



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

RECOVERY

RECOVERY OVERSIGHT ADVISORY

Whistleblower Posters for ARRA Awards

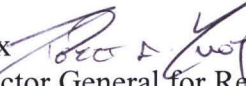


OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

JAN 25 2011

Memorandum

To: Chris Henderson
Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Economic Recovery and Stimulus

From: Robert A. Knox 
Assistant Inspector General for Recovery Oversight

Subject: Recovery Oversight Advisory – Whistleblower Posters for ARRA Awards
Report No. RO-C-MOA-044-2011

This advisory informs you of our effort to ensure posting of rights and remedies pursuant to Section 1553 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) and our finding that few notifications have been posted. This is part of our ongoing efforts to oversee and ensure the accountability of funding appropriated to the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) under ARRA.

Background

Section 1553(e) of ARRA states that “[a]ny employer receiving covered funds shall post notice of the rights and remedies provided under this section [Protecting State and Local Government and Contractor Whistleblowers].” The Association of Certified Fraud Examiners indicated that “[t]he mere mention of an anti-fraud, confidential hotline can deter fraud.”¹ The Association also cited a 2005 National Business Ethics Survey stating that “[a] small number of employees who did not report misconduct (18 percent in 2005) said they were unclear whom to contact in order to raise their suspicious [sic] of unethical conduct.”² For these reasons, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) believes that posting whistleblower notifications is an important step in fraud prevention.

In Recovery Oversight Advisory ROO-ROA-BIA-2008-2010, dated April 27, 2010, we noted that a Rough Rock construction site failed to display a notice about whistleblower protection. As a result, we recommended that the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs ensure that contractors and grant recipients post information about whistleblower protections at each project site.

¹ Tone At the Top: How Management Can Prevent Fraud In the Workplace, Presented by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, p. 9.

² Id., p 4.

Finding

During our site reviews conducted in the last quarter of calendar year 2010, we contacted five locations receiving ARRA funds for project applications. DOI staff at the following four locations was unaware of the need to post whistleblower information:

Bureau	Grant Number	Amount (\$)	Location
USGS	G10AC00106	847,356	Harrisburg, PA
	G10AC00132	1,048,706	
BLM	L10AC16332	487,950	Jupiter, FL
USGS	G09AC00471	50,926	Butte, MT
USGS	G09AC00486	350,549	Memphis, TN

Figure 1. Site Reviews by Bureau.

Recommendation

1. We recommend DOI take affirmative steps to ensure that appropriate whistleblower protection information is posted at each work location issued ARRA funds.

Please provide a written response to this advisory within 30 days of receipt detailing the corrective actions DOI will implement to meet our recommendation, as well as targeted completion dates and title(s) of the official(s) responsible for implementation. We will post this advisory on our Web site (www.doioig.gov/recovery/) and Recovery.gov. Information contained in this advisory may also be included in our semiannual reports to Congress. We performed our work in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspections adopted by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency. Please contact me if you have any questions.

cc: Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior
Director, Office of Executive Secretariat and Regulatory Affairs
Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget
Acting Director, Office of Financial Management
Director, Office of Acquisition and Property Management
Director, Bureau of Land Management
Director, U.S. Geological Survey
Departmental GAO/ OIG Audit Liaison
Audit Liaison, Office of the Secretary
Audit Liaison, U.S. Geological Survey
Audit Liaison, Bureau of Land Management
Recovery Act Coordinator, U.S. Geological Survey
Recovery Act Coordinator, Bureau of Land Management

Report Fraud, Waste, and Mismanagement



Fraud, waste, and mismanagement in government concern everyone: Office of Inspector General staff, Departmental employees, and the general public. We actively solicit allegations of any inefficient and wasteful practices, fraud, and mismanagement related to Departmental or Insular Area programs and operations. You can report allegations to us in several ways.



By Mail:

U.S. Department of the Interior
Office of Inspector General
Mail Stop 4428 MIB
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

By Phone:

24-Hour Toll Free
Washington Metro Area

800-424-5081
703-487-5435

By Fax:

703-487-5402

By Internet:

www.doioig.gov