

Performance Report

Goal 1

Promote NSF Efficiency and Effectiveness

1. Identify and implement approaches to improve product quality and timeliness.

- *Initiate a process to convert to electronic audit workpapers.*
- *Establish a team to develop standard audit report content and presentation formats for performance and grant audit reports.*
- *Develop and finalize a policy on audit reporting.*
- *Conduct a training session to provide guidance and examples of quality audit reports and quality Semiannual Reports write-ups.*
- *Complete most OIG audits within one year of conducting the planning conference.*
- *Complete 75% of all audits carried over from prior year.*
- *Develop and finalize a policy on relying on the work of others.*
- *Develop and finalize a policy on A-133 audit desk review and oversight.*
- *Identify and monitor quarterly workload targets for each audit team.*
- *Discuss performance-based contracting with the Contracting Officer; present options on how to include performance-based language in our contracts.*
- *Contact and solicit bids from at least five new IPA firms.*
- *Solicit staff proposals for increased quality and timeliness of investigative product.*
- *Review OI operations for compliance with ECIE standards of performance.*
- *Ensure sufficiency of all investigative products.*
- *Review Investigations Manual and forms.*

Audits. OIG continued its efforts to improve audit timeliness and quality during this performance period. To convert from paper to electronic workpapers, a task force within the Office of Audit conducted technical and cost comparisons of four electronic workpaper packages and recommended purchasing software from an outside vendor. This year, the Office hoped to begin the process of converting to electronic workpapers in keeping with most other OIG and professional audit organizations. However, due to budget constraints, office-wide conversion to electronic workpapers has not yet been feasible.

To improve the quality of audit reports, the Office of Audit developed a standard audit report format for the content and presentation of grant audit reports. The Office also issued a policy on audit reporting, which will help ensure that audit reports are accurate, fair, and objective by requesting at the draft report stage the views of those responsible for managing the auditee or the activity audited. The policy will also help ensure effective corrective action on audit findings and recommendations through the distribution of the final report to those charged with governance and other stakeholders, such as the Congress and the National Science Board. In addition, the policy will help ensure transparency of audit work by requiring the publication of redacted final reports on the OIG website within one day of issuance.

To increase the quality and timeliness of audit products, the Office of Audit provided training to its staff on writing audit reports and initiated training on writing articles for Semiannual Reports. During the training, staff analyzed the format and presentation of a well-written report and why it was effective in telling the audit “story.” Staff also examined a report that lacked clarity to demonstrate the importance of structure and organization in stating audit findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

In the past year OIG completed 56 percent of the audits contracted to CPA firms and 57 percent of audits performed by OIG staff within one year. Both categories showed improvement over the percentages reported for the previous performance year.³⁰ OIG also completed 61 percent of the audits carried over from the prior year, somewhat less than the comparable percentage reported the previous year.³¹ Although the completion rate for carryover audits was less than the target rate of 75 percent, some of our reports were delayed by circumstances beyond our control, as work was delayed by a concurrent investigation at one auditee and turnover in staff at CPA firms under contract to OIG for three other audits.

The Office of Audit developed two new policies to improve audit quality and timeliness: one provides standards for monitoring the work of the CPA firms and the Defense Contracting Auditing Agency, and the other provides guidance on the review and oversight of Single Audit Reports for awardees that receive NSF funds. The contractor monitoring policy will increase the quality and timeliness of audit work by standardizing audit planning and procurement, oversight, reporting, documentation, supervision, quality control, contractor-evaluation, and invoice-processing functions within the Office. The policy on Single Audit Report oversight will enable the Office to process the 100 or more audit reports reviewed each semiannual period more effectively and efficiently. Because the OIG has sufficient resources to audit only five percent of the NSF funds that are considered high risk, the increased coverage provided by the Single Audit Report enables both NSF and OIG to monitor a larger number of awardees. The new policy will facilitate this important function.

³⁰ March 2007 Semiannual Report, p. 40. Last year we completed 55 percent of the audits contracted to CPA firms and 56 percent of audit performed by OIG staff within one year.

³¹ March 2007, Semiannual Report, p. 40. Last year we completed 68 percent of audits carried over from the prior year within one year.

Other steps taken to improve audit quality and timeliness include tracking audit workload targets each quarter, increasing the pool of CPA firms with which the Office contracts, and developing performance-based language in OIG contracts. Specifically, during this performance period, auditors interviewed seven new CPA firms, posted a *Request for Information Sources Sought* on FedBiz Ops, and received capabilities information from nine additional new CPA firms. The inclusion of performance based language in contracts will provide firms with incentives for producing quality, timely work and penalties for failing to do so.

Investigations. The OIG's Office of Investigations also made substantive improvements in product quality and timeliness. Based on the recommendations of a staff task force, the Office is testing increased use of electronic communications to expedite communications and reduce our use of paper products.

Office management met to review investigative milestone completion records in our ongoing effort to ensure that proper measures of performance are established and maintained. We determined that the electronic milestone tracking ability incorporated last year into OIG's Knowledge Management System (KMS), which included a "flagging" system that alerts individual investigators of approaching milestones, has effectively assisted investigators in assuring milestones are met.

In preparation for our external peer review, the Office reviewed investigative operations for compliance with PCIE/ECIE standards of performance. To help ensure the impartiality of investigations, we developed an Investigator Statement of Personal Independence to be executed by all investigators working on any investigation. The document is posted in the investigative file for future reference. We also reviewed past peer review reports to ensure that all action items were resolved. The Office subsequently underwent peer review by another OIG and was found to be in compliance with all investigative standards of performance.

Internal processes continue to ensure that appropriate quality control and quality assurance are being applied in the production and dissemination of Investigative Reports and Management Implication Reports, the products by which we are measured outside OIG. We also reviewed and updated our Investigative Manual, and corresponding forms, to respond to guidance the Department of Justice provided to federal Offices of Inspectors General and to incorporate efficiency initiatives implemented by management.

2. Strengthen our focus by refining approaches for selecting work and setting priorities.

- *Develop and execute the annual audit plan.*
- *Document decision for final selection of audits included in the audit plan.*
- *Develop a risk analysis of NSF funding by program and Directorate.*
- *Identify and maintain focus on risk factors present in NSF programs and operations.*
- *Identify and maintain focus on high-risk institutions.*

Audits. The Office of Audit conducted staff “brainstorming” sessions in May 2007 to begin preparation of the FY 2008 Audit Plan. We incorporated ideas from those sessions along with risk assessments of NSF awards and awardee institutions, OIG’s annual *Management Challenges Letter*, referrals from the Office of Investigations, and NSF’s audit requests into the FY 2008 Audit Plan, which we presented to the National Science Board in October 2007. We documented the methodologies used in developing the risk analysis employed to select audits for the Plan for future reference during audit planning. In addition, we identified costs by program for all NSF’s directorates and divisions as an important risk factor. To maintain focus on risk factors present in NSF operations and programs, Audit staff attended Congressional hearings, NSB meetings and NSF advisory committee meetings, and read Committee of Visitors Reports and external reports on NSF programs. Identifying and focusing on risk factors in NSF programs and operations and on high-risk awards and institutions makes the most effective use of OIG’s limited resources.

Investigations. During this performance period, we sought input from Office staff regarding the identification of risk factors relevant to NSF programs and operations. Based upon that input, 13 proactive reviews were opened, resulting in the development of a number of meaningful investigations.

Quarterly meetings between the Office of Audit and the Office of Investigations to monitor and coordinate activities at high-risk institutions serve as a means to exchange information, identify common concerns, proactively identify and address possible conflicts, and monitor referrals made between the two offices. These meetings have also resulted in our improved ability to select matters to investigate as a result of audit recommendations.

Goal 2

Safeguard the Integrity of NSF Programs and Resources

1. Detect and address improper, inappropriate, or illegal activities.

- *Improve our ability to detect falsified figures in NSF proposal.*
- *Assess available software packages for enhanced financial analysis.*
- *Improve and accelerate the research misconduct investigative process.*
- *Implement a program to encrypt remotely stored or accessed sensitive information on OIG laptops and other data storage devices.*

During this performance period, the Office of Investigations field tested different types of software to be used in the identification of falsified figures in NSF proposals. A commercial software package was selected, and the new capability will provide a valuable tool in our investigative efforts. Additionally, this initiative resulted in a Management Implication Report to NSF management proposing that NSF provide substantive guidance on how figures should be presented by researchers in their proposals and reports.

We surveyed the research community to determine the most efficient and economical means of facilitating the electronic transmission of financial data. This has resulted in the increased provision of electronic records for review and analysis during the investigative process and has enhanced our ability to conduct such analysis.

To improve and accelerate the research misconduct investigative process, we updated the text of the letter that we use to refer matters to institutions for inquiry and investigation. The improved wording of the letter resolves issues that had been raised in the research community regarding confidentiality of OIG records. Further, it provides guidance to inquiry and investigation committees to assist them in performing their duties when research matters are brought to the attention of the institution by OIG.

Finally OIG IT specialists successfully implemented a program to encrypt sensitive information residing on OIG laptops. We encrypted all of the office's 22 laptop computers to ensure compliance with recently adopted federal security requirements.

2. Strengthen OIG proactive activities

- *Assess efficacy of current approach for identification of cases and priorities.*
- *Enhance proactive review planning process.*
- *Broaden scope of proactive activities appropriate for programs and grantees within NSF OIG jurisdiction.*



Attendees at OIG's Grant Fraud Conference listen to a presentation on compliance agreements

Throughout this performance year, the Office of Investigation has continued to enhance its proactive activities. We developed a proactive review plan based upon the investigative risk areas identified by our staff. As a result, proactive reviews are now even more focused on high-risk programs and institutions. These proactive reviews have proven to be effective, not only in terms of investigations opened, but also in terms of surfacing systemic issues that are raised to NSF through OIG Management Implication Reports.

Proactive preventative work has also been accomplished through sharing our practices and products with other federal OIGs overseeing grant programs. These include posters, hand-outs, fact sheets, slide shows, and other proactive materials we have developed. Prior to this year's NSF OIG Grant Fraud Workshop, which was attended by approximately 130 investigators from 30 departments and agencies, we collected outreach materials from many federal OIGs and made them available to attendees during the workshop.

OIG also provided assistance to the independent auditor performing the annual evaluation of NSF's IT security system. This effort is intended to help safeguard the integrity of the agency's programs and resources.

Goal 3

Utilize OIG Resources Effectively and Efficiently

1. Strengthen and utilize the professional expertise and talents of all OIG staff.

- *Conduct a bi-annual survey of OIG staff to obtain its views on the effectiveness of :*
 - *OIG use of its resources in personnel, equipment, technology and contracting,*
 - *Management planning, policies, and procedures,*
 - *Internal communications and coordination,*
 - *OIG impact on NSF, and*
 - *KMS and other management tools.*
- *Analyze survey results and develop and implement corrective actions for any problems identified.*
- *Make system enhancements to KMS.*
- *Conduct KMS and other IT training, as necessary.*
- *Update KMS user manuals.*
- *Provide prompt, effective responses to requests for IT support.*
- *Identify and replace outdated computer systems.*
- *Implement an automated calling system for continuity of operations planning and testing.*
- *Conduct at least one new employee orientation each year.*
- *Develop and implement annual audit training plan.*
- *Develop position descriptions for OA attorney-advisors.*
- *Develop an employee exit survey form with instructions. Conduct exit surveys with all exiting staff to obtain feedback on any issues and areas for office improvement.*
- *Conduct all-hands meeting once a quarter. Audit staff will be invited to suggest agenda topics to their respective SAMS or DAIGA.*
- *Provide basic FOIA/PA training to OIG staff.*
- *Conduct meetings between the Employee Survey Advisory Group and the AIGA on a quarterly or other mutually agreed upon schedule to discuss issues of continuing concern among audit staff.*
- *Incorporate instructional opportunities into investigatory training requirements.*
- *Complete training identified in Individual Development Plans.*
- *Participate in interagency training.*
- *Maintain investigative training records and review investigative core competency requirements.*

OIG conducted a biennial survey of its staff in February 2008 and received responses from 78 percent of the office's full-time employees. The results are being analyzed by a committee of staff members, who will present their findings at an upcoming meeting with all OIG staff. A preliminary review indicated that the office received positive ratings on all questions involving its use of resources, management planning, internal communications and coordination, OIG impact on NSF, and the OIG Knowledge Management System (KMS). This

continues a trend in the surveys of the past few years showing improvement in performance, especially in those areas that had previously been identified as needing more management attention. Once the results have been discussed in the office-wide meeting, OIG will develop a plan for correcting any problems identified in the survey.

Numerous enhancements were made to the KMS to improve the efficiency of administrative, audit, and investigative functions. These included a time-tracking system for investigations staff, improved procedures for entering personnel data, and new modules for monitoring OIG contracts, conducting audit planning, maintaining staff training records, and tracking OIG outreach activities. The KMS user manual was updated to reflect these improvements. The IT specialists also used the OIG monthly meetings to update office staff on system changes and conduct training on the use of new modules.

The IT specialists within the office provided training to all new employees and to staff promptly as problems were identified or new system configurations were implemented by NSF. They replaced 30 aging desktop computers, procured 8 new laptop computers, and provided upgrades for existing equipment. OIG obtained a new high-speed internet connection for the Denver office that not only resulted in significant cost savings, but also enabled videoconferencing to improve Denver staff participation in office-wide meetings, audit staff meetings, team/project conferences, and other interactive group activities. OIG tested and implemented a new automated-dialing system for fast and reliable communications with OIG staff in the event of a disruption of NSF operations or other emergency. A subsequent test resulted in successful contact with all but one staff member.

To provide developmental opportunities for students and others outside OIG, the office continued its policy of recruiting interns and other staff for part-time or temporary positions. Over the past 12 months, we have had four students under the federal Student Temporary Employment Program and Student Career Experience Program, one summer intern under the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities program, one student from the Washington Internships for Native Students, and six student interns to provide investigation support while they attend law school. We have also used the Federal Career Intern Program for hiring one full-time employee, and OIG accepted two detailees from NSF and one volunteer from the faculty of a Pennsylvania university who wanted to learn about preserving scientific integrity and preventing research misconduct.

Annual training was conducted for all OIG staff on the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts, conflicts of interest, and Office of Special Counsel requirements. The agency also conducted its annual IT security awareness training for all staff, and the OIG monthly meetings were used to convey training on a variety of topics involving OIG procedures for handling audits and investigations, administrative processes, updates on IT modifications, OIG outreach activities, NSF directorate functions and priorities, and other areas related to OIG work. We were also committed to making as much individual and group training available as the budget allowed to provide basic skills to new staff and enhance the capabilities of more experienced employees. As a result, virtually all OIG staff received job-related training approved by their supervisors during

the 12-month period, and all peer-review and audit standards for training were met. In total, OIG staff attended 363 training events. OIG also conducted employee orientation for all new staff and used the NSF clearance form to process out departing employees.

Audit. To comply with the *Government Auditing Standards* requirement that all government auditors complete 80 hours of continuing professional education (CPE) every two years, all auditors identify in their Individual Development Plans courses that will fulfill their CPE requirements as well as enhance their professional expertise. The Office of Audit tracks training hours for each audit staff member and approves a training plan that will ensure that all auditors comply with the CPE requirements standards. In addition, to further strengthen the professional expertise of staff, the Office has developed position descriptions for attorney advisors. This action completes a project initiated last year to develop position descriptions and competencies for all audit staff. The development of the new position descriptions and competencies, the use of Individual Development Plans to identify courses that will most effectively meet federal auditing requirements and enhance professionalism, and the monitoring of staff training helps ensure a competent, well-trained staff, which is essential to high-quality work.

Improving office operations also serves to raise employee morale and strengthen the professional expertise of OIG staff. During this performance year, the Office of Audit implemented three new strategies to obtain feedback on employee satisfaction. First, it initiated quarterly all-hands meetings to improve communications among the audit teams and discuss issues of common interest. Second, as a follow-up to the 2006 employee survey, the Office established an Employee Survey Advisory Group, which meets approximately quarterly with the Associate Inspector General for Audit to discuss issues of continuing concern to audit staff. Third, this year the Office instituted an employee exit survey form to obtain ideas on improving working conditions. By improving communications and providing regular feedback to management, these new strategies help retain talented staff and foster professionalism.

Investigations. During this performance period, the Office of Investigation maintained the high degree of motivation and professional competence possessed by our well-trained staff. All Office staff prepared Individual Development Plans that identified training opportunities deemed appropriate for professional development and career enhancement. Approximately 80 percent of the proposed training was accomplished. All training certificates were entered into our training system electronic records, ensuring that management can effectively monitor staff achievement of required core competency training.

OIG staff participated in the provision of interagency training. As noted above, we hosted the widely acclaimed NSF OIG Grant Fraud Workshop, during which veteran investigators provided training to 130 attendees from over 30 departments and agencies. Office staff also provided interagency training at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Academy, as well as extensive internal training to OIG personnel.

2. Improve communication and collaboration within OIG.

- *Facilitate information exchange and referrals among the Audit, Investigation, and Administrative units.*
- *Share information about audit, investigative, and administrative activities at all-staff meetings.*
- *Strengthen Investigations/Audit/Administrative teams performing OIG/NSF liaison duties.*
- *Conduct periodic meetings between audit and investigation managers to discuss cross-cutting issues, mutual concerns, and cooperative efforts.*
- *Use office-wide committees for completion of various OIG projects and activities.*
- *Conduct periodic informational meetings for administrative staff from each OIG unit.*
- *Ensure staff participation in the development and implementation of the annual OIG Performance Plan.*

The exchange and referral of information among OIG units has improved significantly since they were identified in the employee survey several years ago as an area needing attention. All units have contributed to improved communication and collaboration within OIG through participation in formal and informal meetings, activities, and training events. Audit and Investigations staff met quarterly this year to discuss issues of mutual concern and to monitor matters that have been referred between the offices. Many referrals are explored during these meetings, and while some are found to lack substance, action is taken on any deemed to be significant. Over the past 12 months, seven formal referrals were made between the audit and investigation units. In addition, a number of brainstorming sessions between Audit and Investigations staff have been convened to generate ideas for proactive reviews, investigative priorities, and audit planning.

At every OIG “all-hands” monthly meeting, members of the individual OIG units gave presentations to the entire staff about recent audits, investigations, and administrative matters of interest. Weekly senior staff meetings were used by managers to discuss cross-cutting issues and promote cooperation in mutual efforts, and individual managers met whenever necessary to coordinate the different units’ activities. OIG established committees composed largely of volunteers from all three units to handle a variety of tasks, from tabulating and analyzing the employee survey results to planning the annual office retreat. The OIG Administrative Manager convened regular meetings of the administrative staff from each unit to disseminate information about office and agency procedures, discuss common issues, and meet with representatives of such NSF offices as the Human Resources and Management Division. Staff members from across the OIG are also involved in developing the annual OIG Performance Plan.

There was strong participation in the OIG liaison program, in which staff members from different OIG units are paired to establish an ongoing channel of communication with their designated NSF directorate, division, or office.

3. Ensure effective external communications and consultation with our stakeholders.

- *Produce timely external reports on OIG results and issues.*
- *Provide testimony and other requested information to congressional committees.*
- *Provide briefings to the NSB, Congress, OMB, NSF, and others regarding OIG plans, priorities, and progress.*
- *Prepare timely OIG budget requests.*
- *Issue two OIG Newsletters by email.*
- *Revise statistical section of Semiannual Report to make it more useful.*
- *Update NSF leadership regularly on OIG activities and concern.*
- *Participate in committees and task forces, as appropriate.*
- *Collaborate with federal and international agencies to advance common audit, investigative, and management goals.*
- *Provide leadership and active participation in the IG community.*
- *Track and coordinate GAO audits of NSF programs.*
- *Develop guidance for the OIG/NSF liaison program.*
- *Conduct active outreach to NSF and the research community.*
- *Ensure that most liaison teams include representatives from more than one OIG unit.*
- *Improve presentation and content of OIG website.*
- *Track usage of OIG website.*
- *Ensure that FOIA/PA requests are processed in a timely manner.*
- *Submit article(s) for publication in appropriate journals.*

During the past year, OIG prepared all reports for which it was responsible, including two Semiannual Reports to Congress, NSF's Financial Statement Audit Report, the FY 2007 Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) evaluation, an OIG Performance Report, and a Management Challenges Letter, all of which were issued within the timelines prescribed either by law or by specified due dates. We also issued our FY 2008 budget submission and prepared our FY 2009 request according to OMB and congressional requirements.

In May 2007, the IG was appointed Vice-Chair of the Executive Council for Integrity and Efficiency (ECIE) by the Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget. The ECIE is comprised of 34 Inspectors General who are appointed by the head of their respective agencies. In that capacity, the IG on several occasions was called upon to deliver congressional testimony on behalf of the IG community about proposed legislation to reform the IG Act. The IG provided testimony to committees in both the House and the Senate, and organized a meeting between ECIE IGs and key Senate staff charged with drafting the legislation. Congressional staff in some instances requested draft legislative language to address specific concerns raised by the ECIE, and NSF/OIG staff prepared the drafts in consultation with the other members of the ECIE. OIG staff members were also called upon to help the IG manage the affairs and meetings of the council.

Our staff and the independent financial statement auditor under contract to OIG gave numerous briefings to the Audit and Oversight Committee of the National Science Board. Several presentations focused on the status of NSF's financial

statement audit, the significance of its findings, and the corrective actions taken by the agency in response to previous financial audits. OIG staff also briefed the committee on the office's proposed budget submission, the annual audit plan, and significant investigations and audits. The IG met with the NSF OMB examiner, congressional staff, and other organizations about agency issues as needed. The IG and Deputy IG conducted briefings for the NSF Director and Deputy Director at regular intervals to apprise them of OIG's activities, discuss opportunities to improve agency operations, and inform them of OIG matters likely to come up in future meetings of the National Science Board.

In between issuances of our Semiannual Report to Congress, we released two electronic newsletters to inform NSF stakeholders on a timely basis of OIG's significant audits and investigations. The planned revisions to the statistical section of the Semiannual Report were not accomplished this year, as it will take more time to adjust our computer system to a new format. The OIG website experienced heavy usage, with over 245,000 hits during the past 12 months.

OIG was active in organizing international meetings to promote a better understanding of the different countries' approaches to oversight of science and technology funding, discuss areas of common concern, and identify best practices that could be applied more widely. In June 2007 the IG co-hosted an International Workshop on Accountability Challenges with the European Science Foundation in Strasbourg France. The agenda focused on evaluating and managing risks, misconduct in research allegations, and general auditing and internal control issues.

In September 2007, the IG and the Associate Inspector General for Investigation attended a World Conference on Research Integrity in Lisbon, Portugal. The purpose of the conference was to further world dialogue on the topic of research misconduct, as regulations and practices vary widely from one country to another. The event was closely linked to the OECD Global Science Forum (GSF) and attracted many of the same participants. Then in December 2007, the IG hosted a meeting of GSF at the National Science Foundation. Ongoing efforts to develop common principles for investigation and the resolution of research misconduct allegations with international implications were the primary focus of these meetings.

OIG staff made presentations to, or held discussions with delegations from the European Science Foundation, the U.S.-Israeli Bi-National Science Foundation, the Irish Health Research Board, the Korean Board of Audit and Inspection, and the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology, to provide their expert opinions and personal insights concerning the oversight of scientific research and science funding.

OIG staff continued to actively participate in NSF committees. For example, Audit staff members were active in the Audit Coordinating Committee, which resolves coordination issues with NSF associated with the financial statement audit. The Senior Policy and Operations Advisor serves as an executive secretary to the Audit and Oversight Committee of the National Science Board. The Deputy IG participated in quarterly Division Director retreats and served as the OIG liaison for the agency's Office of Equal Opportunity. During the

past year we continued to advance our goal of enhancing communications with agency staff by presenting at NSF-organized events. OIG staff gave presentations at each of the NSF Program Manager's Seminars, which provide new NSF program managers with detailed information about the Foundation and its activities. OIG staff initiated 55 outreach events and participated in numerous other meetings and interactions with their NSF colleagues. We created a Liaison Guide to assist new personnel in this important role. Finally, we posted additional information and presentations to our website to enhance its value to our external audience.

OIG also continues to actively participate in committees, projects, and events supported by the IG community. Auditors provided leadership to interagency groups established to advance common audit goals. For example, the Associate Inspector General for Audit is the co-chair of the Financial Statement Committee of the Federal Audit Executive Council, audit staff are members of the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency committee working with the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to make substantial revisions to the government-wide *Financial Audit Manual*, and have actively participated in the government-wide Single Audit Roundtable and the Financial Statement Audit Conference. OIG auditors also met monthly during this performance year with auditors from other federal OIGs in the Financial Statement Audit Network to discuss proposed accounting standards and requirements for federal financial statement audits, participated in IG committees working on human resource and training issues, and coordinated and tracked 12 GAO audits related to NSF.

Investigations staff have provided leadership within the IG community through their active participation with the National Procurement Fraud Task Force Grant Fraud Subcommittee, the Inspector General Academy, and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. Investigators have provided over 20 presentations to the research community, including presentations to universities, professional associations, and groups of NSF grant recipients. We have maintained effective communications with the public through our prompt responses to requests under the Freedom of Information Act, during which we have met 100 percent of our processing milestones. Finally, a member of our staff published an article in the *Journal of Public Inquiry* describing the positive impact compliance programs can have on research institutions and organizations.