

GAO/OIG

December 2009

SEMIANNUAL REPORT

April 1, 2009—
September 30, 2009





GAO

Accountability * Integrity * Reliability

Office of the Inspector General
United States Government Accountability Office

OIG

Memorandum

Date: December 7, 2009

To: Acting Comptroller General Gene L. Dodaro

From: Inspector General Frances Garcia *Frances Garcia*

Subject: *Semiannual Report—April 1, 2009, through September 30, 2009*

In accordance with Section 5 of the Government Accountability Office Act of 2008 (GAO Act), I am submitting my semiannual report for the second half of fiscal year 2009 for your comments and its transmission to the Congress.

During this period, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) continued to undertake a number of actions to implement requirements in the GAO Act and selected provisions in the Inspector General Reform Act of 2008. These actions included drafting a revised GAO order and policies and procedures, to incorporate our statutory role and responsibilities; making changes to GAO's intranet to improve visibility of the OIG and its hotline to employees and contractors; and participating in the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency.

In addition, we issued one report with recommendations (GAO/OIG-09-3): our evaluation of four of GAO's people performance measures—staff development, staff utilization, leadership, and organizational climate. (See attachment for a summary of this report and GAO actions to address the report's recommendations.) Further, we initiated a review of the agency's timeliness measure, and based on methodological and other issues raised during our review, GAO has agreed that the issues are worthy of further examination and will be fully analyzed. As a result, we will monitor the changes made and reassess the measure when those changes are completed. We also completed an audit risk assessment of GAO to aid in our development of risk-based audit work plans. Our ongoing work includes two reviews of GAO performance measures (financial benefits and testimonies) and a review of the agency's information systems security program in voluntary compliance with the requirements of the Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002 (FISMA).

Regarding our efforts to identify potential fraud, waste, and abuse within GAO, we completed action on 6 open complaints from the prior semiannual report and received 42 inquiries and allegations this reporting period through our hotline and other sources. Because 28 of these 48 cases concerned matters related to other federal agencies, we closed them with a referral to GAO's FraudNet—a governmentwide hotline that receives complaints of fraud, waste, and abuse of federal funds—or, in one case, to the appropriate agency OIG. We closed an

additional 12, which included potential misrepresentation of GAO or its officials and inquiries for information, because there was no basis for further action. We investigated and closed 6 other cases that involved complaints concerning GAO reports, employee misconduct, the abuse of and fraudulent charges on government travel cards, and misuse of GAO credentials by a former contractor employee. Because of our investigations, GAO suspended an employee for misconduct and has restricted the types of merchants or businesses where its travel cards can be used and thereby reduced the risk of fraud and abuse. In addition, GAO ensured the credentials of the former contractor employee were retrieved and destroyed. Lastly, at the end of the reporting period, two cases submitted during this reporting period remained open.

In response to recommendations made in prior OIG reports, GAO has taken the following actions:

- Based on *Diversity at GAO: Sustained Attention Needed to Build on Gains in SES and Managers* (GAO-08-1098; Sept. 10, 2008), GAO is in the process of revising an order to establish a requirement for an annual Workforce Diversity Plan¹ and to clarify responsibilities and procedures when a complaint involves staff within GAO's Office of Opportunity and Inclusiveness. GAO has obtained comments on the draft order and expects to issue the order by the end of 2009.
- Based on *Independent Evaluation of GAO's Information Security Program and Practices—Fiscal Year 2008* (GAO/OIG-09-1, Oct. 2, 2008), GAO expanded its inventory of information systems to be consistent with FISMA requirements, began incorporating specific security language in information technology acquisitions, revised its annual awareness training to highlight GAO's information security policies and procedures, and created tools and continued negotiations to help ensure that service providers give GAO periodic updates on their security weaknesses. In addition, for its privacy program, GAO drafted a new order and made revisions to 4 C.F.R. part 83, *Privacy Procedures for Personnel Records of the Government Accountability Office*, to establish policies and procedures for protecting the privacy of personally identifiable information, created and implemented a Privacy Impact Assessment process, and reported completing these privacy impact assessments for 23 agency information systems.

Attachment

cc: Sallyanne Harper, Chief Administrative Officer
Lynn Gibson, Acting General Counsel
Sheldon Cohen, Chair, Audit Advisory Committee
Judith O'Dell, member, Audit Advisory Committee
Edward Mazur, member, Audit Advisory Committee

¹On June 30, 2009, GAO published its second Workforce Diversity Plan.

Summary of OIG Reports and GAO Actions

Reports Issued April 1, 2009, through September 30, 2009

Four People Performance Measures: Many Attributes of Successful Measures Met; Opportunities Exist for Further Enhancements (GAO/OIG-09-3, Aug. 31, 2009)

Findings: In this report, the OIG concluded that, in fiscal year 2007, GAO accurately calculated the four performance measures reviewed—staff development, staff utilization, leadership, and organizational climate. Further, of the nine attributes of successful performance measures identified by previous GAO work, staff utilization and organizational climate met all of the attributes, and staff development and leadership met many of the attributes. The OIG also found that GAO could improve disclosure in and understanding about the measures in its annual performance report. The four measures' scores are derived from GAO's Employee Feedback Survey.

Recommendations and GAO Actions: The report included four recommendations to improve the measures. GAO management took action in response to each of the recommendations. In its fiscal year 2009 performance report, GAO has made a number of additional disclosures about these performance measures. First, GAO has disclosed that the scores for the four measures are calculated by excluding survey respondents who select "no basis/not applicable" and that, for two measures, including these respondents would result in a different percentage (or score). Second, GAO clarified that its leadership measure focuses on supervisory leadership by changing its name to "effective leadership by supervisors." Third, GAO is replacing one of this measure's survey questions on how effectively supervisors dealt with equal employment opportunity and discrimination issues because of the large number of respondents who answer "no basis/not applicable" to this question. Further, GAO drafted written procedures to ensure changes made to measures and any effects on performance data comparability are promptly reported.

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- Call toll-free (866) 680-7963 to speak with a hotline specialist, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Send an e-mail to OIGHotline@gao.gov.
- Send a fax to the OIG Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Hotline at (202) 512-8361.
- Write to:

GAO Office of Inspector General
441 G Street NW, Room 1808
Washington, DC 20548

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