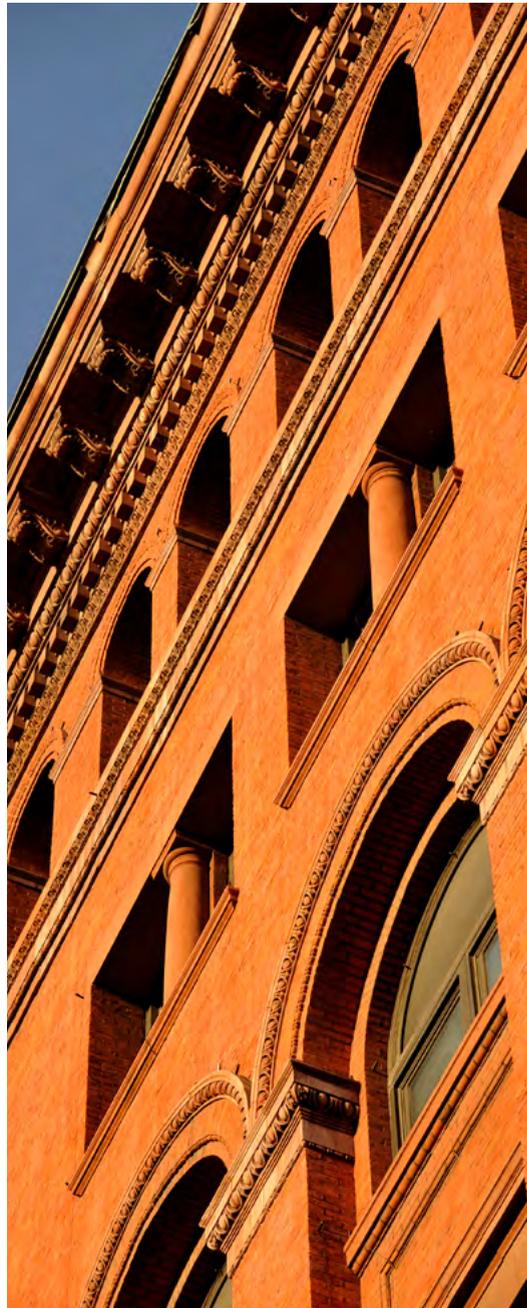
[9] Since the Joint Committee on Printing exercises certain management functions over GPO and by extension, the GPO OIG, where applicable, it may be included in references to "Management."

PEER REVIEW RESULTS

The following meets the requirement under section 5(a) (14)-(16) of the IG Act that Inspectors General include peer review results in each Semiannual Report to Congress. Federal audit and inspection functions can receive a rating of "pass," "pass with deficiencies," or "fail." Federal investigation functions can receive a rating of "compliant" or "noncompliant."

Peer review reports are posted on our website at: **https://www.gpo.gov/who-we-are/our-agency/inspector-general/plans-and-reports**

Peer Review of GPO-OIG Audit Function

The GPO OIG did not have any peer reviews of its audit function during this reporting period. The next audit peer review is scheduled to begin on September 20, 2023.

Peer Review of GPO OIG Inspections Function

The GPO OIG did not have any peer reviews of its inspection function during this reporting period. The next inspection peer review will be between FYs 2024-2026 but is not yet scheduled.

Peer Review of GPO OIG Investigative Function

The GPO OIG did not have any peer reviews of its investigative function during this reporting period. The next investigation peer review is scheduled between September – December 2024.

Peer Reviews Conducted by GPO OIG

The GPO OIG did not conduct any peer reviews during this reporting period.

APPENDIX A.
NON-MONETARY RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Non-Monetary Return on Investment for Reports Issued in Reporting Period

Joint OIG Products: Non-monetary Impact and Benefits	
Regional Site Visit Report (Report No. 22-05)	
Benefit	**Value**
Provide Data to Decision Makers	The purpose of the site visits was to first provide a level of oversight not exercised in the history of our office by physically visiting each site. Second, we endeavored to understand the mission and purpose of each site. Lastly, we sought to educate remote site employees about our office in order to deter fraud, waste, and abuse. Ultimately, we believe the visits were mutually beneficial. Since our report, the Agency announced it will be closing the regional sites. The agency committed to search for and purchase barcode scanners as part of a new Warehouse Management System (WMS)/Inventory Management System (IMS) solution. Publication & Information Sales (P&IS) is exploring options with the assistance of the Office of Programs, Strategy and Technology (PST). Identifying software applications, the required hardware to support the applications, and Wi-Fi integration at both facilities is a necessary step in the process. GPO also issued and clarified policies to address employee safety concerns identified in the report. Some employees on telework were concerned with providing their PII in support of operations. GPO clarified that employees are not required to share their personal phone numbers. All employees have a softphone and Microsoft Teams for communicating with outside customers and vendors. At the beginning of the pandemic, employees used their personal devices until GPO could supply them with the necessary device or softphone.

Audits: Non-monetary Impact and Benefits	
Management and Use of Official Time (Report No. 22-08)	
Benefit	**Value**
Improve Management Controls **Improve Systems and Processes** **Provide Data to Decision Makers** **Avoid Violations of Law or Regulation**	The audit results reinforce the need for additional oversight and accountability with about 900 bargaining unit employees eligible to use official time. The audit made six recommendations to provide the agency an opportunity to strengthen its internal controls and increase transparency and accountability on the use and management of official time. Also, requiring employees to use the official time and attendance system to request, approve, record, and report all work and leave hours should improve data quality and enable a less labor-intensive and more efficient process for the agency to collect, track, and report reliable data on the usage level of official time. Further, evaluating, identifying, and remedying any practices not consistent with the Statutes and collective bargaining agreement provisions are essential to ensure official time is requested, approved, and recorded appropriately. Lastly, providing training and program guidance is essential to educate employees and supervisors on official time procedures, rights, and responsibilities.

Inspections: Non-monetary Impact and Benefits		
	GPO Organizational Transformation Evaluation (Report No. 22-06)	**GPO's Privacy Program (Report No. 22-07)**
Benefit	**Value**	
Provide Analysis and Data to Decision Makers	Conducting a strategic, enterprise-wide, forward-looking forecasting initiative will allow GPO to discern where it needs to be in the next decade and beyond, capitalize on its strengths and refocus agency priorities as needed.	
Validate Existing Processes	Over the next decade, with effective planning and coordination, GPO can build on prior progress to initiate and execute a strategic vision and plan that capitalizes on its strengths and refocuses agency priorities.	
Improve Systems and Processes	Updating and maintaining business and support units' strategic plans that include both short- and long-term goals with realistic timeframes and corresponding metrics for success, will ensure consistent processes, consistent goals and vision across all business units, and alignment among GPO leadership for improved transparency, accountability, and consistent messaging regarding agency-wide priorities towards meeting GPO's goals and strategies.	Developing privacy impact assessments and confidentiality impact levels will help ensure that proper safety measures, processes, and controls are in place.
Avoid Violations of Law or Regulation **Improve Management Controls**		Identifying federal privacy laws and oversight guidance, including the specific sections that GPO intends to follow as definitive guidance, will help GPO and its employees avoid Privacy Act violations of $5,000. Improving management controls, systems, and processes will help avoid data breaches, which cost an average of $4.4 million each in 2022.

Inspections: Non-monetary Impact and Benefits (continued)		
Initiate Best Business Practices **Improve Management Controls**		Documenting the reasoning for following some sections but not others will help guide GPO's future decision-making and privacy practices. It will ensure proper controls are in place in appropriate systems, and it will ensure appropriate parties have been advised of GPO's practices.

Investigations Non-monetary Impact and Benefits	
Debarred Vendor Doing Business with GPO (22-0002-I)	
Benefit	**Value**
Improve Management Controls **Improve Systems and Processes**	The investigative results aid GPO in evaluating vulnerabilities in their procurement process which allowed debarred vendors to circumvent administrative sanctions and profit from GPO contracts. As a result of the investigation and subsequent judicial action, GPO became aware of a fraud scheme that allowed debarred vendors to continue to do business with GPO.
Ensure Compliance with a Prescribed Standard	Investigative results reported to agency officials are expected to facilitate their awareness of measures that can help protect GPO's procurement program.
Enhances Stakeholder Confidence	The results helped to mitigate fraud risks in GPO's procurement program. As a result, case outcomes are expected to help protect the integrity of GPO contracts and the agency's reputation as a fiscally responsible broker.
CIGIE Referred Matter: Outside Investigation Conducted by GPO OIG (22-0001-I)	
Benefit	**Value**
Improve Management Controls **Improve Systems and Processes**	The investigative results aid the OIG involved to evaluate current policies related to the accountability of government-issued identification. Case findings helped the Inspector General respond to internal weakness with regard to the accountability and safekeeping of government-issued identification and property.
Provide Analysis and Data to Decision Makers	The data gathered in this investigative process alerted the Inspector General of a Senior Government Official who did not account for government-issued credentials during an annual inventory and was unaware of the location of the government-issued property for approximately a year.

APPENDIX B.
AUDIT AND INSPECTION REPORTS ISSUED

**Audit and Inspection Reports Issued in Reporting Period
Including Questioned Costs, Funds Put to Better Use and Other Monetary Impact**

Report Name	Questioned Costs	Funds Put to Better Use	Other Monetary Impact
Audit Reports			
Management and Use of Official Time	$20,008	$0	$0
Inspection or Other Reports			
GPO Regional Site Visit Report	$0	$448,000	$2,034,387[10]
Total	**$20,008**	**$448,000**	**$2,034,387**

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[10] As reported, if regional sites remain open, GPO would spend $2,034,387, at a minimum, over the remaining lease terms. GPO has committed to closing the regional sites.

APPENDIX C.
INVESTIGATIONS STATISTICS

Investigations Statistics for Reporting Period[11]

Item	Quantity
Investigations Open at the Beginning of the Period	5
Investigations Opened during the Reporting Period	0
Investigations Closed during the Reporting Period	1
Investigations Open at the End of the Reporting Period[12]	4
Complaints Open at the Beginning of the Reporting Period	1
Complaints Opened during the Reporting Period	0
Complaints Closed during the Reporting Period	1
Complaints Open at the End of the Reporting Period	0
Referrals to Other Agencies	1
Referrals to Audits and Inspections Divisions	0
Preliminary Inquiries Open at the Beginning of the Period	0
Preliminary Inquiries Opened during the Reporting Period	2
Preliminary Inquiries Closed during the Reporting Period	1
Preliminary Inquiries Open at the End of the Reporting Period	1

Current Types of Open Investigations	Number	Percentage
Procurement/Contract Fraud	4	100
Employee Misconduct	0	0
Workers' Compensation Fraud	0	0
IT/Computer Crimes	0	0
Proactive Initiatives	0	0
Other Investigations	0	0
Total	**4**	**100**

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[11] Metrics for developing data for reported statistics were obtained from OIG's Case Management Tracking System.

[12] Two of these investigations are under a formal closure process pending GPO's administrative adjudication.

Investigations Productivity Statistics for Reporting Period[13]

Item	No. or Amount
Arrests, including Summons in Lieu of Arrest	0
Persons Referred to Federal Prosecutors	1
Persons Accepted for Federal Prosecution	1
Persons Declined for Federal Prosecution	0
Indictments/Information/Complaints	1
Initial Appearance	1
Convictions	1
Guilty Pleas/Deferred Prosecution Agreements	0
Criminal Fines, Fees, Recovery, and/or Restitution	0
Civil Settlements	0
Civil Fines, Fees, Recovery, and/or Restitution	0
Total Number of Investigative Reports Issued[14]	1
Referrals to GPO Management for Possible Corrective Action and/or Information Purposes	0
Parties Referred to GPO Management for Suspension and Debarment Action	5
Total Referrals to the Audits and Inspections Divisions	0

[13] Metrics for developing data for reported statistics were obtained from OIG's Case Management Tracking System.

[14] During this reporting period, the OIG did not have any investigations involving a senior Government employee that was substantiated. Additionally, the OIG did not have any instances of whistleblower retaliation to report.

APPENDIX D.
AUDIT AND INSPECTION REPORTS
OVER 6 MONTHS OLD

**Summary of Each Audit and Inspection Report over 6 Months Old for Which
No Management Decision Has Been Made[15]**

Date Issued	Name	Report Number	Number of Recommendations	Costs
None				

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[15] IG Act, § 5(a)(10).

APPENDIX E.
PRIOR AUDIT AND INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS

Prior Audit and Inspection Recommendations on Which Corrective Action Has Not Been Completed in More Than 1 Year[16]

Date Issued	Name of Audit/ Inspection	Report Number	Number of Recommendations	Monetary Impact
12/21/2020	Cybersecurity Controls Report	21-07	1	$0

Recommendation 21-07-01:

a) Develop, finalize, and maintain System Security Plans (SSPs) for all the major information systems in accordance with the requirements outlined in GPO directives and utilize best practices outlined NIST SP 800-18 Revision 1, and NIST SP 800-53, Revision 5, Security and Privacy Controls for Federal Information Systems and Organizations.

b) Perform a security controls assessment and address and remediate any gaps identified where feasible for legacy systems planned to be decommissioned in the future;

c) Document an Information System Contingency Plan (ISCP) for each major information system; and

d) Perform risk assessment every three years or when there is a significant change to the operating environment.

Date Issued	Name of Audit/ Inspection	Report Number	Number of Recommendations	Monetary Impact
2/16/2021	Evaluation of Product Billing Rates	21-08	1	$0

Recommendation 21-08-01: Update the set of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) covering the major People, Process, Data and Technology elements involved in the delivery of GPO's Products/Services to its customers.

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[16] IG Act, § 5(a)(3).

Appendix E Continued

Date Issued	Name of Audit/ Inspection	Report Number	Number of Recommendations	Monetary Impact
7/06/2021	Evaluation of GPO's Suspension and Debarment Program	21-09	4	$0

Recommendation 21-09-01: As recommended by OMB Memorandum M-12-02, appoint a senior accountable official who shall be responsible for program management activities including:

a) assessing the agency's suspension and debarment program and the adequacy of available resources, such as staffing;

b) ensuring that the agency maintains effective internal controls and tracking capabilities;

c) ensuring that the agency participates regularly on the Interagency Suspension and Debarment Committee (ISDC), as appropriate; and

d) reviewing internal policies, procedures, and guidance to ensure that suspension and debarment are being considered and used effectively.

Recommendation 21-09-02: Implement a case management tool to process and monitor suspension and debarment referrals, including maintaining complete official records for each referral.

Recommendation 21-09-04: Update internal S&D directives, policies, procedures, guidance, and controls to include:

a) Timeframes for various steps in processing suspension and debarment referrals, including, but not limited to, timeframes for the initial review and the final decision, and a requirement to document deviations from the established timeframes.

b) Quality control checks for the various steps in the suspension and debarment process, including, but not limited to, the complete official record, reconciliation of exclusion information, and duration of suspension and debarment periods.

c) Reviewing System for Award Management (SAM) (and the Exclusion List, if Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Subpart 9.4 is not adopted) both after opening bids or proposals and immediately before awarding contracts.

Recommendation 21-09-05: Review the Exclusion List and SAM.gov records to confirm the validity of all listed contractors' status, and take appropriate action to add or remove contractors as applicable.

APPENDIX F. STATUS OF OIG RECOMMENDATIONS

Status of OIG Recommendations During this Reporting Period (Open and Closed)

Date Issued	Name	Report Number	Number of Recommendations Opened	Number of Recommendations Closed
09/17/2021	GPO Employees Detailed to Congress	21-11	0	2
05/19/2022	GPO Organizational Transformation Evaluation	22-06	15[17]	1
07/29/2022	GPO Privacy Program Inspection	22-07	13	0
09/16/2022	Management and Use of Official Time	22-08	6	0
		Total	34	3

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[17] The contracted report originally made 17 recommendations of which we adopted 15 as our own.

APPENDIX G.
REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Reporting Requirements under the IG Act of 1978

Reporting	Requirement	Pages
Section 4(a)(2)	Review of Legislation and Regulations	16
Section 5(a)(1)	Significant Problems, Abuses, and Deficiencies	4 – 15
Section 5(a)(2)	Recommendations for Corrective Actions to Address Significant Problems, Abuses, and Deficiencies Identified	4 – 15
Section 5(a)(3)	Significant Outstanding Recommendations on which Corrective Action has Not Been Completed	26 – 27
Section 5(a)(4)	Matters Referred for Prosecutorial Authorities	23 – 24
Section 5(a)(5); 6(b)(2)	Information or Assistance Unreasonably Refused or Not Provided	16
Section 5(a)(6)	List of Completed Audit, Inspection, or Evaluation Reports	7 – 11
Section 5(a)(7)	Summary of Significant Reports	4 – 15
Section 5(a)(8)	Statistical Tables Related to Total Value of Questioned or Unsupported Costs	22
Section 5(a)(9)	Statistical Tables Related to Funds Recommended To Be Put to Better Use	22
Section 5(a)(10)	Summary of Each Audit Report over 6 Months Old for Which No Management Decision Has Been Made	25
Section 5(a)(11)	Description and Explanation of Any Significant Revised Management Decision	16
Section 5(a)(12)	Information on Any Significant Management Decision with which the IG Disagrees	16
Section 5(a)(13)	Information described under section 804(b) of the Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996 – not applicable to GPO	N/A
Section 5(a)(14) Through (16)	Peer Review Results	17
Section 5(a)(17)	Statistical Tables Related to Investigations	23 – 24
Section 5(a)(18)	Description of Metrics Used for Developing the Data for the Statistical Tables under Section 5(a)(17)	24
Section 5(a)(19)	Investigations Involving Senior Government Employees Where Allegations of Misconduct Were Substantiated	24
Section 5(a)(20)	Description of Any Instance(s) of Whistleblower Retaliation	16
Section 5(a)(21)	Description of Any Attempt(s) by the Agency to Interfere with the Independence of the OIG	16
Section 5(a)(22)	Inspections, Evaluations, Audits, and Investigations Involving Senior Government Employees That Were Closed and Not Disclosed to the Public	16

APPENDIX H.
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Abbreviations and Acronyms

CBA	Collective Bargaining Agreement
CIGIE	Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease 2019
FECA	Federal Employees' Compensation Act
FY	Fiscal Year
GAGAS	Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards
GPO	U.S. Government Publishing Office
I&E	Inspections and Evaluations
IG	Inspector General
IG Act	Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended
NAPA	National Academy of Public Administration
NIST	National Institute of Standards and Technology
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
PII	Personally Identifiable Information
RFI	Request for Information
ROI	Return on Investment
S&D	Suspension and Debarment
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
U.S.C.	United States Code

APPENDIX I.
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Complaint
The initial receipt of an allegation is documented immediately upon receipt, an allegation is then converted to a complaint within ten calendar days if the OIG can reasonably articulate a nexus to a violation of law, policy, practice, or a specific threat to human life, national security, or property. Complaints are then converted to full investigations within 30 days, provided there is reason to believe that a crime, tort, or violation of policy within the OIG's jurisdiction has been developed; if not, the matter shall be closed.

Consideration
A suggested corrective action to address potential deficiencies or problems. Considerations do not rise to the level of formal recommendations and are not tracked by the OIG.

Criminal Complaint
A formal charging document that sets out the facts and cause of action (establishing probable cause) that the Government alleges are sufficient to support a claim against the charged party (the defendant).

Finding
Statement of the problem identified during an audit or inspection typically having criteria, condition, cause, and effect.

Follow-Up
The process that ensures prompt and responsive action once the resolution is reached on an OIG recommendation.

Funds Put to Better Use
An OIG recommendation that funds could be used more efficiently if management took actions to implement and complete the audit or inspection recommendation.

Indictment
The written formal charge of a crime by the grand jury, returned when 12 or more grand jurors vote in favor of it.

Investigation
OIG conducts criminal, civil, and administrative investigations relating to violations of federal laws, rules, or regulations as they pertain to GPO programs, contracts, and operations, and also investigates allegations of criminal activity and serious misconduct on the part of GPO employees. Fraud investigations typically result from allegations or suspicions of wrongdoing involving GPO programs, operations, or personnel. Investigations may also be the result of broad initiatives arising from previous OIG activities interagency initiative.

Management Implication Report
A report to management issued during or at the completion of an investigation identifying systemic problems or advising management of significant issues that require immediate attention.

Management Letter
A management letter describes the deficiencies in internal controls identified during the audit that do not rise to the level of seriousness to be stated in the final auditor's report.

Material Weakness
A significant deficiency, or combination of significant deficiencies, that results in more than a remote likelihood that a material misstatement of the financial statements will not be prevented or detected.

Questioned Cost
A cost the OIG questions because of an alleged violation of a law, regulation, contract, cooperative agreement, or other document governing the expenditure of funds; such cost is not supported by adequate documentation; or the expenditure of funds for the intended purposes was determined by the OIG to be unnecessary or unreasonable.

Recommendation
Action needed to correct or eliminate the recurrence of the cause of an identified finding.

Resolved Audit/Inspection
A report containing recommendations that have all been resolved without exception but not yet implemented.

Return on Investment
Return on Investment (ROI) is a commonly used profitability ratio that measures the amount of return, or profit, an investment generates relative to cost. The ROI for an OIG is the most quantifiable metric of performance and considers the cost of doing business and the revenues they collect.

Suspension and Debarment (S&D)
The S&D process protects the federal government from fraud, waste, and abuse by using a number of tools to avoid doing business with non-responsible contractors. See SAM.gov.

Unsupported Cost
A questioned cost that is not supported by adequate documentation.

Waste
Waste is the act of using or expending resources carelessly, extravagantly, or for no purpose. Importantly, waste can include activities that do not include abuse and do not necessarily involve a violation of the law. Rather, waste relates primarily to mismanagement, inappropriate actions, and inadequate oversight.

REPORT FRAUD, WASTE, OR ABUSE

Report violations of law, rules, or agency regulations, mismanagement, gross waste of funds, abuse of authority, danger to public health and safety related to GPO contracts, programs, and/ or employees.

U.S. Government Publishing Office
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Email:gpoighotline@gpo.gov

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