FY 2017 Performance Report

The *FY 2017 Performance Report* covers the period from October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017. This section describes OIG's accomplishments towards the three goals set forth in the *OIG Performance Plan for FY 2017*.

Goal 1: Promote NSF Efficiency and Effectiveness

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

Quantitative Goals

- *Complete 50 percent of OIG internal audit products performed by OIG staff within 1 year of the engagement letter.*
- *Issue one internal quality control review report during the performance year.*
- *80% of all investigative cases and FOIA requests are assigned to appropriate staff teams within 30 days of being opened/received.*
- *Investigative referrals to other offices or organizations are made within 30 days of the need for referral being identified and are conducted in a manner consistent with timeliness guidelines.*
- *Provision of legal reviews or opinions within agreed upon timeframes 60% of the time to ensure that the office's operations stay within the bounds of governing legal requirements and that courses of action are promptly taken to minimize legal risk.*

Qualitative Goals

- *Ensure work remains on schedule through at least bi-weekly tracking and monitoring of the status of the teams' audits and other reviews.*
- *Ensure that audit programs are in accordance with the IG Act, CIGIE standards, generally accepted audit standards, and OIG policies and procedures, with less than 10% discrepancies (as reflected in Supervisory Review Checklist, and Peer Review Guidelines).*
- *Issue the annual internal control and quality assurance report, as required by Government Auditing Standards.*
- *Review all OIG policies and update as needed.*
- *Review records practices and develop approaches for enhancements needed for accuracy or completeness.*
- *Data necessary for tracking and monitoring status of investigations will be provided to appropriate managers on a weekly basis to ensure work remains on schedule.*
- *The recently deployed Investigative Case Management System (eLoc) will be employed by staff for a period of 12 months, during which corrections and refinements will be identified and addressed.*

Audits

Quantitative. During this performance period, the Office of Audit (OA) surpassed its stated goal of completing 50 percent of OIG internal audit products performed by OIG staff within one year of the engagement letter. Specifically, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, the Office issued 10 reports prepared by OA staff, of which 6 (60%) were completed within a year of the engagement

letter. In addition, to help ensure product quality, the office issued an internal quality control review (IQCR) of a prior audit to assess its compliance applicable standards and Office policies. That report, issued September 27, 2017, found that the audit team who conducted the audit generally complied with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards and OA policies and procedures, but found two areas for improvement. The audit team's response to the IQCR showed that the auditors had addressed both areas, and the recommendations were closed as of the date of the IQCR's issuance.

Qualitative. OA issued bi-weekly reports that tracked and monitored the status of teams' audits and other reviews to ensure that work remained on schedule. Also, as required by *Government Auditing Standards*, the office issued its annual internal control and quality assurance report (the Annual Summary), on September 27, 2017. The Summary did not report any discrepancies in audit programs complying with the IG Act, generally accepted auditing standards, and OIG policies and procedures.

Investigations

Quantitative. The Office of Investigations (OI) accomplished all planned substantive improvements to processes and procedures that ensure that our investigative activities are high quality, timely and accurate, and of value to the National Science Foundation. During this reporting period, over 90% of investigative cases were assigned to appropriate staff teams within 30 days of being initiated, exceeding our goal of 80%. Further, we met our goal of investigative referrals to other offices or organizations being made within 30 days of the need for referral being identified. More effective communications with members of NSF management were developed to meaningfully refer matters deemed more appropriate for agency action to NSF management officials.

Qualitative. The new investigations case management system (e-Loc) has been fully deployed since October 1, 2015. All investigative staff have received initial and ongoing training on e-Loc. Further enhancements and refinements to the system are ongoing, as are adjustments to processes and procedures which support OI's transition to a fully electronic case management practice. All relevant data necessary for tracking and monitoring the status of investigations was provided to managers on a weekly basis to ensure investigative work remained on schedule.

Legal, Legislative, External (LLE)/Administrative Division:

Quantitative. The Office of Counsel responded to 88% of all requests for legal reviews or opinions within agreed-upon timeframes or within two weeks (if no timeframe was agreed upon).

Qualitative. Many OIG policies were created or updated during this period including: Administrative Time for Physical Exercise; Records Policy; COOP Plan; Administering the OIG Confidential Financial Disclosure System; Treatment of Allegations Against IG or Other OIG Employees; OIG Credentials; IT Security Policy; Procedures Governing Testimony, Production and Preservation of Records in Legal Proceedings; Transmittal and Posting of Audit and Inspection Reports. While developing a comprehensive records policy, our practices were

reviewed. In addition, during this period our records schedule and policy was reviewed and approved by NARA (Archives & Records).

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

Quantitative Goals

- *80% of investigations opened in accord with investigative management intake recommendations.*

Qualitative Goals

- *Develop the annual audit plan.*

Audits

Qualitative. The office met the goal of developing the Audit Plan for Fiscal Year 2017. It was issued October 8, 2017, and is posted on the OIG website. The Plan had five focus areas:

- Accountability over Large Cooperative Agreements
- Management of the U.S. Antarctic Program
- Moving NSF Headquarters to a New Building
- Management of NSF's Business Operations
- Grant Administration

However, the Plan was flexible so that the office could address high priority issues that came up during the year and respond to a congressional request.

Investigations

Quantitative. OI exceeded its goal of 80% of investigations being opened in accord with investigative management intake recommendations. Over 95% of investigations were opened with appropriate investigative management input and authority.

The allegation intake and review process, in which senior managers meet weekly to triage new incoming information to better prioritize cases opened for investigation, has proven effective. Applying established criteria to each intake has increased the effectiveness of investigative oversight of NSF programs and operations and has ensured the highest priority is given to the most serious allegations and those with likely substantive and significant impact on NSF.

Matters brought to OI's attention that are more appropriately addressed by NSF management have been promptly referred for action and matters deemed inconsequential or otherwise inappropriate for investigative activity have been placed in a searchable electronic file and are available for future review as needed. Successfully applying these criteria has ensured that investigative resources were employed with efficiency and economy.

Goal 2: Safeguard the Integrity of NSF Programs and Resources

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

Quantitative Goals

- *At least 90 percent of OIG-or IPA-performed external incurred cost audits, use data analytics to identify risk areas and develop audit procedures.*
- *As appropriate, at least 20 percent of internal performance audits use data analytics to identify risk areas and develop audit procedures.*
- *20 percent of investigations include forensic analysis.*
- *80 % of all investigations are opened on average within 14 days of receipt of factually sufficient allegation.*
- *At least 1 written legal, legislative, or administrative process update transmitted to staff, which discusses topics relevant to OIG operations or activities to assist in mission support.*

Qualitative Goals

- *Evaluate potential action under the Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act (PFCRA) authorities and make referral to NSF in appropriate cases.*
- *Evaluate use of suspension and debarment for all cases as appropriate.*

Audits

Quantitative. The office met its goal of using data analytics on at least 90 percent of OIG- or IPA- external incurred cost audit: Of 10 issued incurred-cost audits, OA used data analytics on nine. Further, OA exceeded its goal of using data analytics on at least 20 percent of internal performance audits: Of the three internal performance audits issued in FY 2017, one (33%) used data analytics.

Investigations

Quantitative. During this performance period, OI exceeded its goal of opening 80 percent of cases on average within 14 days of receipt of a sufficiently documented allegation, meeting this standard in over 90 percent of the time. Further, OI also exceeded the goal of closing 80 percent of cases within timeframes approved by OI management. In addition, OI exceeded its goal of incorporating forensic analysis into 20 percent of our investigations. During this reporting period, over 50 percent of our investigations included forensic analysis. The office effectively used its forensic audit contract to further incorporate forensic analysis in such investigations, as appropriate.

OI made 29 recommendations to NSF management for administrative actions, which included findings of Research Misconduct, government-wide suspension and debarment, and suspension and termination of awards. NSF concurred fully or in part with approximately 90 percent of these recommendations.

Qualitative. OI continued its participation in a government-wide initiative to increase familiarity with PFCRA authorities and have participated in outreach presentations to increase knowledge within the federal community on this important tool for recovery of funds. With this strong foundation relating to PFCRA, OI accomplished the goal of carefully considering each case investigated to determine if the facts and circumstances of the case and its resolution are such that we should recommend that NSF resolve the matter through a PFCRA action.

OI incorporated a routine evaluation of potential administrative actions, including suspension and debarment, into our case management protocol in the resolution of each investigation. We often recommend fact-based and indictment-based suspensions when evidence indicated the subject was not presently responsible. Similarly, we routinely recommend government-wide debarment at the conclusion of appropriate civil/criminal and research misconduct investigations.

LLE

Quantitative. The Office of Counsel drafted and distributed 4 guidance documents, which covered topics ranging from appropriations law, ethics, information disclosure, to a summary of recent legislation.

2. **Strengthen OIG proactive and outreach activities.**

Quantitative

- *At least 80 percent of discretionary audit products issued during the performance year address top management challenges or NSF's high-risk areas.*
- *Investigations staff present at 80% of New Employee Orientations.*
- *At least one briefing to OIG managers and/or staff on relevant legal, legislative, or administrative requirements to assist managers/staff in performing their work; fully respond to all questions either at the time of the presentation or in follow-up discussions or correspondence within 5 days.*

Qualitative

- *Improve availability of whistleblower protection information through outreach and additional website material.*
- *Report and make recommendations to NSF concerning survey of Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training plans at selected universities.*

Audits

Quantitative. Of discretionary audit products issued in FY 2017, 14, or 82 percent, addressed management challenges or were selected based on OA's risk assessment. For example, of the 10 discretionary incurred cost audits of NSF grantees, all but one was selected based on OA's risk assessment. The one that was not was based on referral from the Office of Investigations.

Another discretionary product that was not selected based on OA's risk assessment or management challenges, was a response to an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) analyst, who asked for our recommendations on how to modify the Federal Demonstration Partnership's Pilot Payroll Certification Program to comply with requirements of the OMB's Uniform Guidance.

Investigations

Quantitative. Members of OI staff participated in over 90 percent of NSF New Employee Orientation briefings. An OI staff member schedules the presentations in coordination with the agency.

Qualitative. OI has continued incorporating up-to-date information on whistleblower protections into outreach presentations to NSF employees and to the research community. Further, OI has updated the whistleblower protection information and resources available to the public on the OIG website. New substantive cases will continue to be identified through complaints that come in through outreach efforts, which encourage NSF program and financial officials – as well as members of the investigative and research communities – to refer matters to OI.

After reviewing Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training plans at 53 grantee institutions, OI prepared a report, including findings and observations, and provided it to NSF. This proactive effort will assist NSF in assessing the efficacy of RCR training programs and NSF's compliance with the America COMPETES Act.

LLE

Quantitative. Legal staff conducted 4 formal briefings and/or training sessions: Annual ethics training; Office of Special Counsel training; SES system training; and a briefing on report redaction practices.

3. Refine financial investigative capabilities.

Qualitative

- *Leverage existing audit and investigative information.*
- *Ensure timely and effective use of external forensic financial analysis.*

Investigations

Qualitative. Information flowing between OI and OA was effectively leveraged. Each office referred appropriate matters to the other and coordinated as necessary to benefit specific audits and investigations, de-conflict activities conducted by each office, and to avoid any duplication of effort.

OI has effectively utilized external forensic accountants, and refined the process of managing our contracted forensic financial analyses to enhance the timeliness and thoroughness of investigations. OI has also utilized the inhouse forensic accountant to supplement the external services, thereby reducing

forensic contract costs. Financial forensic analyses were an important component of 26 investigations and helped OI successfully recover approximately $5.7 million.

Goal 3: Utilize OIG Resources Effectively and Efficiently

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

Quantitative

- *Analyze the 2015 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results and develop plan for addressing any issues identified within 3 months.*
- *All staff required to meet GAGAS §3.76 training requirements have met them.*
- *Have 50 percent of OA professional staff professionally certified (CPA, CIA, CISA, CFE) as of September 30, 2017.*
- *Have 40 percent of OA professional staff with advanced degrees as of September 30, 2017.*
- *Conduct I-Group meetings at least quarterly.*
- *Conduct all-hands Office of Audit meetings at least quarterly.*
- *Subject to budget restraints, complete 75% of approved Individual Development Plan-related training for investigative staff.*

Qualitative

- *Conduct IT training, as necessary.*
- *Provide prompt, effective responses to requests for IT support.*
- *Identify and replace outdated computers, servers, printers, copiers, and related equipment as needed.*
- *Develop and deploy an in-house digital forensics capability to support the acquisition, identification, and analysis of evidence relating to OIG investigations subject to budget availability.*
- *Conduct exit surveys with all departing staff to obtain feedback on any issues and areas for office improvement.*

Audits

Quantitative. For the two-year period April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2017, all OA professional staff met *Government Auditing Standards* training requirements. Specifically, they completed 20 hours of continuing professional education (CPE) each year; and over the two-year cycle completed a total of 80 hours of CPE, including 24 hours of government-related training. Further, as of September 30, 2017, 13 of 30 (43%) of OA professional staff were professionally certified (CPA, CIA, CISA, or CFE); and 17 of 30 (57%) had advanced degrees. Thus, the Office did not quite meet the 50 percent goal for professional certification; however, it exceeded the 40 percent goal for advanced degrees. To further foster professional development, OA held seven Audit-all hands meetings during the year – exceeding the goal of one per quarter. At these meetings, staff shared technical and programmatic information.

Qualitative. Three audit staff left OA during the year, and OA senior staff conducted exit surveys with all of them to obtain feedback on any issues and areas for office improvement.

Investigations / IT

OI has effectively and efficiently utilized the limited resources available in these tight budgetary times to improve the performance of the office in the areas of investigative activity, internal communications, and external communications. Our diverse and talented professional staff of Investigative Scientists, Special Agents, Investigative Attorneys and support staff has demonstrated the value of teamwork and synergy.

Quantitative. During this reporting period, OI exceeded the goal of completing 75 perecent of approved IDP-related training. Over 85 percent of such training was accomplished inexepensively by concentrating on local training opportunities. All mandatory OI and OIG-wide training requirements were completed. Further, all training required by Attorney General Guidelines for OIG offices with Statutory Law Enforcement authority was completed. OI exceeded the goal for I-Group meetings as well, conducting eight such meetings during this reporting period. A training component was also featured in four of the eight OI staff meetings.

Qualitative. The IT specialists conducted informal ad hoc IT training on NSF, OIG and other systems and applications as needed. Most routine IT support activities were promptly and effectively provided by our IT staff or referred to the NSF IT Help Center.

During the reporting period, OIG continued to replace outdated computers with laptops to provide increased flexibility for staff. The new IT specialist has taken specialized training in the acquisition of digital evidence and is setting up the digital forensics laboratory in the new NSF Headquarters. The digital evidence unit analyzed .pst files from multiple OI requests to support the investigators' cases. Finally, the OIG CIO and OIG IT staff attended meetings with NSF staff throughout this period regarding the move to NSF's new building, specifically related to printing and phone services, including the Hotline, security access to sensitive areas, set-up of the NCIC workstation and building access.

LLE/Admin

Qualitative. OIG continued to follow a process for analyzing FEVS results and identifying OIG specific challenges that require action. The process ensured broad staff participation through individual meetings the team held with employees and input that it received from an anonymous survey. The staff that comprise the FEVS committee also suggest specific recommendations to management that might address the issues. After reviewing last year's results, the committee added a challenge related to telework, and withdrew a challenge related to professional development and training. OIG management has steadily acted in response to each challenge that was identified. Among other things, responsive actions have included 360 degree reviews for managers, affirmation of OIG's commitment to telework and its policy, and attempts to further streamline work processes.

2. **Improve communication and collaboration within OIG.**

Qualitative

- *Ensure information exchange and referrals between the audit, investigation, and support units.*
- *Use office-wide committees for completion of various OIG projects and activities.*
- *Provide briefings on significant cases/issues at OI meetings.*

OIG-wide

Audit, Investigation, and MLE staff continued to work together to improve communication and collaboration with their colleagues, accomplish office-wide initiatives, and achieve common goals. Regarding referrals, in 2017, Investigations made five referrals to Audit; and Audit made three referrals to Investigations.

Members of all offices worked together on numerous projects including the new Report of Investigation formatting, the mural design for the new building entrance, redesign of the new employee orientation and outreach slide presentations, and the clean-out effort prior to the move. Annual office-wide activities include developing the FY 2017 OIG Performance Plan, Semiannual Reports, and Management Challenges.

Collaborative working groups, consisting of members from across OIG, were convened during this period to resolve matters such as the analysis of the employee survey, how vacant office space should be allocated, how OIG might use social media, and a CIGIE working group that provided guidance concerning IG Empowerment Act implementation.

To facilitate information exchange, the Assistant Inspectors General for Audit and Investigations meet weekly. OIG-wide collegiality was demonstrated further by teams assigned to conduct liaison to directorates and offices within NSF. Almost all the teams consist of one investigator and one auditor.

Investigations

At over 75 percent of OI meetings, significant research misconduct, civil, criminal, or administrative cases were presented by the investigators or the relevant manager. These discussions allowed all staff to remain aware of ongoing efforts throughout the office and provided an opportunity for them to more deeply understand the varied matters under investigation across the office.

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

Quantitative

- *Complete and accurate responses to requests for information within established timeliness guidelines and FOIA/PA provisions 75% of the time.*
- *Complete and accurate responses to media and congressional inquiries within 15 business days of receipt or by other agreed upon date 50% of the time to advance public transparency and meet congressional stakeholder needs.*

Qualitative

- *Produce timely external reports on OIG activities and results.*
- *Provide testimony and other requested information to congressional committees within a timely manner.*
- *Provide briefings to the National Science Board (NSB), Congress, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), NSF, and others regarding OIG plans, priorities, and progress.*
- *Prepare timely OIG budget requests.*
- *Update NSF leadership regularly on OIG activities and concerns.*
- *Collaborate with federal and international agencies to advance common audit, investigative, and management goals.*
- *Provide leadership and active participation in the IG community.*
- *Conduct active, effective outreach to NSF and the research community, including professional associations of higher learning and scientific research, to the degree possible under tight fiscal restraints.*
- *Post audit reports, which have been redacted as necessary, to the OIG website within the required timeframe after issuance.*
- *Promptly process FOIA/PA requests and appeals.*
- *Provide briefings to new employee orientations, program manager seminars, and NSF Grants Conferences.*
- *Review OIG website for necessary modifications and enhancements*

OIG-wide

OIG kept stakeholders apprised of its work by submitting all reports for which it was responsible by the required due dates, including two Semiannual Reports to Congress, NSF's Financial Statement Audit Report, the Federal Information Security Management Act evaluation, the annual OIG Performance Report and Plan, and Management Challenges Letter. OIG also submitted the FY 2017 and 2018 budget request information according to OMB and Congressional requirements.

The IG and her senior staff met with congressional staff engaged in oversight of NSF on multiple occasions during the year to brief them on the OIG's significant audit and investigative priorities. She testified before the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee in February; and the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Research and Technology in March. OIG provided timely and complete information in response to all congressional inquiries and ensured that that written testimony was accurate, complete, and submitted within the required timeframe. Likewise, media inquiries were responded to in a timely way.

The IG also briefed the NSF Director and Chief Operating Officer at regularly scheduled monthly meetings to inform them of OIG activities and to discuss opportunities to improve agency operations. The IG presented at each National Science Board's Committee on Oversight and met with individual Board members on multiple occasions. The IPA firm retained by OIG to audit NSF's financial statements also briefed the Committee about the results of the audit. The AIGA presented the annual audit plan to the Committee in November.

The IG and her staff actively led and participated in events and committees sponsored by the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE). In January 2015, the Inspector General was elected Vice Chair of CIGIE, and she continues to be an active participant on various committees and working groups. For example, along with the Department of State Inspector General, the IG leads a Suspension and Debarment (S&D) Working Group under the auspices of the CIGIE Investigations Committee. This group works to increase understanding and effective use of S&D throughout the community to better protect government funds against fraud, waste, and abuse.

The S&D Working Group has sponsored five workshops since 2010 that have focused on raising the profile of S&D, fact-based S&D including audit and performance-based, and total accountability including the Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act. More than 250 auditors, investigators, attorneys, and others attended each of the workshops. In November of 2016, "Suspension, Debarment and Coordination of Remedies: Effective Lifecycle Communication is the Key" was held at NSF's headquarters in Arlington.

Audits

Qualitative. OA provided leadership in the IG community in FY 2017. Two staff members chair committees or working groups or subgroups such as the Federal Audit Executive Council (FAEC). Further, 10 OA staff members actively participated in the IG community. One staff member is the NSF OIG representative to the CIGIE Public Affairs Committee. Other staff members participated in CIGIE projects, such as developing its strategic plan for 2018-2022. The Assistant Counsel co-led the group charged with preparing guidance for provisions in the Inspector General Empowerment Act of 2016 (IGEA). The guidance pertained to new reporting requirements for Semiannual Reports to Congress, and IGEA exemptions to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 and the Computer Matching and Privacy Act of 1988. Also, OA staff actively participated in the FAEC DATA Act and Oversight.gov committees, conducted an audit resolution roundtable for a FAEC meeting, and met routinely with the Financial Statement Audit Network, and IG community group.

Ten OA staff members provided outreach to NSF, 10 to professional groups, and four to the research community. The Inspector General for Audit presented the *OIG Role in Enterprise Risk Management* to NSF; addressed NSF's Regional Grants Conference in Louisville, Kentucky and provided an OIG briefing for new NSF employees; and made a presentation titled *So You Want to Be Independent* at a meeting of the Association of Government Accountants. The Deputy AIGA and an Audit Director presented at the National Council of University Research Administrators. The Director also made a presentation to an NSF Program Management Seminar, a seminar that helps orient new program officers.

OA staff also remained actively engaged with NSF committees and organizations during the performance period. They continued to meet monthly with staff from NSF's Office of Budget, Finance and Award Management as part of a Stewardship Collaborative, which focuses on issues related to internal NSF programs and operations as well as NSF awardees. In addition, a subgroup of the Collaborative met monthly to discuss more specific audit resolution issues.

OIG staff reviewed all audit reports for redaction of non-public information prior to their posting on OIG's website, finding and striking the appropriate balance between transparency and legal protections from disclosure (such as those pertaining to personal privacy). All reports were posted within the 3-days of issuance, as required by law.

Investigations

Quantitative. OI effectively communicated with the public through timely release of information through our website, through Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, and through multiple outreach events. All FOIA requests and appeals handled by OI were addressed in accordance with the governing requirements. Modifications were made to the OIG website to create a more prominent FOIA link and updated FOIA information.

Qualitative. OI participated in numerous joint initiatives to develop policy for government-wide application. These included the DOJ Financial Fraud Task Force and its Grant Fraud subcommittee, the Interagency Suspension and Debarment Committee, the CIGIE Suspension and Debarment Working Group, the CIGIE PFCRA Working Group, and the CIGIE SBIR Working Group. OI also served as co-leaders of the Interagency Research Misconduct Working Group. OI staff participated in joint investigations with OIGs from across the government; we have been a leader in the SBIR Agent-Level Working Group. Further, the office provided joint training to the federal community at workshops and at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

Through numerous presentations at New Employee Orientation briefings, NSF Grant Conferences, and NSF Program Management Seminars, our staff have ensured productive communications continue between NSF and the OIG. OIG initiated approximately 40 official events with NSF, in addition to numerous informal meetings and communications with NSF staff. An OI staff member was appointed as co-Executive Secretary to the Committee on Oversight of the National Science Board, which provides an opportunity for greater coordination with this committee.

Regarding its outreach to the research community, OIG had to reduce the number of direct contacts with national education associations, universities, professional associations, and groups of NSF grant recipients compared to prior years due to budgetary constraints. We have, nevertheless, seized opportunities to present to larger audiences – especially when the event is in the local area or the presentation can be made through video conferencing or other similar means.

The AIGI has worked closely with the CIGIE and FLETC training staffs to meet the needs of the community. He has attended numerous functions, including the FLETC Partner Organizations Training Executives Forum; the TSA Office of Law Enforcement/Federal Air Marshal Service; Law Enforcement Officer Flying Armed Program; Federal Partners Community of Interest; and the FLETC Partner Organizations Training Executives Forum. He also continued to work with counterparts at the Office of Research Integrity (ORI), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). As a result, progress has been made in the development and presentation of

joint training in research misconduct investigations. The AIGI is also actively involved in outreach activities throughout the federal community and encourages his staff to do the same. Among the many community-related outreach activities in which OI staff participated are the following:

- FLETC Law Enforcement Control Tactics Working Group
- CIGIE Data Analytics Working Group and lead a test data analytics sampling
- CIGIE Investigations Committee monthly meetings
- Department of Justice Grant Fraud Working Group
- Interagency Suspension and Debarment Committee monthly meetings
- CIGIE Small Business Innovative Research Working Group
- CIGIE Chief Information Officer Committee meetings
- CIGIE Internal Affairs/Quality Assurance Working Group
- CIGIE Policy and Procedures Working Group
- CIGIE Whistleblower Investigations
- CIGIE Whistleblower Ombudsman Working Group
- National Insider Threat Task Force
- CIGIE Inspector General Criminal Investigator Academy and FLETC
- 5th World Conference on Research Integrity

OI staff have also supported community initiatives with numerous training exercises, instruction, and presentations. The recipients of such training include law enforcement agencies, research integrity professionals, government agencies, and professional organizations.

The AIGI was instrumental in the planning, coordination, and execution of an immensely successful first-ever joint workshop for AIGs throughout the community. The workshop brought key stakeholders together to share best practices and lessons learned. Importantly, it provided an opportunity for the establishment and support of coalitions within the federal community bridging the audit, investigation, and inspections communities.

Modifications to OIG's website were made throughout the year to improve the ability of the public to access information about OI investigations and to update important information regarding whistleblower protections.

LLE

In March 2017, the Office of Counsel took over prime responsibility for handling FOIA/PA activities for OIG. This now includes initial processing of all requests under both statutes. All FOIA/PA actions OC handled were responsive, accurate, and in accordance with substantive legal requirements. During the transition, and due to the press of business in other areas, as well as the temporary loss of one staff member, not all FOIA timelines were met by OC. The office is actively working with IT staff to implement a comprehensive SharePoint-based site for FOIA/PA request tracking, which will greatly enhance request processing. The site, for example, will contain fields for all relevant data, including time periods, application of exemptions, and fee information.

The Office of Counsel was instrumental in drafting revisions to NSF's FOIA regulations insofar as they pertain to OIG, and – in collaboration with the Office of Investigations – OC finalized revisions to OIG's Privacy Act system to more optimally align published routine uses with mission needs. An OC attorney participated in an overall CIGIE effort to issue guidance on IGEA requirements regarding Semiannual Reports to Congress.