



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

## CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A09100077

Page 1 of 1

OIG received an allegation that an institution<sup>1</sup> and the PI<sup>2</sup> on an NSF award<sup>3</sup> had violated the Animal Welfare Act. It was further alleged that these issues had been reviewed by the United States Department of Agriculture and both the PI and the university had paid penalties.

OIG's review of the matter confirmed the allegations and found that neither the PI nor the institution had informed NSF of the animal welfare issues that were the source of the violations and were central to the conduct of the award. OIG concluded that the USDA had exerted appropriate jurisdiction over the matter and that the University had failed to comply with the NSF grant condition that specifies that:

Recipients<sup>4</sup> shall immediately notify the Federal awarding agency of developments that have a significant impact on the award-supported activities. Also, notification shall be given in the case of problems, delays or adverse conditions which materially impair the ability to meet the objectives of the award. This notification shall include a statement of the action taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation.<sup>5</sup>

In response to OIG's inquiry both the PI and the institution assigned the responsibility for that notification to the other party; neither accepted the responsibilities expected of them by NSF. OIG also learned that the institution's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee suspended animal research late in the course of the research award. The PI failed to inform the Program Officer of the significant problems in completing the award created by the Animal Welfare violations and the suspension. Rather than report work on live animals the PI had reported work extracted from videotapes of those animals.

OIG noted that these incidents occurred over six years ago; since then, significant organizational and personnel changes had occurred at the institution and the PI had retired. As a result, OIG ensured that both the PI and the institution understood their obligations. The institution reviewed all its current awards to ensure that no significant impediments existed that NSF had not been alerted to. The institution revamped its procedures to ensure that its officials and its PIs were aware of their respective responsibilities to alert NSF to significant issues.

This file closed and no further action will be taken.

<sup>1</sup> The [REDACTED]  
<sup>2</sup> [REDACTED]  
<sup>3</sup> [REDACTED]

<sup>4</sup> Typically, and in this case, institutions are the "recipients" of NSF awards.

<sup>5</sup> FDP (May 16, 2000) Article 51