



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL

September 19, 2014

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Project Notification:
EPA Conferences—Maximizing Cost Efficiencies
Project No. OA-FY15-0381

FROM: Janet Kasper, Director
Contracts and Assistance Agreements

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janet Kasper".

TO: David Bloom, Acting Chief Financial Officer
Office of the Chief Financial Officer

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Inspector General (OIG) plans to begin preliminary research in October 2014 for an audit of conference spending. This project is to be included in our fiscal year (FY) 2015 annual plan. The objective of the audit is to answer the following question:

- Does the EPA have internal controls over conferences to ensure that expenses are appropriate, necessary, and managed in a manner that minimizes expenses to taxpayers and provides optimum use of resources?

The OIG plans to conduct work in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) and offices responsible for conferences during the course of preliminary research. We plan to interview OCFO staff about oversight, internal controls and management of conference costs. We will review related policies, procedures and guidance documents. In addition, we will select a sample of conferences held in FY 2014 and contact responsible program and regional staff members for the sampled conferences. The OIG plans to conduct work via video and audio conferences. Applicable generally accepted government auditing standards will be used in conducting our audit. The anticipated benefits of our project are to improve operational efficiency and be responsive to congressional interest in conference spending.

We will contact your audit liaison to arrange a mutually agreeable time to discuss our objectives and the purpose of the preliminary research phase of our project. We would also be particularly interested in any areas of concern that you may have. We will answer any of your questions about the project process, reporting procedures, methods used to gather and analyze data, and what we should expect of each other during the course of the project. Throughout the project, we will provide updates on a monthly basis.

To ensure the success and timely completion of the audit, we ask that OCFO's Office of Financial Management provide:

- A list of conferences held during FY 2014 with net expenses greater than \$20,000. Please include the name of the conference, date, location, number of employees, and the hosting office/division.
- Read-only access to the EPA's On-line Conference Tracking Tool.
- A contact list of staff members with conference spending oversight and management duties.

We respectfully note that the OIG is authorized by the Inspector General Act of 1978 to have timely access to personnel and all materials necessary to complete its objective. We will request your resolution if an agency employee refuses to provide requested records to the OIG, or otherwise fails to cooperate with the OIG. We may report unresolved access matters to the Administrator, Gina McCarthy, and include the incident in the Semiannual Report to Congress.

The project will be supervised by Janet Kasper, Director of Contracts and Assistance Agreements, and the Project Manager will be Madeline Mullen. Should you or your staff have any questions, please contact me at (312) 886-3059 or kasper.janet@epa.gov, or Madeline Mullen at (206) 553-4032 or mullen.madeline@epa.gov.

cc: Mark Hague, Acting Deputy Chief Financial Officer
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