



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

RECOVERY OVERSIGHT ADVISORY

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RECOVERY OVERSIGHT OFFICE

Washington, DC 20240

NOV 24 2009

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

From: Robert A. Knox 
Assistant Inspector General, Recovery Oversight Office

Subject: Recovery Oversight Advisory – BIA's Lack of Compliance in Properly Reporting Contract Actions (ROO-ROA-BIA-2007-2009)

To safeguard taxpayer dollars, Congress provided us with funding to oversee and ensure accountability of the \$3 billion appropriated to the Department of the Interior (DOI) in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act). We are focused on: preventing fraud, waste, and mismanagement; reducing misuse of dollars through early detection; and ensuring transparency in our oversight efforts. As part of our collaboration with the Department, this advisory informs you of a recent OIG finding regarding the failure of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to meet certain Recovery Act requirements.

Please provide, within 30 days of receipt of this advisory, a written response detailing the corrective actions that the Department and BIA plan to take to implement the recommendations, including targeted completion dates.

We will post this advisory on our website (www.doioig.gov/recovery) and on Recovery.gov. Information in this advisory may also be included in our semiannual reports to Congress. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Findings

Contract actions are not being entered correctly into the Federal Procurement Data System – Next Generation (FPDS-NG), if at all. A missing Bureau Project Identification Number or an improperly formatted Treasury Account Symbol (TAS) prevents accurate tracking of Recovery Act projects, decreasing accountability and transparency of contract actions.

Background

To increase accountability and transparency and to ensure compliance with internal controls, the Department's Guidance Release ARRA-2009-01, Amendment 1, dated August 11, 2009 (Attachment 2, Question 17), requires all contract actions be reported in the FPDS-NG. Question 18 of the Guidance requires that each action include a Bureau Project Identification Number and a properly formatted Treasury Account Symbol (TAS) in the "Description of Requirement" field of FPDS-NG. Without these numbers, Recovery Act projects cannot be tracked in FPDS-NG.

We recently examined eight BIA contract actions reported in the August 26, 2009 Financial and Activity report. We found one contract (SMFOOO9006) in the report was not posted on FPDS-NG. Of the seven other actions, none listed the TAS or the Bureau Project Identification Number in the “Description of Requirement” field of FPDS-NG.

We informed a BIA contracting officer that one of his actions was missing the TAS number. He responded by revising the “Description of Requirement” field in FPDS-NG, but incorrectly formatted the TAS number. We also discussed the need to use proper TAS numbers with a BIA official, who indicated that contracting officers were notified of the requirement during regularly scheduled teleconference meetings. The official was unsure why the numbers were not being entered correctly in FPDS-NG.

Recommendations

We recommend that BIA:

- 1) Determine the status of contract action (SMFOOO9006) and, if appropriate, ensure it is entered into FPDS-NG with all required information.
- 2) Ensure properly formatted TAS numbers and Bureau Project Identification Numbers are entered in the “Description of Requirement” field of FPDS-NG for all contract actions.

cc: Deputy Secretary, Department of the Interior
Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget
Director, Office of Acquisition and Property Management
Director, Office of Financial Management
Departmental GAO/OIG Audit Liaison
Audit Liaison, Office of the Secretary
Recovery Coordinator, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Contracting Officer, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Director Office of Acquisition and Property Management - Indian Affairs

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