



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL



# Audit of EPA Passport Controls

Report No. 14-P-0243

May 1, 2014



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## Report Contributors:

Jean Bloom  
Kevin Collins

## Abbreviations

CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OITA	Office of International and Tribal Affairs
PENS	Passport Expiration Notification System
PII	Personally Identifiable Information

**Cover photo:** Passports located in boxes at an EPA warehouse operated by a contractor in Landover, Maryland. (EPA OIG photo)

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To report fraud, waste or abuse, contact us through one of the following methods:

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**fax:** 1-202-566-2599  
**online:** <http://www.epa.gov/oig/hotline.htm>

**write:** EPA Inspector General Hotline  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Mailcode 2431T  
Washington, DC 20460

### Suggestions for Audits or Evaluations

To make suggestions for audits or evaluations, contact us through one of the following methods:

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**fax:** 1-202-566-2599  
**online:** [http://www.epa.gov/oig/contact.html#Full\\_Info](http://www.epa.gov/oig/contact.html#Full_Info)

**write:** EPA Inspector General  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Mailcode 2410T  
Washington, DC 20460



# At a Glance

## Why We Did This Review

On August 27, 2013, a member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works requested that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Inspector General (OIG), initiate work in connection with a fraud committed by John C. Beale, a former Senior Policy Advisor with the EPA's Office of Air and Radiation. One area that was being audited was the agency's vetting process for new employees. We also audited the process for official passports. The audit has disclosed issues that impact the Office of International and Tribal Affairs (OITA) and require immediate attention.

### This report addresses the following EPA theme:

- *Embracing EPA as a high performing organization*

For further information, contact our public affairs office at (202) 566-2391.

The full report is at:  
[www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2014/20140501-14-P-0243.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2014/20140501-14-P-0243.pdf)

## Audit of EPA Passport Controls

### What We Found

OITA is not in compliance with agency guidance over the control and security of sensitive personally identifiable information—specifically, official and diplomatic passports issued to agency employees. OITA lacks a formal written policy and procedure for issuing, monitoring and securing passports.

Limited reliance can be placed on OITA's Passport Expiration Notification System to track and identify the location of EPA issued passports.

**EPA needs to strengthen controls for official passports to protect sensitive personally identifiable information.**

Of the 417 passports purported to be in OITA's possession, 199 could not be located. OITA has not enforced its passport guidance of having staff return passports after travel. Lack of compliance with agency guidance may put the agency in the position where sensitive personally identifiable information is not being adequately protected.

### Agency Corrective Actions and Noteworthy Achievements

We recommend that OITA include a plan to identify official passports issued to agency employees and ensure that passports not currently being used for travel are returned to OITA for proper storage or cancellation. We also recommend that OITA develop and implement an agencywide policy and procedure for the issuance, monitoring and control of official passports; a plan to review and update information in the Passport Expiration Notification System to ensure the information currently in that system is accurate and complete; and a policy to compare employee travel activity recorded in the official passport with the actual travel activity to ensure official passports are only used to carry out official duties.

OITA accepted all the recommendations and developed a corrective action plan to complete all recommendations. OITA estimates corrective actions will be completed by September 30, 2014.



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

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

May 1, 2014

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** Audit of EPA Passport Controls  
Report No. 14-P-0243

**FROM:** Arthur A. Elkins Jr.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arthur A. Elkins Jr.", is written over the printed name.

**TO:** Jane Nishida, Acting Assistant Administrator  
Office of International and Tribal Affairs

This is our report on the subject audit conducted by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The report contains findings that the OIG has identified and corrective action that the OIG recommends. The report represents the opinion of the OIG and does not necessarily represent the final EPA position. Final determination on matters in this report will be made by EPA managers in accordance with established audit-resolution procedures.

**Action Required**

The agency agreed with all recommendations and provided planned corrective actions and completion dates that meet the intent of these recommendations. Therefore, the agency is not required to provide a written response for these recommendations. Recommendation 3 is closed and no further action is required. For the remaining open recommendations, please update the EPA's Management Audit Tracking System as you complete the planned corrective actions. Please notify my staff if there is a significant change in the agreed-to corrective actions. Should you choose to provide a response to this final report, we will post your response on the OIG's public website, along with our memorandum commenting on your response. You should provide your response as an Adobe PDF file that complies with the accessibility requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

This report will be available at <http://www.epa.gov/oig>.

If you have any questions, please contact Kevin Christensen, acting Assistant Inspector General for Audit, at (202) 566-1007 or [christensen.kevin@epa.gov](mailto:christensen.kevin@epa.gov); or Robert Adachi, Director, Forensic Audits, at (415) 947-4537 or [adachi.robert@epa.gov](mailto:adachi.robert@epa.gov)

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

# Office of Inspector General

Audit of EPA Passport Controls

Report No. 14-P-0243

May 1, 2014

# Reasons for Audit

- Part of continuing work on internal controls in response to a member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Environmental and Public Works request for work in connection with a fraud committed by John C. Beale.
- As part of an audit of the agency's vetting process for new employees, we looked into vetting for official passports.
- Issues have been identified that impact the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Office of International and Tribal Affairs (OITA) and require its immediate attention.

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# Objective

To determine the agency's responsibility and requirements regarding the possession and safeguarding of official passports, and evaluate whether they are being adhered to.

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# Prior OIG Work

- EPA Office of Inspector General (OIG) Report No. 13-P-0272, *Early Warning Report: Main EPA Headquarters Warehouse in Landover, Maryland, Requires Immediate EPA Attention*, dated May 31, 2013, noted an issue concerning passports:
  - Potential security breach of personally identifiable information, as passports were located in boxes at the warehouse.

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# Prior OIG Work (cont'd)

- Agency Acting Administrator stated in a May 23, 2013 memorandum to the Inspector General, that the following actions would be taken to address the issues raised in the report:
  - The agency will identify and strengthen any policies and procedures addressing the transport, storage, access and disposition of agency records containing personally identifiable information.
  - The Breach Evaluation Team will evaluate any potential concern with safeguarding of personally identifiable information.
  - The agency will consult with the U.S. Department of State and implement immediate changes to existing procedures to ensure safe handling of expired or no longer needed government passports.
- OITA has developed corrective actions to address the above issues.

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# Background

- OITA's Office of Management and International Services is responsible for obtaining and monitoring passports.
- The Passport Expiration Notification System (PENS) was created to track all passports issued to EPA travelers.

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# Scope and Methodology

- Performed fieldwork from February 3 through March 19, 2014.
- Conducted assignment in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.
- Met with OITA staff responsible for the oversight and processing of passports obtained for agency staff.

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# Scope and Methodology (cont'd)

- Reviewed OITA guidance concerning official and diplomatic passports issued to EPA employees.
- Obtained an extract of data from OITA's PENS.
- Performed an inventory test of all passports located in the OITA Passport Office safe.
- Conducted audit work on OIG's compliance with EPA passport guidance and will issue a separate report on the results.

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# Criteria–Official Passport

- In the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), under 22 CFR 51.3 (b):

An official passport is issued to an official or employee of the U.S. Government traveling abroad to carry out official duties.

- Under 22 CFR 51.52 (b) and (b)(1), official passports are exempt from fees when the individual is:

An officer or employee of the United States traveling on official business.... The applicant must submit evidence of the official purpose of the travel.

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# Criteria–Passport Acceptance Agents

- Under 22 CFR 51.22 (b) (5), the Department of State is authorized to select an employee of a federal agency to accept passport applications on its behalf.
  
- Within the EPA, four employees have been designated as passport acceptance agents:
  - Two in OITA.
  - Two in EPA Region 5.

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# OITA Guidance

- OITA website provides the following guidance:

Official passports are controlled United States Government documents and must be returned between trips to the Travel Office of the Office of International and Tribal Affairs (OITA). **Please return your official passport to OITA within 15 days after returning to the United States.** When not in use for travel, all official passports will be maintained in a secure facility within OITA.

**All official passports must be forwarded to OITA for immediate cancellation:** if you retire; if you accept employment elsewhere (even if at another government agency); or if you move to another position within EPA that does not require official travel.

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# Sensitive Personally Identifiable Information

- Official passports are sensitive personally identifiable information (PII).
- EPA Privacy Policy 2151.0 defines sensitive PII as:  
*Social Security numbers, or comparable identification numbers.... Sensitive PII, a subset of PII, requires additional levels of security controls.*

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# Results

- EPA OITA is not in compliance with its guidance over the control and security of sensitive PII in the form of official and diplomatic passports issued to agency employees.
- OITA's PENS does not fully and accurately track and identify the location of EPA-issued passports.
- OITA guidance requires improvements.

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# How Did This Happen

- OITA has not kept the PENS database up to date with accurate information.
- OITA has not enforced its passport guidance regarding staff returning their passports to OITA after travel.
- PENS is not updated when an employee separates from the agency, as OITA is not always notified when an employee separates.

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# Why Is This Important

- Lack of compliance with agency guidance puts the agency in the position where sensitive PII is not being adequately protected.
- Lack of control could result in release of sensitive PII due to missing, misused or improperly destroyed official passports.

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# PENS Data

- The PENS universe we were provided contained 2,311 records for passports obtained through OITA's passport office between 1995 and February 3, 2014.

Passport per PENS	
Passport type	Records
Diplomatic	11
Official	2,153
Personal	147
Total	2,311

Location of passport	
Location	Records
OITA	417
With traveler	1,770
Other*	124
Total	2,311

\* Location per PENS is shown as Cancelled and Destroyed, Other or Blank



# OITA PENS Errors

<b>Results of OIG passport testing</b>	
<b>Description</b>	<b>Number of passports</b>
<b>Passport identified in PENS as located in OITA's safe as of 2/3/2014</b>	<b>417</b>
<b>Less actual passports located in safe on 2/12/2014</b>	<b>196</b>
<b>Less passport sent to Department of State by OITA between 2/5/2014 and 2/12/2014</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Passports not located during 2/12/2014 test</b>	<b>199</b>
<b>Percentage of passport not located (199/417)</b>	<b>47.72%</b>
<b>Official passports located in the safe on 2/12/2014 that were not recorded in PENS as of 2/13/2014</b>	<b>15</b>

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# Lack of Policy and Procedures

- OITA lacks a formal written policy and procedure for issuing, monitoring and securing passports.
- OITA's website contains only guidance on passports.
- OITA lacks a formal written policy and procedure for an employee leaving the agency to return the passport to OITA, as stated in its website guidance.

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# Recommendations

- We recommend the Assistant Administrator for OITA :
  1. Develop and implement a plan to:
    - a. Identify official passports issued to agency employees.
    - b. Determine the location of all passports.
    - c. Ensure that passports not currently being used for travel are returned to OITA for proper storage or cancellation.
    - d. Notify the U.S. Department of State of all passports not located.
    - e. Work with the Office of Environmental Information to develop necessary steps to contain, control and mitigate the risks from any potential breach and to prevent further unauthorized access to, or use of, sensitive PII.

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# Recommendations

2. Develop and implement an agencywide policy and procedure for:
  - a. Issuance, monitoring and control of official passports.
  - b. Informing agency staff of the policy and their responsibilities under the policy.
  
3. Conduct a review of its Intranet homepage and update accordingly to ensure information contained on the page is current and updated.

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# Recommendations (cont'd)

4. Develop and implement a plan to:
  - a. Review and update information in PENS to ensure the information currently in PENS is accurate and complete.
  - b. Ensure the system is kept up to date.
5. Develop and implement a policy to compare employee travel activity recorded in the official passport with the actual travel activity reported in the Fast International Approval Tracking database to ensure official passports are only used to carry out official duties.

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# Corrective Actions Taken by OITA

- On March 14, 2014, OITA's Director, Office of Management and International Services, notified the OIG of corrective actions taken and planned to strengthen passport controls.
- As of March 13, 2014, OITA had:
  1. Changed the process for destroying expired or no-longer-needed passports.
  2. Modified PENS to include tracking of passports sent to Department of State, Special Issuance Agency.
  3. Revised Standard Operating Procedures for passport destruction and renewal.
  4. Revised International Travel Pages.

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# Corrective Actions Taken By OITA (cont'd)

5. Issued an International Travel Memorandum concerning travel guidelines.
6. Contacted the Department of State regarding a Memorandum of Understanding, and is awaiting a response.
7. Updated the International Travel Coordinators Handbook.

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# OITA Planned Corrective Actions

OITA changes in process and planned corrective actions include:

1. Program Review of PENS (estimated completed by June 2014).
2. Development and use of PENS 2 upgraded system (by September 30, 2014).
3. Return of Official/Diplomatic Passports to OITA.
4. Follow-Up Program Review of its FY 2015 Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act process.

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# OITA Response to OIG Report

- On April 2, 2014, we received a signed memorandum from OITA in response to our draft report.
- OITA accepted the recommendations and provided a corrective action and estimated completion date for each recommendation.
- All recommendations are estimated to be completed by September 30, 2014.
- See appendix A for OITA's full response.
- Since OITA concurred with the recommendations, no OIG comments are being provided.

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## **Status of Recommendations and Potential Monetary Benefits**

RECOMMENDATIONS						POTENTIAL MONETARY BENEFITS (in \$000s)	
Rec. No.	Page No.	Subject	Status <sup>1</sup>	Action Official	Planned Completion Date	Claimed Amount	Agreed To Amount
1	19	Develop and implement a plan to:		Assistant Administrator for International and Tribal Affairs			
		a. Identify official passports issued to agency employees.	O		4/30/14		
		b. Determine the location of all passports.	O		4/30/14		
		c. Ensure that passports not currently being used for travel are returned to OITA for proper storage or cancellation.	O		6/30/14		
		d. Notify the U.S. Department of State of all passports not located.	O		6/30/14		
		e. Work with the Office of Environmental Information to develop necessary steps to contain, control and mitigate the risks from any potential breach and to prevent further unauthorized access to, or use of, sensitive PII.	O		9/30/14		
2	20	Develop and implement an agencywide policy and procedure for:	O	Assistant Administrator for International and Tribal Affairs			
		a. Issuance, monitoring and control of official passports.			9/30/14		
		b. Informing agency staff of the policy and their responsibilities under the policy.			9/30/14		
3	20	Conduct a review of its Intranet homepage and update accordingly to ensure information contained on the page is current and updated.	C	Assistant Administrator for International and Tribal Affairs	3/17/14		
4	21	Develop and implement a plan to:	O	Assistant Administrator for International and Tribal Affairs			
		a. Review and update information in PENS to ensure the information currently in PENS is accurate and complete.			6/30/14		
		b. Ensure the system is kept up to date.			9/30/14		
5	21	Develop and implement a policy to compare employee travel activity recorded in the official passport with the actual travel activity reported in the Fast International Approval Tracking database to ensure official passports are only used to carry out official duties;	O	Assistant Administrator for International and Tribal Affairs	9/30/14		

<sup>1</sup> O = recommendation is open with agreed-to corrective actions pending  
C = recommendation is closed with all agreed-to actions completed  
U = recommendation is unresolved with resolution efforts in progress



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

OFFICE OF  
INTERNATIONAL AND  
TRIBAL AFFAIRS

April 2, 2014

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** Response to Office of Inspector General Draft Report “Review of EPA Passport Controls,” March 19, 2014

**FROM:** Jane Nishida /s/  
Acting Assistant Administrator

**TO:** Arthur A. Elkins, Jr.  
Inspector General

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the issues and recommendations in the draft report “Review of EPA Passport Controls.” The following is a summary of the Office of International and Tribal Affairs’ (OITA) overall position, along with technical comments to clarify and supplement this response.

**OVERALL POSITION**

OITA accepts the recommendations in the draft report, and we have assigned corrective actions outlined below.

As communicated to your office on March 14, 2014, and included in the Technical Comments Attachment, OITA has taken a number steps to strengthen its passport controls. Some of these changes have been implemented fully and others are in process of being implemented. OITA is committed to addressing the specific issues that the OIG has raise in its draft report and to maintaining an environment of strong passport controls.

RESPONSE TO REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Agreements

No.	Recommendation	High-Level Intended Corrective Action(s)	Est. Completion
1	Develop and implement a plan to:		
	a. identify all official passports issued to agency employees;	OITA is conducting a review to identify all official passports issued to agency employees as documented in our technical comments attachment.	April 30, 2014
	b. determine the location of all passports;	OITA is conducting a review to determine the location of all passports as documented in our technical comments attachment.	April 30, 2014
	c. ensure that passports not currently being used for travel are returned to OITA for proper storage or cancellation;	OITA has requested that passports not currently being used for travel are returned to OITA as documented in our technical comments attachment.	June 30, 2014
	d. notify the Department of State of all passports not located; and	OITA is notifying State of all missing passports by immediately filing a lost/stolen passport application as soon as we confirm that a passport cannot be located.	June 30, 2014
	e. work with Office of Environmental Information to develop necessary steps to contain, control and mitigate the risks from any potential breach and prevent further unauthorized access to or use of sensitive PII.	OITA will work with OEI, as recommended.	September 30, 2014
2	Develop and implement an agency wide policy and procedure:		
	a. for the issuance, monitoring, and control of official passports;	OITA will develop policy, as recommended, for agency directives clearance review. This policy will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• passport holder roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• control of passport and passport-related information</li> <li>• regional waiver process and conditions</li> <li>• monitoring passport use against international travel plan</li> </ul>	September 30, 2014
	b. inform agency staff of the policy and their responsibilities under the policy.	OITA will notify agency staff of the new policy, as recommended.	September 30, 2014

No.	Recommendation	High-Level Intended Corrective Action(s)	Est. Completion
3	Conduct a review of its intranet homepage and update accordingly to ensure information contained on the page is current and updated.	Completed.	March 17, 2014
4	Develop and implement a plan to:		
	a. review and update information in PENS to ensure the information currently in PENS accurate and complete and	OITA is in the process of updating the information in PENS as documented in our technical comments attachment.	June 30, 2014
	b. ensure the system is kept up to date.	OITA is developing PENS 2, an upgraded passport tracking database, as documented in our technical comments attachment.	September 30, 2014
5	Develop and implement a policy to compare employee travel activity recorded in the official passport with the actual travel activity reported in FIAT to ensure official passport are only used to carry out official duties.	OITA will develop and document a process for sampling passports for the recommended comparison.	September 30, 2014

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions regarding this response, please contact Teresa Ruppe, Audit Follow-Up Coordinator, Office of International and Tribal Affairs at 202-564-6619.

Attachment

cc:

Michael Stahl, DAA  
 Katrina Cherry, Director OMIS  
 Dennis Cunningham, Deputy Director OMIS

## Technical Comments Attachment

### Response to Office of Inspector General Draft Passport Controls Report

#### Specific Comments on the Draft Report

- **Page 4:** Please remove the reference to EPA-OIG Report No. 13-P-0272 concerning EPA's Warehouse. Without additional background information, this reference is confusing and may be viewed as an ongoing action of the current review.
- **Page 15, 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet:** Please clarify this bullet. Until March 2014 OITA's guidance only noted that employees "should" return their passports to OITA, but was not mandatory. There was no requirement to enforce the guidance.
- **Page 18, 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet:** Please change this bullet to, "OITA is not always notified when an employee separates from the Agency." OITA does update PENS when we are notified of an employee's departure.

#### Changes Made as of March 13, 2014

**Destruction of Expired or No-Longer-Needed Passports:** In May 2013, OIG notified the Office of the Administrator that a number of expired passports had been found unsecured at EPA's warehouse in Landover, Maryland. Upon learning of these passports, OITA immediately stopped sending expired or no-longer-needed passports for destruction within the agency. OITA's Office of Management and International Services (OMIS) notified the Special Issuance Office within the Department of State that, beginning immediately, EPA would send all such passports directly to State for incineration.

After agents from OIG returned the passports found at the Landover warehouse to OITA, staff in our International Travel Office worked with the Special Issuance Agency at the Department of State to return these passports to State for destruction.

OITA also developed standard language for all letters sent to the Special Issuance Agency instructing State not to return cancelled passports to EPA.

All letters requesting renewal or destruction of Official/Diplomatic passports must now be signed by the Director or Deputy Director of OMIS. Copies of these request letters must also be maintained in OITA's International Travel Office.

**Update to the Passport Expiration Notification System (PENS):** OITA changed PENS, its database for tracking passport expiration and renewal requests, to include a field for tracking when passports are sent to the Special Issuance Agency, either for renewal or destruction.

**New Standard Operating Procedures:** OITA revised its Standard Operating Procedure for passports to reflect changes in how the agency now manages requests for passport destruction/renewal. The revised SOP also includes templates for letters to the Special Issuance Agency.

**Revised International Travel Pages:** OITA thoroughly updated the travel information on its intranet site, which serves as a key source of information on international travel planning, passports, visas, and security issues related to foreign travel. The site's new structure will make it easier for OITA to locate and update the travel information we provide.

**International Travel Memorandum to the AAs/RAs/DAAs/DRAs/OGC/IG:** On March 14, 2014, the OITA Acting AA emailed an updated list of requirements and best practices related to international travel planning (see attachment). The AAs/RAs/DAAs/DRAs/OGC/IG were asked to distribute this email through their organizations and help the agency adhere to all relevant policies and guidelines on international travel. The OITA DAA will also discuss this document with the DAAs/DRAs and it will be posted to OITA's intranet site.

**Update as of April 2, 2014:** Travel memo is posted to OITA's intranet site.

**Memorandum of Understanding with the Special Issuance Agency:** OITA Acting AA contacted the Acting Director of the Special Issuance Agency (SIA) at the Department of State regarding an MOU between our agencies on passport management. During a call with the Special Issuance Agency on last year, SIA management mentioned that their organization would be interested in developing such an MOU with EPA. OITA believes that the MOU would help clarify further roles and responsibilities related to passport management. We are currently awaiting a status update from the SIA.

**Updated International Travel Coordinators (ITC) Handbook:** OIG's review prompted OITA to revise the International Travel Coordinators Handbook. The Handbook is now available on OITA's intranet site in an HTML format, and is being distributed to the ITCs, which will facilitate future revisions. The updated text addresses numerous changes to the structure of the International Travel Plan (ITP) form in FIAT.

### **Other Changes In-Process**

**Program Review of PENS:** As part of its Multi-year Plan for Program Reviews under FMFIA, OITA had planned a FY 2014 review of passport controls. The work already undertaken by OIG as part of its review as well as some of the initial feedback that OIG has provided has led OITA to focus its review more closely on the structure of PENS and on the quality of the system's data. OITA believes that a thorough review of PENS, though time-consuming, will substantially help us improve the quality of our data and guide OITA as it develops a next-generation database.

OITA assigned staff from outside of the International Travel Office to design and carry out the review. As of March 13, 2014, OITA staff have reviewed approximately 500 of the 2800 records in PENS, documenting any missing or conflicting data. OITA expects the review to be completed and initial findings and recommendations available by late April 2014.

**Update as of March 27, 2014:** OITA has reviewed approximately 2,200 of the 2,800 records in PENS. The record review will be completed by April 4<sup>th</sup>, at which time our office will begin

correcting all identified errors in PENS. We will draw on our analysis of data entry errors to develop an improved passports management database (PENS 2).

**Development of PENS 2:** Based on the findings and recommendations from the OIG's review of passport controls and from OITA's review of records in PENS, OITA will develop PENS 2, an upgraded passport tracking database. This new database will contain records only on active Official and Diplomatic passports (all information from the legacy PENS will be archived) and will feature new controls to help prevent data entry errors. OITA's goal is to have PENS 2 in use before the end of FY14.

**Return of Official/Diplomatic Passports to OITA:** EPA's international travelers should return their Official or Diplomatic passports to OITA's International Travel Office within 15 days of returning to the United States. OITA acknowledges that many travelers appear not to have been aware of this policy and therefore, have not returned their passports to the International Travel Office in a timely manner. While this failure does not indicate any malfeasance, OITA is working with program offices to correct this issue.

Using data provided by the OIG following their review of PENS and of the passports in OITA's International Travel Office, OITA is contacting each traveler who hasn't returned his/her Diplomatic or Official passport, as required. Reaching out to these travelers should significantly reduce the number of passports being held outside of the International Travel Office. OITA acknowledges that a small number of staff, such as emergency responders who might be called to work on transboundary issues, will need to maintain their passports in their Region or Lab. OITA will work with the Regions/Labs where these employees work to develop a process for securing their passports on-site. Our goal is to have this alternate process developed and in place by June 2014.

OITA is also exploring options to modify the Fast International Approval of Travel (FIAT) system so that it sends automated reminders to staff who have not returned their passports within 15 days of their scheduled travel end date.

**Follow-up Review:** OITA will perform another program review of passport controls as part of its FY 2015 FMFIA process. This second review will assist us in confirming the efficacy of the controls we developed in FY 2013 and FY 2014, and identify any new controls that may be necessary.

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