

Summary: Investigation of a U.S. Geological Survey Employee for Ethics Violations

Report Date: March 19, 2014

OIG investigated allegations that a USGS supervisory technical information specialist intentionally disclosed a draft statement of work (SOW) to a company, thus giving that company an unfair advantage in competing for an upcoming contract, which was expected to be worth approximately \$47 million. The complainant had specifically alleged that the USGS employee provided the draft SOW to a company employee and that she had been motivated to do so because her daughter worked for the company.

We found that the USGS employee, who had worked for the company before coming to USGS, had disclosed a procurement-sensitive draft SOW document to a company program manager for an upcoming competitive solicitation for bid. The company received the SOW more than 5 months earlier than all other potential bidders and submitted an offer in response to the subsequent solicitation.

We also determined that the USGS employee had evaluated the company's proposal for an earlier contract, a task order worth over \$1.6 million. At that time, her daughter worked for the company, she herself had a personal relationship with the company owner, and she held a 401(k) account with the company.

We presented our findings to the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Eastern District of Virginia, which declined criminal prosecution in favor of administrative action by USGS. We referred our findings to USGS for appropriate action. USGS notified the company that it had been disqualified from consideration for any award under the related solicitation. The USGS employee resigned.

This is a summary of an investigative report that was issued internally to the U.S. Department of the Interior. This summary was posted to the web on October 13, 2015.

