



**OFFICE OF  
INSPECTOR GENERAL**  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

**JUN 09 2015**

Memorandum

To: Allen Lawrence  
Division Chief, Office of Financial Management

From: Chris Stubbs *Chris Stubbs*  
Eastern Region Manager

Subject: Verification of Recommendations for the Report Titled "U.S. Department of the Interior Program Startup Inspection: Bureau of Indian Affairs Youth Initiative Program" (Report No. ER-IS-BIA-0010-2011)  
Report No. 2015-ER-055

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) has completed a verification review of the recommendations presented in the subject report to determine whether the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) implemented our recommendations as reported to the Office of Financial Management (PFM), Office of Policy, Management and Budget. PFM reported to OIG that it has closed the recommendations. Based on our review, we concur that the recommendations have been resolved and implemented.

**Background**

Our November 2011 report, "U.S. Department of the Interior Program Startup Inspection: Bureau of Indian Affairs Youth Initiative Program," made three recommendations to BIA, pertaining to the bureau's tools for identifying and implementing a planning model used in the youth initiative; identifying and establishing a mission, vision, and goals for the program; and developing alliances with organizations experienced in collaborative program planning and youth-oriented programs and activities.

In January 2012, we referred the recommendations to PFM for tracking and implementation; at that time, we considered all three recommendations unresolved because BIA did not concur with any of them, stating that although the Department considers the Youth Initiative Project a priority goal, BIA has no specific line item in its budget to support this project. When PFM received the referral, it asked BIA to provide additional support for the position of nonconcurrence.

In a March 2012 memorandum to OIG, BIA concurred with the report's recommendations and outlined steps for implementation. In September 2012, July 2013, and September 2014, PFM reported to OIG that BIA took the necessary steps for PFM to consider recommendation 2, recommendation 1, and recommendation 3 implemented and closed, respectively.

## Scope and Methodology

We limited the scope of this review to determining whether BIA implemented the recommendations in our report. To accomplish our objective, we reviewed the supporting documentation that PFM obtained to recommend closure, in addition to documentation that BIA provided us relating to steps it took to implement the recommendations.

We did not perform site visits or conduct fieldwork to determine whether BIA had corrected the underlying deficiencies initially identified in the report. We did not conduct this review in accordance with the Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards or the Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation as put forth by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency.

## Results of Review

We concluded that BIA implemented the recommendations as indicated by PFM's closure notification.

### *Recommendations and Actions Taken*

**Recommendation 1:** The Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, should identify and implement a program planning process suitable to the needs of the bureau.

**Actions Taken:** BIA conducted a program needs assessment and used a collaborative planning model to establish a mission and vision, develop performance measures, leverage resources with partner groups, and engage stakeholders. The model emphasizes building and maintaining relationships with key partners, focusing on common goals, and using the strengths of the partners to achieve the program's goals. Over the past year, BIA has established a working relationship with the Corps network, which includes the Conservation Legacy, AmeriCorps Volunteers In Service to America (VISTA), the First Alaskans Institute, and the Montana Conservation Corps. BIA also entered into a contract with the University of Arizona.

**Recommendation 2:** The Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, should establish a clear mission, vision, and goals for the program.

**Actions Taken:** BIA established a clear mission, vision, and goals for the program and will post the National Policy, which outlines the Director's mission and vision and identifies the roles of the Director and the youth coordinator, annually on its website. The mission statement, vision, and goals, as written in the National Policy, are detailed below:

### *Mission Statement*

To promote, coordinate, and direct the engagement, education, and employment of native youth through hands-on experiences in natural resources, law enforcement, Indian Services, and Trust, Education, and all programs BIA

oversees in carrying out their government to government responsibilities to Native communities.

### *Vision Statement*

Provide opportunities to Native youth by promoting cultural, spiritual, and traditional values through meaningful employment opportunities.

These opportunities include public service, the role of the federal government in Indian self-determination, economic development, and Trust responsibilities in building strong and stable tribal governments.

### *Goals*

#### Youth Goal 1 – Engage Youth

Engage youth from the native communities and geographic locations and provide opportunities for them while accomplishing the BIA's mission. This would result in educating local native youth about the opportunities available through natural resources and conservation projects as future career opportunities.

#### Youth Goal 2 – Recruitment of Youth

Identify procedures to recruit and conduct outreach to native youth researching methods used by other bureaus or Federal agencies that have a proven track record of successful and long-term recruitment efforts.

#### Youth Goal 3 – Capacity Building

To better plan for current positions and to consider the disciplines needed to pipeline native youth for future positions.

#### Youth Goal 4 – Cultural Awareness

This goal and objectives will be designed to raise awareness to our native youth in the areas of natural resources, forestry, Ag/Rangeland, Environment, and conservation.

#### Youth Goal 5 – Retention

This goal will help to train and keep native youth engaged by working every year with BIA, receiving training and development skill sets that will pipeline native youth into careers with BIA.

**Recommendation 3:** The Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, should develop alliances with organizations experienced with collaborative program planning as well as youth-oriented programs and activities to set the BIA Youth Initiative Program on course for long-term success.

**Actions Taken:** BIA developed agreements or alliances with numerous organizations that provide youth-oriented activities. For example, BIA and the U.S. Department of

Agriculture (USDA) have a 3-year agreement with AmeriCorps to work on projects that provide cultural awareness and pair Native youth with tribal elders, placing seven VISTA workers into the following tribal colleges:

- College of Menominee Nation;
- Institute of American Arts;
- Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College;
- Leech Lake Tribal College;
- Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute;
- United Tribes Technical College; and
- Ilisagvik College.

BIA also recently revamped its water program, renaming it the Native Water Corps, and selected 15 students to attend a month-long training at the University of Arizona focused on water testing.

## **Conclusion**

We informed DOI officials of the results of this review on May 18, 2015.

cc: Alexandra Lampros, Audit Liaison Officer, Office of Financial Management  
Michael Oliva, Audit Liaison Officer, Bureau of Indian Affairs  
James West, Audit Liaison Officer, Bureau of Indian Affairs