

Memorandum

To: All Department of the Interior Employees

From: Secretary

Subject: Cooperation with the Office of Inspector General

The Office of Inspector General serves a critically important role within the Department of the Interior (Department). The Inspector General is part of the senior leadership team at the Department. The Office of Inspector General helps all of us pursue economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in Department programs and operations and also detects and helps us prevent fraud, waste, and abuse. As public servants, we cooperate with the Office of Inspector General as it fulfills its statutory responsibilities under the Inspector General Act of 1978 (Act).

That Act provides the Inspector General access to information within the Department. Specifically, the Act states the Inspector General “is authorized to have timely access to all records, reports, audits, reviews, documents, papers, recommendations, or other materials available” to the Department relating to its programs and operations. (Section 6(a)(1)). It is important that each of us cooperate with Office of Inspector General personnel because it helps them to provide timely information to the Department so we can take prompt and responsible action to address matters, as appropriate.

To fulfill its mission, the Office of Inspector General needs access to information that may be privileged, confidential, or otherwise exempt from disclosure to sources outside the Department under laws such as the Freedom of Information Act, the Privacy Act, or the Trade Secrets Act. We all can be confident that the Office of Inspector General will treat this information in ways that are consistent with legal interests and are fully compliant with applicable statutes. Providing this kind of information to the Office of Inspector General does not waive legal privileges in any way. The Office of Inspector General will work with the Office of the Solicitor to fully understand the extent of privileges and to consult on their applicability. In addition to the Act, the Departmental Manual (110 DM 4) provides for the responsibilities of the Office of Inspector General and its relationship to the Department and its Bureaus and Offices.

If you have any questions about your obligations to cooperate with requests by authorized representatives of the Office of Inspector General, you should promptly contact your supervisor or the Office of the Solicitor.