

Department of Veterans Affairs

Office of Inspector General



Strategic Plan
FY 2016 – 2020





“I don't believe in little plans. I believe in plans big enough to meet a situation which we can't possibly foresee now.”
- Harry S. Truman

I am pleased to present the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of Inspector General (OIG) Strategic Plan for fiscal year 2016 – 2020. In accordance with the *Government Performance and Results Act of 1993* (Public Law 103-62), this Strategic Plan establishes our goals and objectives in promoting the efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity of the Department's programs and operations and ensuring that VA support services such as financial management, procurement, and information management are capable and useful.

Operating independently under the *Inspector General Act of 1978*, as amended, OIG audits, evaluations, inspections, investigations, contract reviews, and Combined Assessment Program (CAP) reviews recommend improvements in VA programs and operations, and act to deter criminal activity, waste, fraud, and abuse in order to help VA become the best-managed service delivery organization in Government.

Our Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020 builds upon the strategic goals and outcome-oriented performance measures set out in our Strategic Plan 2009 – 2016. Over the coming years, OIG will continue focus on the major ongoing management challenges and high-risk areas facing the Department within six strategic goals:

- Health Care Delivery
- Benefits Processing
- Financial Management
- Procurement Practices
- Information Management
- Workforce Investment

The Plan encompasses audits, evaluations, inspections, investigations and reviews of VA's initiatives, priority goals, key issues, management challenges, and high risks facing the Department in the coming years. OIG's strategic plan forms the basis for developing our annual and month-to-month work plans, helping VA achieve its mission, improve customer satisfaction, and protect the interests of veterans and their families, as well as taxpayer dollars.

OIG remains committed to achieving these long-term strategic goals through promoting positive change in VA and, ultimately, improving services to our Nation's veterans. We look forward to continuing our partnership with the Department and Congress to meet the many challenges facing VA, as we work to ensure veterans and their dependents receive the best possible care, support, and recognition they have earned by serving our country.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard J. Griffin".

RICHARD J. GRIFFIN
Acting Inspector General
October 2014

OIG MISSION AND ORGANIZATION

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) was administratively established on January 1, 1978, to consolidate audits and investigations into a cohesive, independent organization. In October 1978, the *Inspector General Act*, Public Law (P.L.) 95-452, was enacted, establishing a statutory Inspector General (IG) in VA. It states that the IG is responsible for: (1) conducting and supervising audits and investigations; (2) recommending policies designed to promote economy and efficiency in the administration of, and to prevent and detect criminal activity, waste, abuse, and mismanagement in VA programs and operations; and (3) keeping the Secretary and Congress fully informed about problems and deficiencies in VA programs and operations and the need for corrective action. The IG has authority to inquire into all VA programs and activities as well as the related activities of persons or parties performing under grants, contracts, or other agreements. In addition, P.L. 100-322, passed on May 20, 1988, charged OIG with the oversight of the quality of VA health care. Inherent in every OIG effort are the principles of quality management and a desire to improve the way VA operates by helping it become more customer-driven and results-oriented.

OIG, with 650 employees from appropriations, is organized into three line elements: the Offices of Investigations, Audits and Evaluations, and Healthcare Inspections, plus a contract review office and a support element. In addition to the Washington, DC, headquarters, OIG has field offices located throughout the country.

OIG keeps the Secretary and Congress fully and currently informed about issues affecting VA programs and the opportunities for improvement. In doing so, OIG staff strive to be leaders and innovators, and to perform their duties fairly, honestly, and with the highest professional integrity.

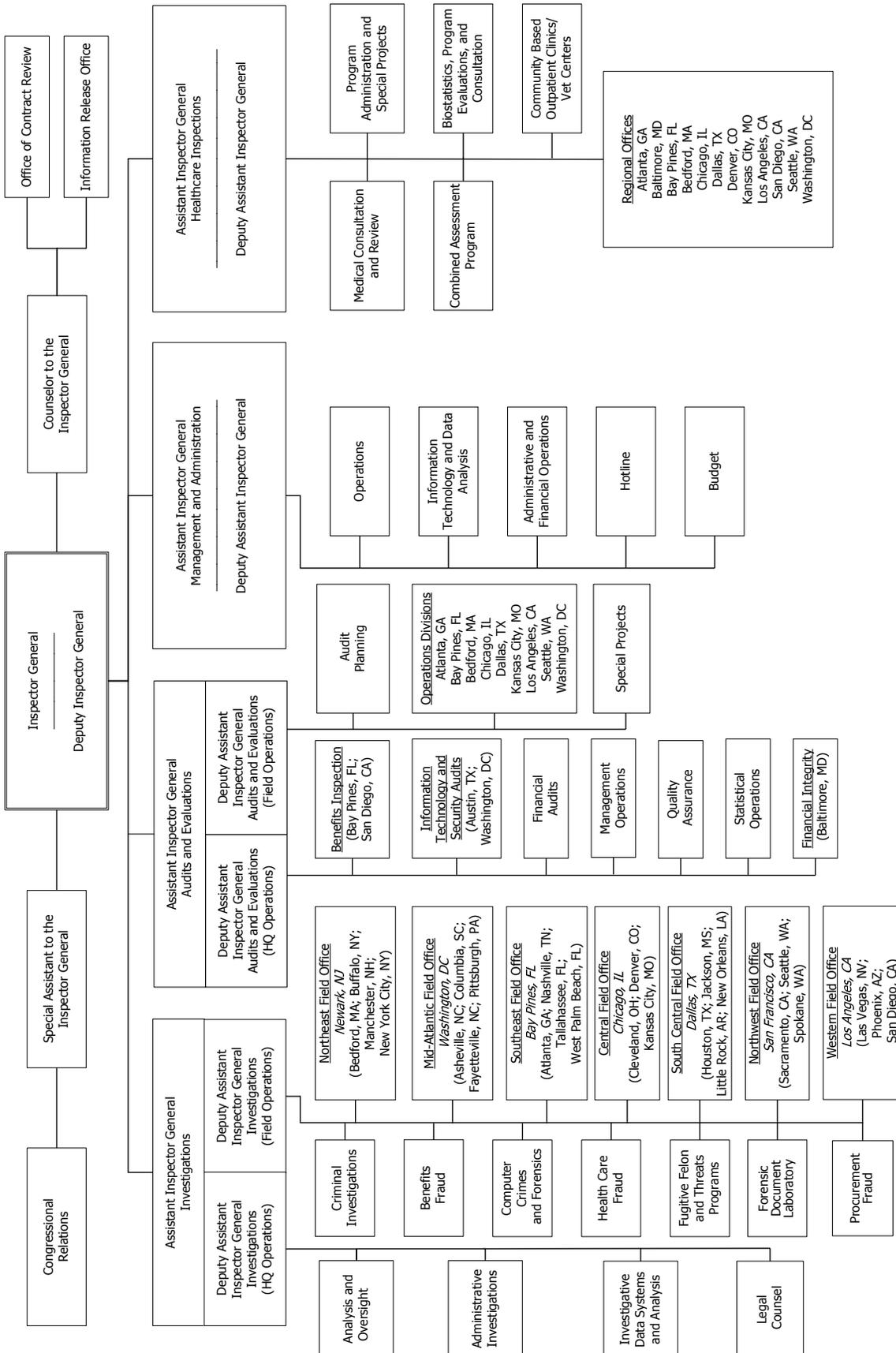
OIG MISSION STATEMENT

The Office of Inspector General's mission is to provide independent and objective reporting to the Secretary of the VA and the Congress for the purpose of bringing about positive change in the integrity, efficiency, and effectiveness of VA operations. The Office of Inspector General conducts various audits, investigations, and inspections of VA programs and makes recommendations for adjustments and changes as required by law.

- Conducts audits, evaluations, investigations, and inspections of VA programs and operations to provide oversight of activities performed or financed by VA.
- Compiles and presents findings and makes recommendations to adjust or change policies and/or practices to ensure conformity with law and guidance; promotes economy, efficiency, and effectiveness; and prevents/detects criminal activity, waste, abuse, or mismanagement in the Department.
- Provides formal semiannual reports required by the *Inspector General Act* to the Secretary, Congress, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and published on the VA OIG Internet site.

OIG is dedicated to helping VA provide veterans and their families the care, support, and recognition they have earned through service to our country.

OIG ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



ACTING INSPECTOR GENERAL
Department of Veterans Affairs

OIG STRATEGIC GOALS

Strategic Goal 1—Health Care Delivery

Improve veterans' access to high-quality health care by identifying opportunities to improve the management and efficiency of VA's health care delivery systems, and by detecting, investigating, and deterring fraud and other criminal activity.

Strategic Goal 2—Benefits Processing

Improve the delivery of benefits and services by identifying opportunities to improve the quality, timeliness, and accuracy of benefits processing, while reducing criminal activity in the delivery of benefits through proactive and targeted audit and investigative efforts.

Strategic Goal 3—Financial Management

Assist VA in achieving its financial management mission of providing all VA activities with accurate, reliable, and timely information for sound oversight and decision making, while identifying opportunities to improve the quality, management, and efficiency of VA's financial management systems.

Strategic Goal 4—Procurement Practices

Ensure that VA's acquisition programs support our Nation's veterans, other Government entities, and the taxpayer by providing customers with quality products, services, and expertise delivered in a timely fashion, for a reasonable price, and to the right place.

Strategic Goal 5—Information Management

Assess information systems and policies within VA to ensure that they protect information security and integrity, are cost effective, meet the needs of the user, and are used in a lawful and ethical manner, while investigating fraud and other computer-related crimes against VA.

Strategic Goal 6—Workforce Investment

Recruit, retain, and empower a diverse workforce. Foster a work environment that enhances productivity, innovation, excellence, and employee satisfaction by leveraging technology and tools to maximize the impact of our work.

OIG PERFORMANCE MEASURES

OIG performance measures primarily focus on intended outcomes and demonstrate the critical linkages between work and results, effort and effect, and appraise the influence of both interim and long-term VA mission-related outcomes in each of the six strategic goal areas.

Our results for FY 2014 are summarized in parentheses:

- Number of arrests, indictments, convictions, criminal complaints, pretrial diversions, and administrative sanctions. (2,537)
- Number of reports (audit, inspection, evaluation, contract review, and CAP reports) issued that identify opportunities for improvement and provide recommendations for corrective action. (310)
- Monetary benefits (\$ in millions) from audits, investigations, contract reviews, inspections, and other evaluations. (\$2,300)
- Return on investment (monetary benefits ÷ cost of operations)*. (22:1)
- Percentage of prosecutions successfully completed. (94 percent)
- Percentage of recommendations implemented within 1 year to improve efficiencies in operations through legislative, regulatory, policy, practices, and procedural changes in VA. (85 percent)
- Percentage of recommended recoveries achieved from postaward contract reviews. (100 percent)
- Customer satisfaction survey scores (based on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is high). (Investigations–4.9, Audits and Evaluations–3.9, Healthcare Inspections–4.5, Contract Review–4.7)

*Beginning in 2009, the cost of operations for the Office of Healthcare Inspections, whose oversight mission results in improving the health care provided to veterans rather than saving dollars, is not included in the return on investment calculation.

IMPLEMENTING OIG'S STRATEGIC PLAN

We believe in transparency and accountability. The OIG Strategic Plan is built from the ground up by soliciting key issue, project, performance goals and outcome measure ideas from all OIG employees. We also consult with other OIGs, and consider the feedback of VA and other customers and stakeholders. This plan reflects the results of our three previous OIG strategic plans, based on our experience over the past 13 years.

This OIG Strategic Plan draws from our performance measures, which focus primarily on intended outcomes rather than on outputs. It demonstrates the critical linkages in the chain leading from work to results—from effort to effect—and measure our influence on both interim and long-term mission-related outcomes.

Rooted in six strategic goals in the areas of health care delivery, benefits processing, financial management, procurement practices, information management, and workforce development, the OIG Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020 encompasses the key issues VA will encounter over the next six years. At the division level, we establish work plans and performance goals linked to each strategic goal, setting forth strategies and projects to achieve these goals, and follow through by assessing our progress toward achieving them.

This plan will act as a template to direct all OIG audits, proactive investigations, and health care inspections. Our Semiannual Reports to Congress (SAR), for example, serve as periodic performance reports to both Congress and the Secretary of VA, outlining our current work on the urgent, significant issues that require review. The annual September editions of the SAR also function as an annual report, summarizing the OIG's fiscal year's performance data.

Each year, as required under the *Reports Consolidation Act of 2000* (Public Law 106-531), OIG provides VA with a list of high-risk issue areas, as Major Management Challenges, identifying the most serious management problems that challenge the Department's ability to achieve its mission of serving veterans in the most effective and efficient manner. VA includes this report with the Department's comments in its annual Performance and Accountability Report, along with OIG's own year-by-year performance measure results. These results, too, are reported annually in our budget submissions to the White House through the Office of Management and Budget. All these reports are organized by the six OIG strategic goals.

We use VA performance and financial data to make decisions on how to best align OIG oversight resources; allocating human resources, opening new offices, shifting resources, funding awards and training, undertaking travel, modernizing information technology (IT), contracting for services, deciding whether to address a hotline case in-house or refer it to VA, and what proactive initiatives to undertake. In every decision to commit OIG resources, we strive to improve VA programs and operations, provide objective and independent information for better decision-making, eliminate criminal activity, highlight accountability, and keep both the Secretary and Congress fully informed of our findings and recommendations.

Strategic planning is an ongoing process requiring constant measurement and readjustment. OIG is dedicated to remaining proactive in helping VA ensure it is fully prepared to meet the demands of a new generation of veterans, as well as to care for our earlier veterans with their own particular needs. We will continue to demonstrate great flexibility in reacting to changing circumstances, consulting with stakeholders and customers within and outside the Department as necessary, to ensure that we are having maximum impact on helping VA achieve its mission of serving those who have kept our Nation free.

OIG ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Office of Investigations

The Office of Investigations (OI) conducts investigations of criminal and administrative activities affecting the programs and operations of VA in an independent and objective manner.

Criminal Investigations Division

- **Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Investigations**
Allegations of patient abuse, drug diversion, theft of VA pharmaceuticals or medical equipment, false claims for health care benefits, and other frauds relating to the delivery of health care.
- **Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) Investigations**
VBA administers a number of financial benefits programs for eligible veterans and certain family members, including VA guaranteed home loans, education, insurance, and monetary benefits. Investigations routinely concentrate on payments made to ineligible individuals. For example, a veteran may deliberately feign a medical disability to defraud the VA compensation program. With respect to VA guaranteed home loans, OIG conducts investigations of loan origination fraud, equity skimming, and criminal conduct related to management of foreclosed loans or properties. VA appoints fiduciaries for veterans in receipt of VA benefits who are deemed incompetent and for minor children who are receiving VA benefits. OIG investigates allegations of fraud committed by these fiduciaries.
- OIG investigates a wide array of criminal offenses in addition to those listed above, including allegations of bribery and kickbacks, bid rigging and antitrust violations, false claims submitted by contractors, and other fraud relating to VA procurement activities. OIG also investigates information management crimes such as theft of IT equipment and data, network intrusions, and child pornography.

Administrative Investigations Division

- Reviews allegations and conducts administrative investigations generally concerning high-ranking senior officials and other high profile matters of interest to Congress and the Department.

The Office of Audits and Evaluations

The Office of Audits and Evaluations (OA&E) provides independent evaluations of VA's activities to ensure the integrity of its programs and operations. Staff are involved in evaluating diverse areas such as the access to and delivery of medical care, veterans' eligibility for benefits and benefits administration, resource utilization, financial and contract management, forensic auditing, fraud, and information security. This work addresses the areas of program results, economy and efficiency, finance, fraud detection, and compliance. OA&E reports provide comprehensive recommendations identifying opportunities for VA to enhance operations and improve care and support of veterans.

Office of Healthcare Inspections

The Office of Healthcare Inspections (OHI) conducts inspections of patient care and quality improvement issues and conducts VHA health care program reviews. In addition, OHI staff provide consultative evaluations of individual VA medical care facility inpatient and outpatient operations and participate in Combined Assessment Program (CAP) and Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) reviews. OHI focuses on quality of care issues in VHA and assesses medical outcomes to help VHA maintain a fully functional program that ensures high quality patient care and safety and safeguards against the occurrence of adverse events.

Office of Management and Administration

The Office of Management and Administration (OMA) provides comprehensive support services that promote organizational effectiveness and efficiency through reliable and timely management and administrative support, and through products and services that promote the overall mission and goals of OIG. In addition to support services, OMA manages the Hotline. The Hotline Division is the focal point for contacts made to OIG; it receives phone calls, web submissions, e-mails, and letters from employees, veterans, the general public, Congress, the U.S. Government Accountability Office, and other Federal agencies reporting issues of criminal activity, waste, abuse, and mismanagement.

Counselor to the IG

The Office of Contract Review, operating under a reimbursable agreement with VA's Office of Acquisition, Logistics and Construction (OALC), provides preaward, postaward, and other requested reviews of vendors' proposals and contracts. Preaward reviews provide VA contracting officers with assistance and information needed to negotiate fair and reasonable prices, and to protect the interest of the Veteran and the taxpayer. Postaward reviews assess compliance with contract terms and conditions and recover identified overcharges. OIG also provides advisory services to OALC contracting activities.



On the Cover:

A U.S. Marine Veteran places his hand over his heart as a sign of respect during a tribute ceremony at the Marine Corps League Detachment 246 hall in Staten Island, N.Y., February, 19, 2010. Photo courtesy Department of Defense.

For more information about OIG, please visit our website at:
www.va.gov/oig

Follow us on Twitter:
[@VetAffairsOIG](https://twitter.com/VetAffairsOIG)

To report waste, fraud, and abuse, please contact the OIG Hotline at:

Telephone: (800) 488-8244
(800) 488-VAIG

Fax: (202) 495-5861

Internet Homepage: <http://www.va.gov/oig/hotline>

E-mail: vaighotline@va.gov

Mail: VA Inspector General Hotline (53E)
810 Vermont Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20420