



SIGAR

Office of the Special Inspector General
for Afghanistan Reconstruction

External Peer Review Report

April 11, 2024

The Honorable Sean W. O'Donnell
Inspector General, Environmental Protection Agency

This required external peer review was conducted in accordance with the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) Inspection and Evaluation Committee guidance as contained in the *CIGIE Guide for Conducting External Peer Reviews of Inspection and Evaluation Organizations of Federal Offices of the Inspector General* (December 2021). The peer review was conducted from November 1, 2023, through April 10, 2024.

As the reviewing office, we assessed the extent to which the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Inspector General (OIG) complied with the CIGIE *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation*, December 2020 (Blue Book). This assessment included a review of the EPA OIG's internal policies and procedures, including the *Interim Project Management Handbook for Evaluation* (OIG Policy and Procedure No. 109, January 26, 2022), implementing the Blue Book standards. It also included a review of selected inspection and evaluation reports issued from October 1, 2020, to September 30, 2023, to determine whether the reports complied with the Blue Book standards and the EPA OIG's internal policies and procedures.

Overall Conclusion

We determined that the EPA OIG's policies and procedures generally were consistent with the Blue Book standards addressed in the external peer review.

John F. Sopko
Special Inspector General
for Afghanistan Reconstruction

Enclosure(s)

ENCLOSURE 1: Scope and Methodology

We reviewed compliance with the EPA OIG’s system of quality management in effect for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2023, to the extent we considered appropriate.

In selecting specific reports for analysis, the peer review team considered all inspection and evaluation reports issued during our period of review—October 1, 2020, to September 30, 2023. The team determined to review reports issued in the final year of the 3-year peer review period, fiscal year 2023. During fiscal year 2023, the EPA OIG issued nine evaluation reports.

From this group, we selected three reports for our sample that differed in topic and director, and one report prepared by an EPA OIG contractor. Each of the three reports selected was from different directorates (Implementation, Execution, and Enforcement; Information Resources Management; and Programs, Offices, and Centers Oversight). The fourth was performed by an EPA OIG contractor.

We selected the following four reports for review:

Report Number, Title of Report, and Issuance Date
23-E-0012 <i>EPA’s Residential Wood Heater Program Does Not Provide Reasonable Assurance that Heaters Are Properly Tested and Certified Before Reaching Consumers</i> February 28, 2023
23-E-0016 <i>The CSB Is at Increased Risk of Losing Significant Data as Vulnerabilities Are Not Identified and Remediated Timely</i> May 2, 2023
23-E-0021 <i>EPA’s Vulnerability Tracking and Remediation and Information Technology Procedures Review Processes Are Implemented Inconsistently</i> July 5, 2023
23-E-0033 <i>The EPA Needs to Address Increasing Air Pollution at Ports</i> September 21, 2023

The peer review team analyzed the workpapers prepared in support of each of the four reports reviewed. Those workpapers were provided to the review team in Auto Audit for Windows, a software program that was transferred to individual computers for use and analysis by each review team member. Additional documentation regarding policies and procedures and prior organizational assessments was also reviewed, including the EPA OIG’s most recent work plans and most recent internal and external quality assurance reviews.

Finally, the peer review team interviewed staff within the inspection and evaluation organization to gain an understanding of the organization's overall quality management system, its electronic workpaper administration system, staff training records, and the organization's policies, procedures, and oversight practices.

ENCLOSURE 2: Reviewed Organization's Comments to Draft Peer Review Report



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

April 4, 2024

Mr. John F. Sopko
Special Inspector General for Afghanistan
Reconstruction
2530 Crystal Drive
Arlington, Virginia 22202-3940

Dear Inspector General Sopko:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft peer review report assessing the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Inspector General's compliance with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency's *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation*, published in December 2020 and commonly referred to as the Blue Book. We appreciate your review of our Blue Book policies and procedures, as well as four Blue Book evaluation reports that we issued. We acknowledge your determination that our policies and procedures generally were consistent with the Blue Book standards addressed in the peer review. We do not have any comments other than to thank your team for its constructive engagement during the review process.

We will post the final peer review report on our public website at www.epaoig.gov.

Sincerely,

Sean W. O'Donnell, Inspector General

cc: Nicole N. Murley, Deputy Inspector General
Katherine Trimble, Assistant Inspector General for Audit
Paul H. Bergstrand, Assistant Inspector General for Special Review and Evaluation
Michael C. Zola, Assistant Inspector General for Congressional and Public Affairs
Shelley Howes, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audit
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