



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

OFFICE OF  
INSPECTOR GENERAL

November 10, 2015

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** Self-Certifications and Third-Party Certifications

**FROM:** Carolyn Copper, Assistant Inspector General  
Office of Program Evaluation

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carolyn Copper".

**TO:** *See Below*

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) plans to begin research on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) self-certification and third-party certification programs.

The OIG's objective is to survey the EPA's headquarters program offices to obtain an inventory of EPA self-certification and third-party certification programs or functions. To guide this work, we define a self-certification program or function as one in which a regulated or overseen entity independently certifies to compliance the completion of some action(s), or some accomplished result(s). A third-party certification program or function is one in which a third party—usually a non-government entity—performs the certification on behalf of the regulated or overseen entity. Past OIG work has disclosed vulnerabilities and risk of fraud in self-certification or third-party certification programs and functions.<sup>1</sup> An inventory of EPA self-certification and third-party certification programs and functions supports the OIG's focus on high-risk agency issues in developing our work plans.

We will contact your offices to arrange a mutually agreeable time to discuss our objective and the purpose of our project. We would also be particularly interested in any areas of concern that your program offices 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 regular basis to the respective audit follow-up coordinators.

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 objectives. We will request your resolution if an agency employee or contractor refuses to provide requested records to the OIG, or otherwise fails to cooperate with the OIG. We may report unresolved access matters in the Semiannual Report to Congress.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, EPA OIG Report No. [13-P-0373](#), *The EPA Should Improve Monitoring of Controls in the Renewable Fuel Standard Program*, issued September 5, 2013.

If you or your staff have any questions, please contact me at (202) 566-0829 or [copper.carolyn@epa.gov](mailto:copper.carolyn@epa.gov); or Eric Lewis, Director, at (202) 566-2664 or [lewis.eric@epa.gov](mailto:lewis.eric@epa.gov).

Addressees:

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