



At a Glance

Catalyst for Improving the Environment

Why We Did This Review

The Council of Inspectors General for Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) suggested a series of certifications be included in Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) awards government-wide. The Office of Inspector General reviewed the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) SBIR solicitations and contracts to determine whether EPA included those certifications.

Background

The SBIR program provides incentive funding to small businesses to translate their innovative ideas into commercial products that address environmental problems.

For further information, contact our Office of Congressional, Public Affairs and Management at (202) 566-2391.

The full report is at:
www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2011/20110330-11-N-0199.pdf

EPA's Small Business Innovative Research Awards Should Include Additional Certifications to Reduce Risk

What We Found

Our review of EPA's SBIR solicitations and contracts found that EPA has certifications and contract clauses that address many of the CIGIE concerns. However, EPA would benefit from two additional certifications CIGIE suggested. EPA does not require awardees to submit a certification against false statements when submitting the proposal. EPA also does not require a certification with the final report that addresses, among other items, that the report statements are true and completed. We believe that the risks CIGIE identified would be significantly mitigated if EPA added these certifications to its SBIR program.

What We Recommend

We recommend that the Assistant Administrator for Research and Development add a certification statement to the current requirements SBIR funding applicants must submit prior to award and require SBIR funding recipients to submit a certification statement with their final reports.

In response to the draft report, EPA concurred with our recommendations. In 2010, the Office of Research and Development required the signed certification for phase 2 contracts prior to award and at the time of the final report. For March 2012 solicitations and thereafter, EPA has agreed that signed certifications will be required for phase 1 contracts prior to award and at the time of the final report. Also, a new certification will be added to phase 1 and 2 contracts for signature prior to final report issuance.