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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

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December 9, 2013

The Honorable Phyllis K. Fong
Inspector General, U.S. Department of Agriculture
Chair, Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency
1400 Independence Avenue S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Ms. Fong:

As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight, I have consistently highlighted the need to improve quality and oversight in the federal government's security clearance procedures. I am also committed to ensuring that information and findings by Inspectors General are received and addressed by the appropriate agency officials.

Recent disclosures from law enforcement officials to the Subcommittee have highlighted the need to examine the procedures by which Inspectors General share investigative findings with the security clearance review offices in their respective agencies. It appears that there is no formal process or guidelines governing when Inspectors General should alert review offices to findings that may be relevant to an individual's security clearance. Such findings, even if preliminary, could potentially alter the outcome of security clearance determinations.

To better understand the role of Inspectors General in the security clearance review process, I request that CIGIE evaluate the processes and procedures currently used by the Inspectors General to ensure that relevant information is shared with security clearance review offices. I also request that, based on the findings of this review, CIGIE prepare and disseminate guidelines and best practices to Inspectors General. These guidelines should include information sufficient to assist the Inspectors General in answering the following questions:

- (1) What types of findings (e.g., lack of candor) should Inspectors General forward to security clearance review offices?
- (2) At what point in the audit or investigative process should Inspectors General share their findings with security clearance review offices?
- (3) When would it be appropriate, if ever, for Inspectors General to share allegations made against agency officials, without further investigation, with security clearance review offices?

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I look forward to reviewing the results of this work. Please contact Brandon Reavis with the Subcommittee at (202) 224-6242 or Brandon_Reavis@hsgac.senate.gov with any questions. Please send any official correspondence relating to this request to Kelsey_Stroud@hsgac.gov.

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill
Chairman
Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting
Oversight

cc: Ron Johnson
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight