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REPORT BY THE

Comptroller General

OF THE UNITED STATES

The Army Inspector General's Inspections -- Changing From A Compliance To A Systems Emphasis

Inspection reports of the Army Inspector General at the headquarters level contain valuable information on significant problems while lower level reports focus on less significant areas such as compliance with rules and regulations. The emphasis of lower level inspections should match headquarters' systems approach.

The inspection system could be strengthened by reducing overinspection and duplication, using more civilian inspectors, and improving the training and oversight of temporary inspectors.

This report was requested by the Chairman, Subcommittee on Legislation and National Security, House Committee on Government Operations, and is the second in a series of five on Department of Defense inspection activities.



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FGMSD-80-1
OCTOBER 30, 1979



COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

B-134192

The Honorable Jack Brooks
Chairman, Subcommittee on Legislation *H5E01506*
and National Security
Committee on Government Operations
House of Representatives

Acc 00 58 Dear Mr. Chairman:

ACC00378

ACC00909

ACC00070

Your letter of November 13, 1978, requested that we review inspector general operations of the Air Force, Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Defense Logistics Agency. You also asked us to determine whether the new Department of Defense policy of releasing inspector general reports to us is a workable solution to the longstanding problem of obtaining inspection reports and records needed to perform our work.

When we reviewed the Army's inspection system, we received excellent cooperation and copies of all closed reports and supporting documents we requested. This report discusses the results of that review and recommends several ways of strengthening the system.

As you requested, we did not take the time to obtain written comments from the Army. However, we did informally discuss our findings with Army officials, and their comments are included in the report.

As arranged with your office, unless you publicly announce the contents of this report earlier, we will not distribute it until 30 days from its date. Then we will send copies to interested parties and give copies to others upon request.

Sincerely yours

Comptroller General
of the United States

COMPTROLLER GENERAL'S
REPORT TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE
ON LEGISLATION AND NATIONAL
SECURITY, HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

THE ARMY INSPECTOR GENERAL'S
INSPECTIONS -- CHANGING FROM
A COMPLIANCE TO A SYSTEMS
EMPHASIS

D I G E S T

The thrust of inspections by Army personnel at lower organizational levels should be changed.

Headquarters inspection reports provide valuable information on such areas as safety programs, reserve components, management and accountability of Army materiel, and morale which is useful to Army's top management. However, inspection reports below the headquarters level contain many nonmission related, insignificant findings, and do not normally develop the causes of problems uncovered during inspections. This is because inspections cover many broad subjects in a very short time resulting in superficial inspections and even missed problems.

For example, an inspector and his assistants who had to cover numerous inspection areas devoted only 1 day to determining the adequacy of procedures for identifying excess equipment. The report did not contain any findings in this area. GAO found the activity had requisitions outstanding for major pieces of equipment even though it had excesses of those same items. When GAO pointed this out to property officials, they said they would cancel additional equipment requisitions valued at \$2.8 million. (See pp. 10 and 11.)

The Inspector General recognizes that the thrust of Army inspections should be shifted from a compliance approach to one which would identify problems by tracing them throughout the system. The Inspector General believes that the systemic approach will provide commanders a better evaluation of mission performance.

However, because the Inspector General does not have direct control over the approximately 1,280 lower level inspector general personnel, their commanders do not have to agree to change their inspection approach. For example, a division inspector general at one of the activities GAO reviewed said that his commanding general was pleased with the broad compliance approach, and that compliance rather than systemic inspections still will be performed. (See p. 11.)

The Inspector General could change the inspection approach at the lower levels if he develops specific guidance and ensures that the guidance is implemented by direction of the Secretary of the Army. A less desirable alternative would be to revise the organization of the inspection system so the Inspector General would directly control all inspection resources. (See p. 12.)

Some of the lower level Army inspector general offices rely heavily on temporary inspectors who take part in an inspection and then return to their regular jobs. This allows lower full-time inspection staffing, but results in reduced objectivity as a temporary may inspect an area that he is responsible for during his regular job. Because of his regular involvement in the area, he may be unwilling to report on or unable to recognize problems. GAO found that temporary inspectors often make "courtesy" inspections and assistance visits to units before official inspections. Relationships which develop then may make the inspectors reluctant to report deficiencies during an actual inspection. (See pp. 15 and 16.)

Unlike the Air Force, where civilians comprise under 10 percent of the inspection force, about 24 percent of the Army's inspection personnel is civilian. This is more in line with the DOD policy of filling any position with a civilian unless it can be proven that a military person is required. However, most of the Army's civilians are used in administrative areas and GAO believes additional civilians could be used in professional

positions in headquarters and major commands. This might help offset military personnel shortages due to not meeting recruiting goals. (See p. 17.)

Like the Air Force inspection system, over-inspection and duplication are problems in the Army inspection system. GAO saw where officials were preventing duplication by limiting inspection frequency and scope based on the results of recent inspections or reviews by other oversight groups. However, GAO determined that some activities were not doing this and identified duplicate findings by comparing reports of lower level inspectors general, other oversight review groups, and preinspections. (See p. 20.)

The November 1978 DOD policy regarding the release of Inspector General reports and documentation to GAO, as implemented by the Army for this review, seems to be a workable method for GAO to review and obtain copies of closed Army inspection reports. However, the Army's policy for providing or denying access to open inspection reports could cause our office problems in future reviews. (See p. 28.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Secretary of the Army should:

- Issue directives to lower level inspectors general on (1) the systemic approach to inspections, (2) the need to identify causes of problems, (3) the inadvisability of reporting minor deficiencies, and (4) the need to allow adequate time for a thorough inspection.
- Require that before temporary inspectors conduct inspections they be provided guidance and training on their role as inspectors; that their work be monitored to promote objectivity; and that they be selected from activities that do not have routine working relationships with the unit to be inspected.

- Require that more civilians be placed in professional positions as much as possible.
- Clearly define the functions of inspection, internal review, and internal audit, and eliminate duplication and overlap. Where duplication and overlap are deemed necessary, require that the group performing an evaluation review and consider the work of any preceding group. Also conduct inspections on a no-notice or limited notice basis to the greatest extent possible.

As instructed by the Subcommittee on Legislation and National Security, House Government Operations Committee, GAO did not obtain written comments from the Army. However, GAO considered the views of Army officials in preparing this report.

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ABBREVIATIONS

DOD	Department of Defense
GAO	General Accounting Office

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In November 1978 the Department of Defense adopted a new policy for releasing Inspector General reports to GAO. The Chairman, Subcommittee on Legislation and National Security, House Committee on Government Operations, subsequently asked us to review the effectiveness of Inspector General functions of the Air Force, Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Defense Logistics Agency and thus determine if this policy solves the longstanding problem of GAO access to Inspector General reports. This report is the second in a series. Our first report, on the Air Force inspection system, was issued on August 28, 1979. 1/

HOW THE INSPECTION SYSTEM FUNCTIONS

The Army inspection system was established in 1777 and over the years its mission has remained essentially the same. Title 10, United States Code, Section 3039 (A) states that

"* * * the Inspector General shall inquire into and report upon the discipline, efficiency, and economy of the Army, and shall perform any other duties prescribed by the Secretary, the Chief of Staff, or by law."

Army regulations further define this responsibility by stating that the Inspector General will provide

"* * * a continuing assessment of the operational and administrative effectiveness of the Department of the Army through evaluation of managerial procedures and practices pertaining to personnel, materiel, and fund resources; identification of issues, situations, or circumstances which affect mission performance and isolation of the associated causes, and determination of the state of economy, efficiency, discipline, and morale within the Army."

The Army Inspector General is responsible for a variety of activities. As agreed with representatives of the Subcommittee on Legislation and National Security, our review focused on the inspection function, and generally did not

1/"A Look At The Air Force Inspector General's Inspection System," FGMSD-79-51, Aug. 28, 1979.

include the investigative or complaint functions. 1/ However, we recently reviewed the Department of Defense grievance procedures and the resultant report included the Army Inspector General complaint system. 2/

During fiscal 1978, the inspector general system had an operating budget of about \$37 million and involved 1,458 full-time employees--633 of whom were designated as inspectors general. Approximately 180 employees were under the control of headquarters--which includes the Office of the Inspector General and the Army Inspector General Agency, both at the Pentagon. Some 1,278 of the employees work at 162 different sites throughout the world and are under the control of lower level commanders. There are 342 people at the 10 Army major commands and 936 with various armies, corps, divisions, brigades, and other activities. In addition to these full-time personnel, the Inspector General makes extensive use of temporary inspectors.

The Inspector General approves the individuals assigned as lower level inspectors general, but the commanding officer and the size and mission of the activity determine how inspectors general perform, how their offices are organized, and what resources they may use.

ARMY INSPECTION SYSTEM DIFFERS FROM CIVIL AGENCY COUNTERPARTS

The Army inspector general system differs basically from its civil agency counterparts established on October 12, 1978, by Public Law 95-452. The civil agency inspectors general were created primarily to prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse. They comprise centralized, independent organizations with combined audit and investigative capabilities. The civil agency inspectors general are appointed by the President, for unlimited terms. They report to and are under the general supervision of the agency head. They also periodically report results of their efforts to the Congress. The civil agency inspectors general can be removed from office only by the President who must justify removal to the Congress.

1/A brief overview of these functions is provided in app. V.

2/"Actions Needed to Improve Military Chain of Command and Inspector General Grievance Procedures," FPCD-79-23, June 11, 1979.

The Army inspector general system is designed to assess operational and administrative effectiveness rather than to prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse. The Army Audit Agency and the Army's Criminal Investigations Command carry out many of the functions performed by the civil agency inspectors general. While not designed to uncover fraud, the Army inspection system apparently could do so. In the first half of fiscal 1979, inspectors general uncovered about 20 cases of potential fraud and transferred them to the Criminal Investigations Command.

From 1974 to 1977 the Army's inspection and audit functions were combined under one person, the inspector general and auditor general. In 1977 we issued a report in which we recommended placing the audit function at a higher organizational level. 1/ Subsequently, the audit function was removed from the control of the Inspector General. However, the audit compliance function, which involves followup on audit findings, remained under the Inspector General.

INSPECTOR GENERAL NONINSPECTION FUNCTIONS

In addition to inspections, inspectors general conduct investigations and inquiries, and respond to requests for assistance.

Investigations and inquiries.

An investigation is an examination of an allegation, report of conditions, or a situation. It includes the collection and evaluation of sworn testimony and evidence, and is finalized with a report to the requestor of the investigation. An inquiry is similar, but informal and sworn testimony usually is not taken. In general, more serious cases become the subject of investigations rather than inquiries.

The Inspector General is authorized to make investigations and inquiries into any Army activity, including reserve components, National Guard units, and civil functions, to provide the Secretary of the Army or Chief of Staff with a sound basis for decision. Lower level inspectors general perform the same function for their commanders for matters pertaining to their activities.

1/"Why the Army Should Strengthen Its Internal Audit Function,"
FGMSD-77-49, July 26, 1977.

Examples of the allegations inspectors investigate are

- racial discrimination,
- abuse of position or authority,
- harrassment of service members by a commander, and
- unsatisfactory living facilities.

Assistance cases

Service members can file complaints or request assistance from inspectors at their command level or any higher level. They may appeal in person, by mail, or by phone, and need not go through all parts of the chain of command. The inspector general must investigate the circumstances of the case, and has official access to whatever personnel, documents, or evidence he feels are necessary. He is required to answer the complainant quickly.

As an indication of the work generated by assistance cases, one major command reported that its inspectors general completed 13,468 such cases in a recent 15-month period. Lost or erroneous paychecks or personnel records and requests for reassignment or transfer are typical subjects of complaints.

TYPES OF INSPECTIONS

Headquarters and lower level inspectors general conduct general, special, and nuclear inspections. Their roles are similar in that all inspectors serve as the "eyes and ears" of their superiors. The headquarters Inspector General employees work for the Secretary of the Army and the Army Chief of Staff, while the lower level inspectors general work for their own commanders.

Unlike the Air Force, the Army inspectors general normally do not conduct operational readiness inspections--evaluations of the operational capability of combat or combat support units to accomplish their wartime missions during a mock operational exercise. Instead, the Army commanders are responsible for training their troops and evaluating the training during exercises and war games. Although we noted one instance where a division level inspector general in Europe was beginning to conduct this type of inspection, the headquarters Inspector General said that normally commanders perform that function.

General inspections

General inspections consume the majority of the inspection effort and are aimed at assessing the operational and administrative effectiveness of a unit. Both headquarters and lower level inspectors perform general inspections.

Typically, the headquarters Inspector General starts a general inspection at a lower level of a major command, such as a brigade, and works his way up the echelons to the major command headquarters. This inspection of a vertical slice of a command is considered a productive sampling technique which allows inspectors to assess the state of the command. A headquarters general inspection of a major command lasts 4 to 5 weeks and utilizes 20 to 30 inspectors. The Inspector General uses this approach to identify causes of systems problems rather than conducting a broad compliance inspection. He directed 18 general inspections in fiscal 1978.

Although some of the lower level inspectors general use an approach similar to headquarters', most perform broad compliance or checklist inspections, covering nearly every aspect of their subordinate units' work. These checks take 4 hours to 4 weeks, depending on the size of the activity and the number of units inspected. The inspections may be announced or not and are performed regularly by an inspector general at least one echelon above the inspected activity. Army regulations require that all activities be inspected at least every 2 years.

Special inspections

Special inspections assess a specific problem that may exist in more than one command. They are done at the direction of the commanding officer or the Chief of Staff. They are not conducted regularly. In fact, some inspectors general that we visited had not conducted a special inspection in fiscal 1978; from October 1977 to December 1978, the headquarters Inspector General had conducted only three.

Even though fewer staff are assigned to these inspections than to general inspections, the special ones usually last several months. Past special inspections have included such subjects as nuclear matters; management and accountability of materiel; reserve components inspector general system support; treatment of recruits at training centers; and Army safety programs.

Nuclear inspections

Nuclear inspections are compliance inspections of any Army unit having a nuclear delivery, storage, support, or training mission. These checks determine the safety, security, and reliability of the weapons and/or reactor facilities, and must be conducted at least once each fiscal year, no more than 15 months apart. Both headquarters and lower level inspectors perform nuclear inspections.

Procurement inspections

Lower level inspectors general whose organizations perform procurement functions conduct procurement inspections to assess the degree of units' compliance with policies and procedures. These inspections are often part of a general inspection.

We reviewed a number of reports from each type of inspection conducted by headquarters and lower-level inspectors general. The reports provide valuable information on such matters as safety programs, reserve components, management and accountability, materiel, and management effectiveness. Based on our review of these reports and discussions with headquarters personnel and individuals at the various installations visited, we concluded and recommended

- improving lower level general inspections and reports,
- strengthening the inspection system, and
- reducing overinspection and duplicate inspection.

CHAPTER 2

LOWER LEVEL INSPECTIONS AND

REPORTS CAN BE IMPROVED

Inspectors are not required to prepare formal working papers to support their work and findings, so documented evidence of the quality of their work is scarce. Instead of working papers, inspectors verify their findings by briefing inspected officials and reaching an agreement with them on the facts. To determine the quality of their work, we interviewed inspected officials, followed up on selected inspection findings, and observed portions of ongoing inspections. Our observations of inspections are included in appendix VII.

Officials said both headquarters and lower level inspections were beneficial and brought problems to commanders' attention. However, some felt that the scope of the inspections was so broad and the time allowed for the work so short that some areas received only a cursory review. They also said that reports contained petty and nonessential findings.

The findings in the headquarters level inspector general reports we reviewed generally were significant and mission related. However, lower level inspection reports showed findings that were primarily compliance oriented and did not address important areas such as the unit's mission. Also, these inspections were usually so broad and so short that causes of problems were not normally identified and large problems were not detected.

DOD AND THE CONGRESS CAN BENEFIT FROM HEADQUARTERS REPORTS

Reports of the headquarters Inspector General on general and special inspections contain information that would be valuable to congressional and DOD decisionmakers. For example:

- The training of helicopter repairmen at two forts was found in 1971 to be inefficient and costly. In spite of a possible savings of \$2,369 per student from consolidating training at one of the forts, this has not been done.
- Reserve component medical units lacked required equipment and authorized personnel.

--National Guard units based their authorized stock lists on peacetime demand data, which would not satisfy mobilization demand.

--For National Guard units, there was a long term shortage of mission essential equipment for which there was no ongoing procurement--but new units requiring the same equipment were still being activated.

--A child care facility at a certain fort did not meet safety, health, or sanitation standards. This was the third major command child care facility noted to have such problems in recent inspections.

--The lack of an automation security program weakened the safeguarding of classified or sensitive data processed by the command.

Generally, inspector general reports are distributed to the inspected unit, the Army Audit Agency, and other selected Army organizations. As a rule, the reports are not sent to the Congress nor to Department of Defense (DOD) components outside the Army, although at least one report from a 1977 special inspection was sent to DOD components and the Congress.

LOWER LEVEL INSPECTION REPORTS
INCLUDE MINOR DEFICIENCIES

According to a DOD draft report dated November 3, 1978, on the "Study of the Operations and Relations of Audit, Inspection and Review Groups in the Department of Defense," 70 percent of the Army employees interviewed felt that the value of the Army's inspections was either marginal or low. Moreover, about 70 percent of a sample group of about 1,000 active and 5,000 reserve members responding to a headquarters inspector general questionnaire in the latter part of 1978 believed that the Army inspection system was misdirected or needed improvement in determining units' capability to perform their missions.

Lower level inspection reports included relatively minor, nonmission essential deficiencies, such as:

--Cooks were not following recipe cards for baked macaroni and cheese.

--Sink stoppers were missing from several sinks.

- Three of 20 files inspected had labels which were improperly positioned.
- There were no technical manuals for the soft ice cream mixer.
- The active files contained empty folders.
- Recipe for omelets was not being followed. (Paragraph 4-19, AR 30-1 and TM 10-412.) No water, milk, salt, or pepper were added to the eggs.

LOWER LEVEL INSPECTIONS DO NOT FULLY DEVELOP FINDINGS

Despite requirements that inspectors identify causes of problems uncovered, inspectors below the headquarters level normally do not identify causes. Thus, in attempting corrections, officials may waste resources by treating symptoms rather than causes.

For example, during the general inspection of a corps unit that had contractor-operated dining facilities, the inspector saw and reported several deficiencies in the contractor's operations, including

- servicing lines were not clean during the serving period,
- only one variety of beans was used in three bean salad, and
- the cook's worksheet was not prepared in accordance with Army regulations.

The inspected activity responded to the report by proposing corrective action.

The activity's commander advised us that the findings were just symptoms of an overall problem with the dining facility contractor because even though the cited problems were corrected, the next year more problems arose which eventually led to terminating the food service contract. According to the commander, the cause of all of the problems was that the contractor did not have enough supervisors to ensure that his employees followed good sanitation, food preparation, and recordkeeping practices. The inspector general report did not identify this cause and therefore the problems continued for another year.

LOWER LEVEL INSPECTIONS ARE
TOO BROAD FOR THE TIME ALLOWED

One reason lower level general inspection findings are not fully developed and reports contain insignificant findings is that numerous areas must be inspected in very little time. Since inspectors do not have time to thoroughly evaluate the areas they inspect, they report minor compliance findings which are quickly identifiable.

The broad scope of inspections is due to Army Regulation 20-1 which requires that general inspections examine all areas of command operations. This regulation also requires that general inspections always include (1) special subjects for inspection (13 examples listed in Army Regulation 20-3), (2) areas of special interest to the inspector general's commander, and (3) a sample of the items in Technical Bulletin IG-1, the inspection guide.

We noted that lower level inspectors hurried through inspections to make sure they covered all areas. For example, the provost marshal area was scheduled for 1 day of inspection, but due to lack of time the inspector spent only about 3 hours covering many facets. A similar situation occurred when an inspection of the arms rooms was reduced from a day to several hours.

A major drawback of this approach is that significant mission-related findings may go undetected. For example, as part of a recent general inspection of a support command, the commanding general requested a review of the operations of a materiel management center to determine how well excess equipment was identified. Because numerous other areas had to be covered, the inspector and his assistants devoted only one day to the review. The inspection report did not contain any findings in this area.

An Army official said that there were problems with excess equipment, so we followed up on that portion of the inspection. We found that because the summary property records made it difficult to identify excess equipment, the activity had requisitions outstanding for major items even though it had excesses of those items. A separate complex and lengthy study being done by division logistics staff at the time of our review determined that this situation applied to jeeps and directed that all outstanding jeep orders be canceled.

We identified other types of equipment that were on order but not needed, and when we pointed this out to division property officials, they said they would cancel the

orders valued at \$2.8 million. If the requisitions had gone through, the Army either would have transferred equipment to this activity from other units with an excess, or would have bought more equipment.

HEADQUARTERS INSPECTOR GENERAL
SUGGESTS SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE

The Inspector General recognizes the need to change the thrust of inspections. In a February 16, 1979, letter to major commanders, the Inspector General pointed out that there was a problem with the inspection system and a need to shift emphasis from compliance to identifying causes of problems (by tracing the problems throughout the system), and determining solutions. He said he was hopeful that this approach--which he termed "systemic"-- would not only provide commanders a better evaluation of mission performance but would have impact on units' preparations for inspection and "* * * discourage last minute spasms and concentration on superficials like painting rocks and waxing floors." We agree with the Inspector General's attempt to change the emphasis of general inspections.

HEADQUARTERS INSPECTOR GENERAL
CANNOT MAKE SUBORDINATE INSPECTORS
CHANGE APPROACH

Although the Inspector General is responsible to the Secretary and the Chief of Staff for the entire inspection system and for providing guidance on inspector general activities throughout the Department, he does not have direct authority over the approximately 1,280 lower level inspector general personnel. Thus, the inspectors do not have to change their approach if they or their commanders do not agree with him. For example, a division inspector general told us that his current commanding general was pleased with the broad compliance approach, and that compliance rather than systemic inspections would still be performed. Other commanders stated that they believed the compliance approach was necessary, especially at lower levels.

CONCLUSIONS

We believe that the general and special inspection reports prepared by the headquarters Inspector General contain valuable information which would benefit DOD and congressional decisionmakers and that this information should be made available to them.

The reports of general inspections of lower level inspectors, which comprise the majority of the Army's inspection effort, provide commanders with information--much of it significant--on how well their subordinate units comply with regulations and directives. However, we believe these inspections could be more effective if more time is allowed, if the number of petty deficiencies reported is reduced, and if the causes of problems are determined and reported.

The headquarters Inspector General has recognized that improvements are needed and is proposing action which would strengthen the inspection system. However, he cannot require subordinate inspectors general to make needed improvements. To ensure that the Army inspection system is strengthened, we believe strong control is needed. One way is to centralize the system and place all inspectors general under headquarters' direct control. However, this would require changing the basic Army inspection philosophy--that the inspection function is an element of command, and the inspection resources are the "eyes and ears" of commanders.

An alternative is to ensure that headquarters guidance is implemented by the major commands by direction of the Chief of Staff and the Secretary. Because the Inspector General reports directly to those two officials we believe that he has an avenue to effect changes and that he should not hesitate to use this avenue to strengthen the inspection system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To improve the Army Inspector General inspection system, we recommend that the Secretary of the Army issue directives to lower level inspectors general on (1) the systemic approach to inspections, (2) the need to identify causes of problems, (3) the inadvisability of reporting minor deficiencies, and (4) the need to allow adequate time for a thorough inspection.

CHAPTER 3

OPPORTUNITIES FOR STRENGTHENING

THE INSPECTION SYSTEM

During our review, we looked at staffing levels, qualifications, training, and length of assignment of inspectors. We also reviewed the use of supplemental temporary inspectors and the extent to which civilian inspectors are used.

Staffing of the Army inspector general function differs from the Air Force's staffing because the Army's inspection system is much more decentralized. Even though both have about the same number of full-time lower level inspection employees, the Army's staff is at more locations resulting in a smaller staff at each. Thus, some of the lower level Army inspector general offices rely heavily on temporary inspectors who help with an inspection and then return to their regular jobs. This can result in a less effective inspection system. We also found that although about 24 percent of the inspection staff is civilian, the majority of the civilians are clerical workers.

ARMY HAS INSPECTORS AT NUMEROUS SITES

As of March 1979, about 1,458 persons worked full time in the inspector general system. Of these, 180 were assigned to headquarters and 1,278 to 162 lower level inspector general offices--an average of about eight full-time inspectors at each. The chart on the following page shows the breakdown of full-time military and civilian employees by command. Additional information on the different types of inspectors general, staffing standards, selection, qualifications, training, and duty tours is in appendix VI.

INSPECTORS OBJECTIVE BUT NOT INDEPENDENT

The inspector general personnel are not independent in the sense that internal auditors are, primarily because they are not permanently assigned to the inspection function. They are selected for 3-year tours, and then return to their functional areas. This permits the possibility that inspectors might be influenced by former ties or anticipated relationships with their commands. In addition, the lower level inspectors are not independent, as internal auditors are, because they are under the control of their commanders.

ESTIMATED INSPECTOR GENERAL STAFF
AS OF MARCH 31, 1979 (note a)

	<u>Military</u>			<u>Civilians</u>	<u>Total</u>
	<u>Officers</u>	<u>Warrant</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>		
Department of the Army Inspector General:					
Office of the Inspector General	5	-	-	3	8
US Army Inspector General Agency	<u>109</u>	-	<u>2</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>172</u>
Total Inspector General	114	-	2	64	180
Commands/separate operating agencies:					
US Army Forces Command:					
Headquarters	30	4	3	8	45
Subordinate commands	164	-	155	71	390
US Army Training and Doctrine Command:					
Headquarters	24	-	4	5	33
Subordinate commands	57	-	62	33	152
US Army Materiel Development and Readiness Command:					
Headquarters	21	-	1	40	62
Subordinate commands	22	-	8	54	84
US Army Communications Command:					
Headquarters	5	-	1	12	18
Subordinate commands	6	-	13	3	22
US Army Health Services Command:					
Headquarters	15	-	4	8	27
Subordinate commands	10	-	9	6	25
US Army Europe and Seventh Army:					
Headquarters	34	12	17	13	76
Subordinate commands	64	2	82	16	164
US Army Western Command:					
Headquarters	6	-	2	2	10
Subordinate commands	3	-	3	-	6
US Eighth Army:					
Headquarters	13	1	20	-	34
Subordinate commands	7	-	7	1	15
US Army Japan Headquarters	2	-	2	2	6
US Army Recruiting Command Headquarters	12	-	15	4	31
US Army elements of Defense activities and joint commands (note b)	17	-	3	3	23
Operating agencies of Army headquarters staff elements (note c)	<u>31</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>55</u>
Total commands/agencies	<u>543</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>420</u>	<u>293</u>	<u>1,278</u>
TOTAL	<u>657</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>d/ 422</u>	<u>e/ 357</u>	<u>1,458</u>

a/The Army does not maintain records on the number of temporary inspectors, therefore, these figures exclude them.

b/There are nine activities in this category. These include five activities within the Defense Logistics Agency, the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Headquarters of the North American Air Defense Command, the European Command Headquarters, and the Pacific Command Headquarters.

c/There are seven activities in this category. These include the Army Intelligence and Security Command, the Criminal Investigations Command, the Office of the Chief of Engineers, the U.S. Military Academy, the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, the Military District of Washington, and the Military Traffic Management Command.

d/Includes 169 clerical military personnel.

e/Includes 231 clerical civilian employees.

While their lack of independence creates potential lack of objectivity, we did not note any instances when full-time inspectors were not objective or lacked integrity. However, we noted problems when temporary inspectors were assigned to inspect the same activities and personnel they normally work with.

PROBLEMS WITH SUPPLEMENTAL INSPECTORS

Army regulations state that personnel with certain special skills may assist in inspections. These temporary inspectors are normally assigned from the base being inspected and are referred to as augmentees. They returned to their regular jobs when their portion of the inspection was completed. The extent that temporary inspectors were used varied by activity. Some units seldom used them while others relied almost totally on temporaries. For example, the total time expended during one inspection we observed was 1,974 staff-hours. Of this time, only 187 hours, or less than 10 percent, were by full-time inspectors. At this installation, because the temporary inspectors were considered "experts" in their functional areas, they were given little inspection guidance.

At each of the activities we reviewed that used temporary inspectors, the temporary staff had routine working relationships with the people they inspected because of their regular jobs. We found that they often made courtesy inspections and assistance visits to the units to prepare them for the inspection, identify problems, and train personnel, and then returned as part of the inspector general's team to officially inspect them. During our observation of a general inspection at one unit, we spoke with a temporary inspector who stated that his team had been at the unit motor pool on five occasions, including the previous evening, helping prepare for inspection.

Disadvantages of temporary inspectors may outweigh advantages

The Army's lower level inspectors general that use temporary inspectors extensively are like the Navy and Marine Corps inspectors general who, because of budgetary and staffing limitations, rely almost totally on temporary staff and have very small full-time staffs. This appears to be the major advantage of using temporary staff because the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps would have to significantly increase their full-time staffs if they were to eliminate temporary inspectors and continue providing the same inspection coverage. Another advantage of using temporary inspectors is that they provide expertise in specialized areas.

We noted two major disadvantages of using temporary inspectors. First, they may be reluctant to report deficiencies because of their close relationship with personnel at the inspected activity. We observed one example of this where, rather than report an area as deficient, the inspector advised unit personnel to correct the problem, noting that he would check it again in a couple of days. This tends to give commanders a false impression of the condition of their units and violates the intent of an inspection. According to the "Army Basic Inspection Guide,"

"An inspector general inspection is unique. It is different from inspections made by staff officers of their functional areas. An inspector general can be totally objective in that he has no proponenty responsibilities. Thus, he can serve as the 'eyes and ears of the commander' to observe activities of the command as the commander would do personally if he had the time. The inspection also gives the commander an independent assessment of each element of the command."

The second major disadvantage of using temporary inspectors is that because they work in an area on a regular basis, they may be so close to it that they cannot identify or comprehend the extent of problems. We identified an example of this during our review. In chapter 2, we reported that an inspector failed to identify that an activity planned to requisition excess equipment. The inspector in this instance was a temporary inspector. Although we believe that a major reason this problem went undetected was because only one day was devoted to inspecting the area, the temporary inspector's close involvement with the area also contributed. The temporary inspector stated that he was aware of the practice of substituting jeeps for armored personnel carriers on the unit's records, and that it would eventually result in excessive numbers of jeeps being ordered. He did not examine this area or report it to the inspector general because he believed that no armored personnel carriers would be delivered in the near future and because he doubted that a similar problem existed with other types of equipment. When we discussed our findings with the unit's inspector general, he stated that this was an area that definitely should have been examined.

USE OF MORE CIVILIANS IN PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS MAY BE FEASIBLE

Unlike the Air Force, where civilians comprise less than 10 percent of the inspection force, about 24 percent of the Army's inspection system personnel is civilian. This is more

in line with the DOD policy of filling each position with a civilian unless it can be proven that a military person is required. However, most of the civilians are used in clerical areas. About 58 percent of the clerical staff is civilian while only 14 percent of the professional staff is civilian. We believe additional civilians could be used in professional positions in headquarters and major command inspector general offices.

Advantages and disadvantages of using civilians

Several inspector general offices we reviewed used civilians as inspectors of such areas as nonappropriated funds and procurement. Officials we interviewed said the advantages of using civilians as inspectors are that they may provide expertise in a particular area and they would provide continuity because they are not subject to the 3-year tour of duty. Also use of civilians would allow additional military personnel to be used to help offset personnel shortages due to problems in meeting recruiting and reenlistment quotas.

Disadvantages mentioned were that civilians would lack credibility with troops, play a limited role in a combat environment, lack command experience and understanding of military issues, be reluctant to travel extensively, and deprive military officers of this invaluable preparation for command. In addition, some officials felt the use of civilians would result in a corps of career inspectors and destroy the vitality of the system created by the constant influx of new military personnel.

CONCLUSIONS

Some of the Army's lower level inspectors general make extensive use of temporary inspectors which can result in an ineffective inspection. Since the Army probably would have to significantly increase the size of its full-time inspection staff if it were to try to eliminate temporary inspectors and still provide current coverage, we believe that the Army will continue to require temporary staff for inspections. However, several alternatives for improving the situation are available including requiring that when temporary inspectors are used they be selected from activities that do not have a routine working relationship with the unit to be inspected.

We believe that the Army inspection system should consist predominantly of military personnel. However, more civilians could be used in professional positions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Secretary of the Army:

- Require that temporary inspectors be provided guidance and training on their role as inspectors; that their work be monitored to promote objectivity; and that they be selected from activities that do not have routine working relationships with the inspected unit.
- Require that more civilians be used in professional positions whenever possible.

CHAPTER 4

OVERINSPECTION AND

DUPLICATION ARE PROBLEMS

Like the Air Force inspection system, overinspection and duplication are problems in the Army. We identified instances where officials were preventing duplication by limiting inspection frequency and scope based on results of recent inspections or reviews by other oversight groups. However, some activities were not doing this. Preinspections conducted by inspectors general staff and unit personnel as "dress-rehearsals" for inspector general visits also were duplicative.

HEADQUARTERS INSPECTIONS AND INTERNAL AUDITING ARE BEING COORDINATED

The Army inspection system's and Army Audit Agency's missions and responsibilities permit them to inspect or audit virtually all functions, activities, and operations in the Army. Internal audits generally have the same overall objectives as inspector general inspections. The audit agency performs the same types of evaluations of similar systems and functional areas, including maintenance, procurement, supply, and accounting and finance that the inspector general does. The primary difference between the two groups seems to be the approach. Army regulations make this comparison of the two approaches:

"An audit consists of comprehensive in-depth analysis of a condition within a specifically defined functional area or system. Inspector General inspections * * * generally have the same overall objectives as an audit, but are normally broader in scope, shorter in duration and examine a larger number of areas in less depth."

In addition, an audit usually complies with professional standards such as those prescribed by GAO. These standards require that auditors obtain evidence and document findings to support their work. Inspectors, on the other hand, do not follow audit standards, but are usually knowledgeable in the inspected area and rely on this knowledge and discussions with top agency officials to support their work. The Army considers the two groups to be complementary.

Since the Army Inspector General at the headquarters level is moving more toward conducting systemic inspections and identifying underlying causes of problems, the possibility of duplication between audits and inspections must be recognized. The Inspector General already has informal contact with the Auditor General to preclude duplication. In addition, on January 15, 1979, the Army Audit Policy Committee was established to ensure coordination of ongoing Army audits, inspections, investigations, and other review activities executed by a variety of separate organizations. The committee meets at least quarterly, and members include the Inspector General, the Comptroller of the Army, the Auditor General and the commanding general of the Criminal Investigation Command.

Although the Army may preclude duplication between headquarters level inspections and audits, some overlap between the two is unavoidable. Work may be done at the same locations, discussions may be held with the same people, and the same documents may be reviewed although the objectives of the two may be different.

LOWER LEVEL INSPECTIONS DUPLICATE OTHER GROUPS' REVIEWS

Army regulations encourage inspectors general to use reports of inspections and staff visits conducted by other staff agencies and lower echelons. These regulations also require that commanders, to the maximum extent possible, fulfill their requirements for administrative, logistical, technical, and other inspections by one annual, comprehensive inspection.

We found an example where this policy was being implemented. However, we found many examples of duplication between lower level inspector general inspections, evaluations of other oversight review groups, and preinspections conducted by inspector general staff and unit personnel preparing for a general inspection. Coordination efforts at the lower levels were limited to avoiding schedule conflicts and did not include coordination of functional area coverage.

Potential for duplication recognized

Since 1968, we have reported to the Congress several times that many groups are performing management reviews and evaluations within the various DOD elements more or less independently of the efforts of other groups. We reported a growth in the number of such groups, in the striking similarity of authorized areas of interest, and in the overlap of

functions. In addition, we reported some confusion of responsibilities and an apparent need for overall coordination and guidance on the total review effort.

There has been no apparent improvement--a DOD Joint Study Group on Audits, Inspection, and Reviews noted in its November 3, 1978, draft report that over 350 such groups exist. The report said that so many groups significantly increased the likelihood that several groups had similar missions and responsibilities in almost every phase of DOD operations.

Various Army commanders and officials agreed that duplication occurred between inspections and other groups' reviews. The Inspector General identified such duplication in his June 20, 1979, "Report of the Special Inspection of the Inspector General System Support of the Reserve Component Units," where he stated that

"* * * reserve component units underwent numerous, and often redundant inspections, evaluations, and assistance visits from higher headquarters and assistance elements."

He said one study identified 13 different inspections made in reserve component units which, although they had different thrusts, had substantial similarity in subject areas and documents inspected.

The Inspector General also stated that numerous technical assistance visits at installations with nuclear missions duplicated inspector general nuclear inspections. He said that there were as many as 10 to 12 assistance visits and inspections at one unit in a year. The Inspector General tried to improve this situation by recommending that commanders reexamine the utility of their technical assistance teams, reorienting their efforts toward better training and reducing the frequency of inspections at the unit level.

PREPARATION FOR INSPECTIONS CAUSES DUPLICATION

Most of the Army's inspections at all levels are announced far in advance. One benefit of this is that it allows the inspected activity to remedy problems before the inspection. However, a disadvantage is that it can result in duplication because often either the activities themselves or the inspectors general have time to conduct courtesy or practice inspections to prepare the unit for the inspection. It also gives a misleading picture of the unit's ability to perform its mission on a regular, routine basis.

We also found that some lower level inspectors general offices conduct formal inspections of their subordinates in preparation for a scheduled inspection by the next higher level inspector general.

At one location we visited, each of the inspector general activities encouraged inspected units to take advantage of "technical assistance visits" or "courtesy inspections." The purposes of such visits are to review unit preparations, identify problems that would be noted as deficiencies during the general inspections, and train unit personnel in how to correct the problems. As many as three or four "courtesy inspections" may be conducted in preparation for the general inspection, usually by the same inspector general or headquarters staff member who would conduct the general inspection. During our observation of a general inspection in one division, we spoke with a maintenance inspector who stated that his team had been at the unit motor pool on five occasions, including the previous evening, assisting in preparing the unit for inspection.

At one command we noted that a division level inspector general inspected his subordinate units semiannually regardless of whether the next higher inspector general office had inspected the same units as part of its annual inspection program. Thus some units were inspected three times in one year. We brought this to the attention of the activity's chief of staff and were told that the higher level inspector general recommended to the division inspector general that the higher level annual inspection serve as one of the division's semi-annual inspections.

At another command, we noted that some of the same locations were visited by two different levels of inspectors general within months of each other. They looked at similar functional areas and reported similar findings. For example, the inspector general of a command headquarters and a lower level inspector general within the command inspected the same unit within one month of each other. The reports contained duplicate findings about the management of the installation's golf course. At another location within the same command, the inspectors general of command headquarters and the installation reported the same findings, verbatim, relating to excess tools and duplicated findings on maintenance management within 5 months of each other.

We also noted that one command inspector general had criticized a lower level inspector general for conducting a preinspection over a 30-day period to prepare the activity for the command inspection.

Example of duplication between inspection and other reviews

Within one command, we identified duplication by comparing information from the inspector general's reports on general inspection with information from reports by other oversight activities. For example, during calendar 1978, an aircraft flying club with membership revenues of about \$12,000 per year was subjected to six different inspections/reviews. The inspector general performed three inspections; the Criminal Investigation Division performed a crime survey; the provost marshal performed a physical security check; and an internal review group made a followup review on a prior audit.

In this instance we found that an inspector general report duplicated four findings from the criminal investigation survey conducted the month before. The inspection report did not mention the status of corrective actions but we found that corrective action for one of the findings had been completed before the inspector general's visit.

NO-NOTICE INSPECTIONS MIGHT REDUCE PREPARATIONS AND ASSURE FASTER RESPONSE TO FINDINGS

The Army has established formal procedures for units responding to findings in inspection reports. These procedures generally require written responses from the commander of the inspected unit to the inspector general, citing the corrective actions taken or planned. The inspectors general offices administratively follow up on the findings to determine their status. Some of the inspection reports we reviewed contained more than 100 findings, so the amount of administrative effort required to follow up on one report can be enormous.

During the period of inspection covered by our review, the amount of time to close inspection reports varied from approximately 3 months to 1 year after the inspection was completed. However, no matter how extensive the writing is in reporting the status of corrective actions, the ultimate proof is not until the next inspection when the findings from the previous inspection report are checked. Thus, the inspected activity may report a problem as corrected when in fact it was not--or the problem may recur because of personnel changes or because the symptom rather than the cause was corrected.

At one major command, this situation was confirmed. The command inspector general conducted an unannounced inspection

7 months after the regular announced general inspection to ensure that corrective action was taken. The inspector general found that corrective action had not been taken on one-fourth of the findings checked. We noted similar situations for findings at other commands. At one location, we found that corrective action had not been taken on 69 percent of the findings we followed up on. We also followed up on selected findings from two headquarters inspections and found that corrective action had not been taken on 37 percent.

We believe that in many instances activities make sure that prior inspection findings or their symptoms are corrected just before the next regular announced inspection. For example, a commanding general of a subordinate command said that preparation time for a headquarters field inspection totaled 141 staff-days at a cost of \$12,200. He said this was primarily due to little corrective action having been taken on findings of a previous general inspection. It is likely that corrective action would be taken sooner if the inspectors general conducted their inspections on a no-notice or limited notice basis. Units would then be less likely to postpone corrections because of the risk of having a repeat finding. No-notice or limited notice reviews would also reduce extensive preinspection.

CONCLUSIONS

Overinspection continues to be a problem within the Army due to the numerous inspector general, assistance, preinspection, and review team visits.

Duplication of audit and inspection is not a problem at the headquarters level, due to the Inspector General's coordination of inspection with the audits of the Army Audit Agency and major activities. However, duplication does occur below the headquarters level between inspector general reviews and other groups' evaluations, and to an even greater extent with units' preinspections made just before announced inspector general reviews. While inspection is a good concept, its overuse wastes resources and diverts attention from essential areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Secretary of the Army clearly define the functions of inspection, internal review, and internal audit, and, as much as possible, eliminate duplication and overlap. Where duplication and overlap are useful, we recommend that the group performing a review be required to review the work done by any preceding group and consider it in their own work.

We also recommend that inspections be conducted on a no-notice or limited notice basis to the greatest extent possible.

CHAPTER 5

ARMY POLICY ON GAO

ACCESS TO INSPECTION REPORTS

As a result of revised DOD policy, we have been granted access to inspector general reports and related records. The Army Inspector General provided us with copies of all closed inspection reports we requested. However, the Army's policy for providing or denying access to open inspection reports could cause our office problems in future reviews of Army activities.

REVISED POLICY GIVES US CASE-BY-CASE ACCESS

On November 6, 1978, DOD adopted a new policy for releasing inspector general reports to us which provides that:

"Every effort should be made to accommodate the specific needs of GAO on a case-by-case basis-- including, as appropriate, release of reports and records, or access without releasing physical custody of the files or reports.

Each DOD component is authorized to delegate the authority for access to and release of Inspector General reports.

In those instances where mutual accommodation cannot be worked out, the issue should be forwarded to the Secretary of the Military Department or head of the Defense agency for decision.

The Comptroller General has indicated that he will be personally available for discussions to determine whether the needed information can be supplied in some other manner."

ARMY GAVE US INSPECTION REPORTS PREVIOUSLY

Prior to the DOD policy revision, the Army had allowed us access to its inspector general reports. Army Regulation 36-20, dated March 13, 1975, authorizes the Inspector General to furnish GAO copies, access, or statements of fact on inspection reports. According to the Inspector General's records, GAO requested and received access to or copies of

75 inspection reports during the period November 26, 1974, to March 13, 1978.

For our review, the Inspector General provided the following guidelines for responding to GAO requests for inspection reports:

- "A. Each request is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Approval is granted only for those records and reports specifically requested.
- B. Requests for reports that have been administratively closed are normally approved.
- C. Requests for open reports may be approved if an analysis indicates that no controversy exists pertaining to the findings of the report.
- D. Requests are not approved when it is determined that disclosure would compromise an active investigation of wrongdoing.
- E. Names are deleted from reports when it is determined that inclusion would affect the ability of the inspectors general to obtain information in future investigations and inspections.
- F. Classified information is provided only to individuals having proper clearance.
- G. GAO representatives will be advised that certain files are subject to the Privacy Act. Any information made available which is subsequently used in a GAO publication must be purged of personal and unit identification.
- H. Full cooperation will be accorded GAO representatives and all requests for information will be processed expeditiously. * * * "

COMPLETE ACCESS TO CLOSED
REPORTS DURING THIS REVIEW

After being granted visual access to reports and records, we requested and received 172 copies of reports (or excerpts from them) published between October 1977 and December 1978. Except for some initial delays at one installation, all report copies were provided in a reasonable time period.

PROBLEMS IN GETTING COPIES OR VISUAL ACCESS TO SOME OPEN INSPECTION REPORTS

An open inspection report is one in which an inspector general has not evaluated and accepted the corrective action proposed by the inspected unit's commander. The Inspector General characterized an open inspection report as analogous to a GAO draft report that was being reviewed by an agency and as such, the report could be modified substantially.

During our review, the Inspector General considered our requests for open inspection reports on a case-by-case basis. We were given visual access to portions of a top secret special inspection involving nuclear matters. We did not believe it necessary to request a copy of this information for our review. We were allowed to review a special inquiry conducted by a division level inspector general but we were initially denied copies of the report because it was considered open. We did receive a copy of the report after we completed our field work because the report had been closed by then.

The major problem we encountered with open reports was when we requested a copy of the headquarters "Report of the Special Inspection of the Inspector General System Support of the Reserve Component Units." We were not permitted even visual access to this report initially because it was open. Subsequent to completion of our review, the report was closed and we were given a copy. Among the findings in this report were the opinions of active and reserve component soldiers on the inspector general system, which made the report particularly relevant and important to our review.

Since inspection reports can remain open for as long as 13 months (the "Inspector General System Support of the Reserve Components" was open for about 6 months), we are concerned that future GAO reviews that could benefit from the Inspector General's work will lose that benefit because of the Army's policy on open reports.

CONCLUSIONS

Except for the inability to get a copy of, or visual access to, one open special inspection report until very late in our review, we received timely access to, and copies of, all reports requested. We appreciate the Inspector General's concern about providing copies of open reports which may subsequently be modified, but we believe this problem could be handled by having the Inspector General place a caveat on any open reports provided us noting that they contain findings that have not been fully resolved.

CHAPTER 6

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The review was conducted at the Inspector General Headquarters, Washington, D.C., and in various lower level inspector general offices including the Materiel Development and Readiness Command, Alexandria, Virginia; the Forces Command, Ft. McPherson, Georgia; the III Corps Headquarters, Ft. Hood, Texas; the Training and Doctrine Command, Ft. Monroe, Virginia; the U.S. Army Europe Headquarters, Heidelberg, West Germany; and the Eighth Army Headquarters, Korea. Headquarters and command inspection personnel with the activities reviewed represented 38 percent of the Army's inspection force.

As agreed with representatives of the Subcommittee on Legislation and National Security, House Committee on Government Operations, we concentrated on the inspection function, and generally limited our work involving the functions dealing with assistance, complaints, and investigations to information gathering.

Within the Materiel Development and Readiness Command we visited the Mobility Equipment Research and Development Command, Ft. Belvoir, Virginia. Under Forces Command, we visited inspectors general at the Army Garrison, Ft. McPherson, the 5th Infantry Division, Ft. Polk, Louisiana; the Army Garrison, and the First Army Headquarters, Ft. Meade, Maryland; and the 1st Cavalry Division and 2d Armored Division, Ft. Hood. Under the Training and Doctrine Command, we visited inspectors general at Ft. Lee and Ft. Eustis, Virginia. Under U.S. Army Europe Headquarters, we visited inspectors general at the V Corps, Frankfurt, West Germany, and the Eighth Infantry Division, Bad Kreuznach, West Germany. In addition, we visited inspectors general at the 2d Infantry Division and the 38th Air Defense Artillery Brigade under the 8th Army in Korea.

Where possible we accompanied inspectors on scheduled inspections and observed part of the inspections to determine approach and the general manner in which inspections were conducted.

We reviewed general and special inspection reports or parts thereof and obtained copies of 172 reports. We also reviewed several complaint and assistance cases and investigation reports.

We interviewed headquarters and lower level inspectors general, commanders, and other command personnel. We also interviewed appropriate management personnel to ascertain whether report findings were being corrected or referred to higher levels. We contacted Army Audit Agency and internal review group personnel to determine the extent of coordination between the review, inspection, and audit groups. In addition, we interviewed members of two DOD task forces whose evaluations were concerned with the inspection systems. One task force was initiated by DOD while the other was required by the Inspector General Act of 1978, Public Law 95-452, dated October 12, 1978.

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225-8147

NINETY-FIFTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
 LEGISLATION AND NATIONAL SECURITY SUBCOMMITTEE
 OF THE
 COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM B-373
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

November 13, 1978

Honorable Elmer B. Staats
 Comptroller General of the U.S.
 General Accounting Office
 441 G Street, N.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear General:

As you know, through the efforts of Assistant Secretary Fred P. Wacker the Department of Defense adopted on November 6, 1978 a new policy for releasing Inspector General reports to GAO. While I remain concerned over past refusals of the Department of Defense to provide GAO necessary information, I am hopeful that this will mean GAO will have access to all the information it needs to be able to effectively carry out its work.

I believe it is in order, therefore, for GAO to immediately determine whether or not this new policy will in fact prove to be a workable solution to this long-standing problem. This can be best accomplished by a GAO review of the Inspector General functions of the Departments of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps and of the Defense Logistics Agency. Such a review will be timely in light of the study mandated in the Inspector General legislation and will assist the Subcommittee in its ongoing review of DoD internal management control activities. Such a study should encompass an evaluation of the organization, role, staffing, independence, quality of work and effectiveness of these agencies.

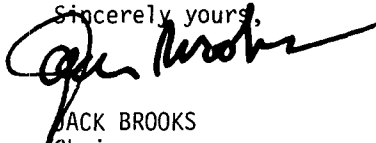
Because of the importance of this review, it will be necessary to have it completed as expeditiously as possible. I would expect to receive a final report on the Department of the Air Force Inspector General not later than May 31, 1979, final reports on the Navy and Marine Corps Inspectors General not later than July 31, 1979, and final reports on the Army and Defense Logistics Agency Inspectors General not later than September 30, 1979. While these are tight deadlines, they can be met if sufficient resources are devoted to this project. And, as usual, I request that GAO not provide draft reports to the affected agencies for official comment, which should also enable you to meet these deadlines.

General Staats
November 13, 1978

I would appreciate it if the GAO staff members who will be assigned to this review would meet as soon as possible with members of my staff to discuss in detail the questions the Subcommittee desires to have dealt with by the review.

With best wishes I am

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jack Brooks", written in a cursive style.

JACK BROOKS
Chairman

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NINETY-SIXTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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 OF THE
 COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM B-373
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

March 28, 1979

Honorable Elmer B. Staats
 Comptroller General of the U. S.
 General Accounting Office
 441 G Street, N. W.
 Washington, D. C. 20548


Dear General:

Last November I asked GAO to conduct comprehensive reviews of the Inspector General functions of the Departments of Air Force, Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and the Defense Logistics Agency. Since it is important to have the results of these reviews prior to the completion of the Department of Defense's own Task Force review of the operations of its audit, inspection and investigative components, I asked for early completion dates with the latest report being submitted to the Subcommittee no later than September 30, 1979.

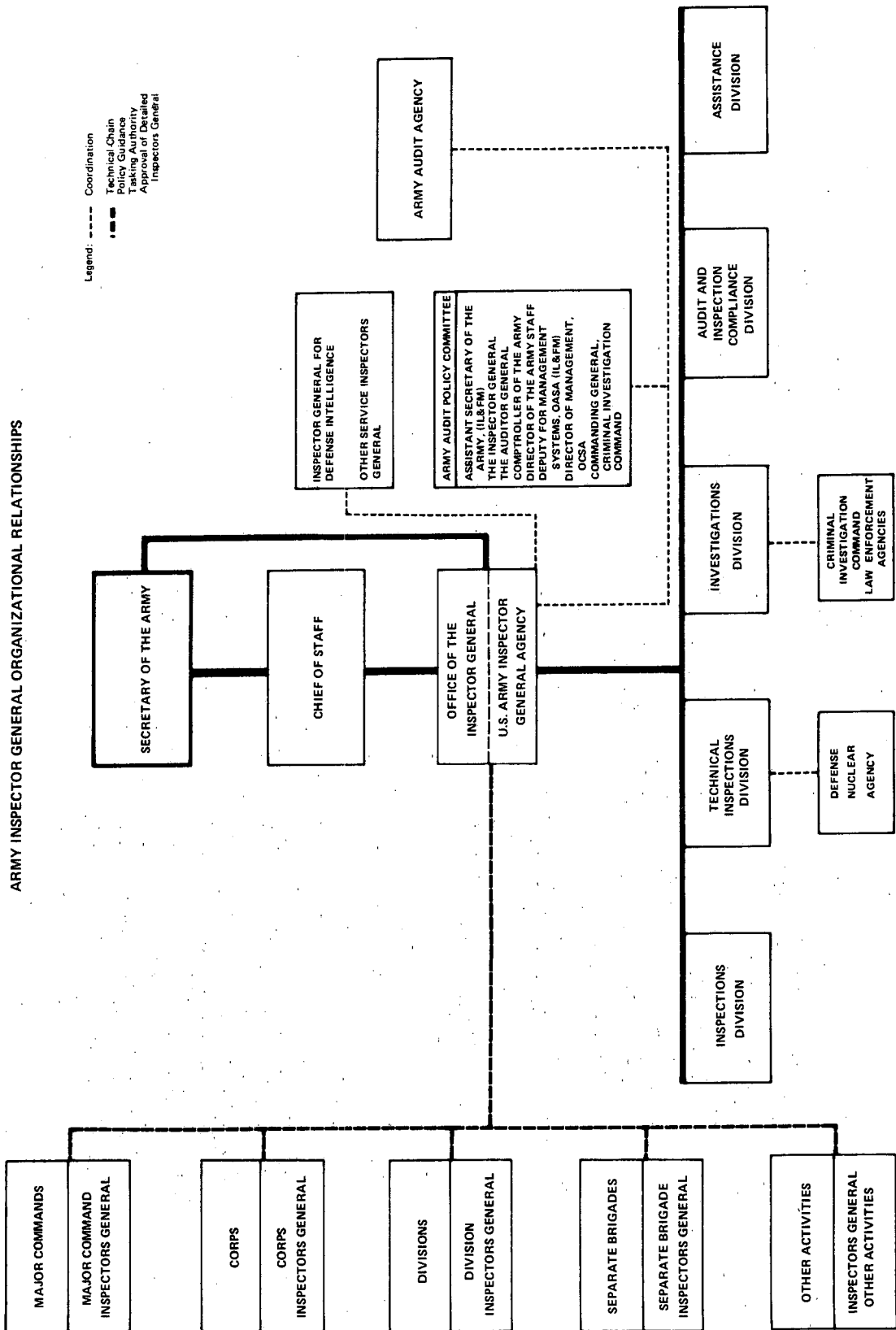
It is now my understanding that GAO, after beginning work on these reviews, feels that more time than originally planned will be needed because of the sizes and differing organizational structures of these offices. This being the case, I am agreeable to allowing some additional time but must continue to stress the importance of the reviews being timely. It is, therefore, my hope that the Air Force report will be available no later than August 31, 1979, the Army report no later than October 31, 1979, and the Navy and Marine Corps and Defense Logistics Agency reports no later than December 31, 1979.

I appreciate the amount of resources and talent you are devoting to these important projects.

Sincerely,


 JACK BROOKS
 Chairman

ARMY INSPECTOR GENERAL ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS



ARMY INSPECTION SYSTEM
COSTS FOR ONE YEAR PERIOD ENDING
MARCH 31, 1979 (note a)

	<u>Military personnel costs</u>	<u>Civilian personnel costs</u>	<u>Other (note b)</u>	<u>Total</u>
Department of the Army Inspector General:				
Office of the Inspector General	\$ 212,952	\$ 55,751	\$ 24,000	\$ 292,703
US Army Inspector General Agency	<u>3,758,220</u>	<u>1,122,299</u>	<u>942,000</u>	<u>5,822,519</u>
Total Inspector General	3,971,172	1,178,050	966,000	6,115,222
Commands/separate operating agencies				
US Army Forces Command:				
Headquarters	1,013,406	112,605	317,000	1,443,011
Subordinate commands	6,803,536	922,363	897,000	8,622,899
US Army Training and Doctrine Command:				
Headquarters	753,937	57,791	227,000	1,038,728
Subordinate commands	2,673,951	418,661	241,000	3,333,612
US Army Materiel Development and Readiness Command:				
Headquarters	648,602	1,082,969	109,000	1,840,571
Subordinate commands	977,571	1,224,347	95,000	2,296,918
US Army Communications Command:				
Headquarters	174,451	250,722	58,000	483,173
Subordinate commands	381,667	34,931	23,000	439,598
US Army Health Services Command:				
Headquarters	469,345	114,249	82,000	665,594
Subordinate commands	420,836	75,960	48,000	544,796
US Army Europe and Seventh Army:				
Headquarters	1,593,519	159,075	297,000	2,049,594
Subordinate commands	3,370,862	220,919	247,000	3,838,781
US Army Western Command:				
Headquarters	211,317	28,718	29,000	269,035
Subordinate commands	136,328	-	9,000	145,328
US Eighth Army:				
Headquarters	671,863	-	36,000	707,863
Subordinate commands	306,658	12,127	13,000	331,785
US Army Japan Headquarters	112,657	25,638	9,000	147,295
US Army Recruiting Command Headquarters	579,608	48,626	85,000	713,234
US Army Elements of Defense activities and joint commands (note c)	606,977	45,498	Unknown	652,475
Operating Agencies of Army Headquarters				
Staff Elements (note d)	<u>1,158,895</u>	<u>225,848</u>	<u>160,000</u>	<u>1,544,743</u>
Total commands/agencies	<u>23,065,986</u>	<u>5,061,047</u>	<u>2,982,000</u>	<u>31,109,033</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$27,037,158</u>	<u>\$6,239,097</u>	<u>\$3,948,000</u>	<u>\$37,224,255</u>

a/The Army does not maintain records on the use of temporary inspectors, therefore, these figures exclude them.

b/Includes costs for communications, supplies, equipment, and the largest component--travel, which accounted for \$3.3 million of this amount.

c/There are nine activities in this category. These include five activities within the Defense Logistics Agency, the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Headquarters of the North American Air Defense Command, the European Command Headquarters, and the Pacific Command Headquarters.

d/There are seven activities in this category. These include the Army Intelligence and Security Command, the Criminal Investigations Command, the Office of the Chief of Engineers, the U.S. Military Academy, the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, the Military District of Washington, and the Military Traffic Management Command.

FUNCTIONS CONTROLLED BYTHE INSPECTOR GENERAL

The Inspector General of the Army is a lieutenant general appointed by the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff with the advice and consent of the Senate. He reports to the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff on the state of preparedness, discipline, efficiency, economy, and morale of the Army. As a member of the Chief of Staff's personal staff, he inquires into any matter of interest to the Secretary or the Chief of Staff.

The Inspector General

- formulates policy, conducts training and maintains surveillance over other inspectors general in the Army;
- approves the appointment of all detailed inspectors general;
- conducts general, special, and nuclear inspections, certain types of sensitive, noncriminal investigations, and responds to assistance requests;
- coordinates inspection and audit schedules to ensure coverage and prevent duplication;
- grants or refuses access to all inspector general reports and records;
- inspects Reserve and National Guard units; and
- evaluates and ensures the adequacy of corrective action taken on Army Audit Agency and inspection report findings.

Unlike the Air Force Inspector General, the Army Inspector General is not responsible for criminal investigations, security police, counterintelligence, or safety programs.

Two offices located at the Pentagon, the Office of the Inspector General with 8 people, and the Army Inspector General Agency with 172 people, constitute the headquarters level of the Army inspector general system. The Inspector General Agency performs the headquarters level inspections and has two major generals that serve as deputies to the Inspector General. One of the deputies is responsible for the Inspection Division, Audit and Inspection Compliance Division, and the Technical Inspection Division. The other deputy is responsible for the Investigations and Assistance Divisions.

The Inspection Division conducts both general and special inspections. General inspections are broad and aimed at evaluating a unit's ability to perform its assigned mission. The Inspector General inspects the headquarters of Army staff agencies triennially, the headquarters of all other major Army commands biennially, and the headquarters of the six major commands with the largest number of troops annually. In addition, the Inspector General is required to inspect annually the Soldiers' and Airmen's Home and the Army and Air Force Exchange Service. Responsibility for the latter is shared with the Air Force Inspector General.

The Audit and Inspection Compliance Division is responsible for analyzing data derived from Army Audit Agency audits and Department of the Army inspections; evaluating and monitoring corrective actions of audited and inspected commands; assuring compliance with report findings; and providing inspection leads to the Inspection Division. This division also maintains the reports of general and special inspections, analyzes audit trends, and serves as the liaison with external audit and inspection groups such as GAO and the Defense Audit Service.

The Technical Inspection Division conducts nuclear inspections of selected units or installations having a nuclear weapons delivery, storage, support, instructional, or training mission. It also conducts surveillance inspections of major command nuclear inspection teams. The division makes policy and determines procedures and techniques for all Army nuclear inspections. The Inspector General would like to transfer his responsibility for setting nuclear inspection policy to the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations because he feels it is inappropriate for him to inspect for compliance with policies he developed. The Technical Inspection Division schedules all nuclear inspections and analyzes all nuclear inspection reports, including those done by the major commands and the Defense Nuclear Agency.

The Investigations Division investigates all allegations against general officers and senior Army civilian personnel. In addition, it handles some investigations and inquiries concerning misuse of Government funds, property, and personnel. It has jurisdiction over cases in the National Guard and Reserve components, as well as in the active Army. It handles about 70 cases per year. The Investigations Division does not investigate criminal matters. Such cases are referred to the Army Criminal Investigations Command.

The Assistance Division receives and responds to complaints, requests for assistance or information, and allegations against persons or organizations. It handled over

2,000 cases in fiscal 1978. Cases deal with a variety of problems ranging from undue delays in the shipment of household goods to lost paychecks.

In addition to these five divisions, the Army Inspector General Agency contains various administrative support activities and a training branch which conducts the orientation course for all newly assigned inspectors general.

INSPECTOR GENERAL STAFFING

During our review we looked at the selection process, staffing criteria, qualifications, training, and duty tours of inspectors. We found that (1) inspectors general were well qualified and received training in accordance with Army regulations, (2) despite staffing guides, staffing levels were largely determined by commanders, and (3) personnel turnover is not a problem in the Army, as it is in the Air Force.

Inspectors general are categorized as either detailed, acting, or assisting. In addition, the Army uses temporary staff extensively to augment inspection teams.

Detailed inspectors general are officers approved by the Inspector General and officially assigned to a 3-year tour of duty as inspectors general. They are authorized to take sworn testimony and to participate in all inspector general activities. As of March 31, 1979, there were 633 detailed inspectors general.

Acting inspectors general are officers formally designated to perform specific inspector general functions, primarily responding to requests for assistance. They are often used temporarily to handle peak workloads or on a full-time or part-time basis in activities that do not have detailed inspectors general. As of March 31, 1979, there were 24 full-time acting inspectors general. Although the Army was unable to tell us the number of part-time acting inspectors general, we know that in some areas they are used extensively. For example, in Europe alone there are over 200 part-time acting inspectors general.

Assisting inspectors general are noncommissioned officers or warrant officers who perform inspector general functions. There were 275 assisting inspectors general as of March 31, 1979.

Neither acting nor assisting inspectors general can take sworn testimony and both must work under the supervision of a detailed inspector general.

COMMANDERS MAY DETERMINE
NUMBER OF INSPECTORS

Unlike the Air Force, the Army does have inspector general staffing standards for both installations with specialized missions and units with normal combat missions. The staffing standards for units with specialized missions, such

as an Army activity with a training center or a service school, are being revised to authorize three detailed inspectors general for installations with approximately 15,000 troops. Staffing requirements for similar installations of different sizes are computed using various ratios. Staffing standards for units with normal combat missions are being revised to authorize 1 detailed inspector general for each 4,500 troops. This is an increase over the previous standard of one inspector general for each 6,000 troops.

Commanders have flexibility in applying these standards and can assign more or less personnel to this function as necessary. Using the staffing standards as guidelines, commanders determine how many inspectors general they need based on the number of units to be inspected, command population, the average number of assistance requests received, the number of acting and assisting inspectors general, and whether they use temporary inspectors.

We did not evaluate the adequacy of the staffing standards or the number of personnel assigned to the Army's inspector general effort. However, comparing the number of full-time inspector general personnel to the total number of personnel in the respective services, the Army has fewer full-time personnel assigned to the inspector general function than the Air Force. This may be offset somewhat because the Army appears to use more temporary inspectors than the Air Force, although neither service maintains data on the overall number of temporary inspectors used.

SELECTION OF INSPECTORS

Detailed military inspectors general are selected in one of two ways--through the military personnel channels or within the command at the recommendation of the local inspector general or commander. The Inspector General has final approval authority for all detailed inspectors. In order to be considered, officers must have:

- Grade of major or above (or in certain situations, captain with command experience).
- Maturity and broad experience and Army background with above average past performance.
- Moral attributes and personal traits necessary for a position of dignity and prestige.

Acting inspectors general may be designated by commanders authorized a detailed inspector general. The officer considered must meet the criteria prescribed for detailed inspectors general. Assisting inspectors general are selected to fill a required specialty. Neither the acting nor assisting inspector general positions need to be approved by the Inspector General.

QUALIFICATIONS

The inspectors whom we interviewed and observed were highly qualified, dedicated personnel. Promotion statistics comparing inspectors general with their peers in other parts of the Army show that they tend to be promoted more rapidly than their contemporaries.

Units are authorized inspectors with specific military occupational specialties which coincide with the unit's mission. In large offices we found that personnel generally inspect in their areas of expertise. Smaller offices rely on inspectors to fill in wherever needed regardless of their specialties. The military occupational specialties for assisting military inspectors were specific and related to the functional areas individuals were assigned to inspect.

TRAINING

The Army Inspector General Agency conducts an 8-day orientation at the Pentagon for detailed and acting inspectors general. The course consists of lectures, practical exercises, and an examination. The purpose of the course is to familiarize the new inspectors with the fundamental inspector general policies and procedures. The course is supplemented with on-the-job training.

Most of the inspectors whose records we examined attended the inspection school within a reasonable time after assignment to the inspector general function. Assisting inspectors general and civilian inspectors may also attend the course.

DUTY TOURS

Detailed inspectors general are normally appointed for a 3-year tour with no extensions. Generally we found that inspectors general do not complete their tours. Army figures showed that the actual tour for detailed inspectors general in the entire active Army averaged about 31 months. At headquarters, the average tour was about 27 months. The tours for some of the lower level inspectors general activities

were less than 3 years, and at one of the overseas activities, the normal tour for all personnel, including the inspector general, was 1 year.

Officials we interviewed felt that one tour as an inspector general is invaluable preparation for command responsibilities, but that continued assignments in this capacity would not be career-enhancing. The current turnover in the system is perceived as good because it prevents stagnation. Inspectors said that some inspector general assignments are hard to fill for a longer period of time because of extensive travel requirements.

Turnover of top management in the Army inspection system does not appear to be a problem. Although there have been three different Inspectors General in the last 5 years, a deputy to the Inspector General has been assigned to headquarters for more than 4 years, thus providing stability to the system.

GAO'S OBSERVATIONS OF INSPECTIONS

We observed portions of 12 inspections at the activities visited during our review. We were not able to observe entire inspections because of the large number of inspectors involved and the simultaneous coverage of many areas. However, the following descriptions of three of the inspections demonstrates their quality.

HEADQUARTERS INSPECTION OF A MAJOR COMMAND

We accompanied the headquarter's Inspector General team on parts of its annual general inspection of the Forces Command. We observed the Inspection Division's preparations for the inspection and the inspection teams at work at Fort Hood, and at the Forces Command Headquarters at Fort McPherson. We attended the exit briefing with the commanding general of the Forces Command and entrance and exit briefings with commanders of various subordinate units. We also accompanied individual inspectors on their interviews.

Each year the headquarters Inspector General inspects the Forces Command by selecting a vertical slice of the organization which usually includes a division, brigade, corps, and the command headquarters, as well as selected Army National Guard and Reserve units. Inspectors said this sampling technique helps them assess the entire command. The Inspection Division maintains charts indicating all units that the headquarters Inspector General must inspect down to the separate brigade level. Essentially, units to be inspected are selected on a rotational basis.

The Forces Command inspection ran from March 12 through April 6, 1979. The schedule announcing the inspection was published a year in advance. Twenty-two detailed inspectors general and two assisting inspectors general participated.

Before the inspection, the Audit and Inspection Compliance Division prepared a package of information (including 35 mandatory leads and background on them) for team members. The team chief and executive coordinator assigned leads and functions to inspect at each unit. The inspection plan, including these assignments, travel plans, and schedules for inspecting, was published a month before the inspection.

Each inspector was responsible for preparing himself for the inspection. This could involve reading current Army regulations and guidelines, prior inspection reports, and Army Audit Agency reports. As they were inspecting, some inspectors requested copies of pertinent instructions and guidelines issued by the unit.

Inspection teams met daily during the inspection to discuss tentative findings, pass leads to team members, and handle administrative matters. They drafted findings during the inspection.

A team opened its inspection with an entrance briefing and closed it with an exit briefing. At the entrance briefing, the inspectors described their purpose and procedures to the unit commander and top members of his staff. The unit commander described his activity's mission, organization, and usually, some of the problems he faced in carrying out his mission. At the exit briefing, the team chief showed the unit commander the tentative findings and discussed them with him.

The inspectors we observed relied almost exclusively on interviews. In a few instances, inspectors asked to see documentation, asked for copies of material to document their findings, or asked the interviewee to prepare a brief fact sheet on a subject. However, inspectors are not required to document findings or to collect background information. They rely, instead, on the verification process to ensure accuracy.

When verifying a finding, inspectors showed it to individuals whom they interviewed or who were knowledgeable of the facts. The purpose of the verification is to inform the individuals and agencies concerned that a finding has been written and to ensure that information in the finding is factual and clear. It is not intended to obtain agency agreement with the judgments and conclusions in the findings.

The inspectors we observed appeared well qualified and knowledgeable in the areas they were inspecting. However, they were limited by the brief time allotted to each segment of the inspection.

As the team progressed to subsequent units in the vertical slice, they continued to track the tentative findings written at the lower levels. It appeared to us that both the inspectors' questions and the tentative findings at the lower levels were primarily concerned with the units' compliance with Army regulations and procedures. At the higher levels of the organization, both questions and findings dealt with procedures and policies, and appeared more substantive. At the top echelon, the major command headquarters, we felt the team was actually confirming findings developed in subordinate units. As findings were tracked through successive layers in the command, a few were dropped and several others were consolidated.

MAJOR COMMAND INSPECTION
OF AN INSTALLATION

We observed the Army Training and Doctrine Command inspector general review of one of its installations. We attended predeparture, entrance, end-of-day, and exit briefings and observed inspections of the provost marshal's facility club system; Directorate for Plans, Training, and Security; and administrative services activities.

The officer who inspected the provost marshal's was a training specialist and this was his first inspection of a provost marshal activity. He used a checklist consisting of 13 areas and covered them in 3 hours. The inspector asked questions about procedures, forms, and adequacy of selected areas. For example, in the detention area he pursued

- exceptions to regulations for detention cells,
- required number of fire extinguishers on hand,
- first aid kits on hand and frequency inventoried,
- procedures for using the cells,
- length of time an individual can stay in a cell, and
- procedures for watching individuals in cells.

The inspector generally accepted the verbal responses to questions as adequate evidence. Occasionally, he checked documents to determine whether the activity was complying with regulations.

The inspector noted a need for

- standard operating procedures for terrorist occurrences,
- a system to keep track of mandatory training, and
- a documented and controlled physical training program.

We observed the inspection of the club system at this installation. The inspector prepared for the inspection by reviewing general and special information pertaining to club operations. He said that he usually limits the inspection to the package store and officers' club.

In examining the club's financial statements, the inspector said he pays particular attention to accounts receivable, delinquent accounts, returned checks, and any significant inventory losses. He also may receive information from the veterinarian, health inspector, or other inspectors. He also had a checklist.

The inspector said his approach depends on how much time he has and his initial impression of the activity. He explained that if the club management seemed to be "on the ball," the inspection would be more cursory. The inspection was scheduled for one day, and lasted about 6 hours. It resulted in only one finding.

In general, it appeared that the inspector was well versed in the area he inspected; however, he had predetermined areas of interest and was very rushed due to time constraints. This resulted in a quick and broad overview of the areas he inspected. If the inspector had had more time to listen to the inspectees, he may have uncovered more problem areas.

We also observed the inspections of the Directorate for Plans, Training, and Security and of administrative services activities. In general, inspectors moved rapidly through their inspections. The time allotted for each area did not always seem sufficient and in two instances the limited time may have affected the quality of the inspection. The experience of the inspector appeared to be important to the quality of inspections. The less experienced inspectors used checklists and moved rapidly through unfamiliar areas. Inspecting techniques varied, and the inspectors we observed collected very little documentation.

LOWER LEVEL INSPECTIONS

We observed portions of two inspections conducted by the inspector general offices of III Corps and 1st Cavalry Division. Both offices relied almost exclusively on temporary inspectors from staff offices and specialized teams of supply and maintenance personnel to perform the inspections. According to inspector general personnel, the temporary inspectors' inspection role is purposely limited to performing personnel, billets, and clothing inspections whereby the "pulse" of the command can be measured. The 1st Cavalry Division inspector general said that he and his staff try to "float around the inspected unit showing the Inspector General flag." We observed this during a motor pool inspection when the Division inspector general and his deputy arrived in his jeep, said hello to several temporary inspectors, and then left within 10 minutes after arrival.

Within these units, the officers detailed as inspectors general had little direct involvement in supervising the temporary inspectors. Since the temporary inspectors were considered "the experts," the inspectors general gave them little guidance on the approach or scope of the general inspection. Generally, the inspectors general depended on feedback from unit commanders, individual inspectors, section chiefs, and inspector reports to monitor the team members' inspection activities. All team members inspected areas within their specialties.

The inspectors general of the activities we visited believed that training was part of their function. Units were encouraged to seek training and assistance before being inspected, and we noted that some inspectors made an effort to explain proper procedures during the inspections. In addition, we were told that a unit had received a courtesy inspection before the annual inspector general inspection and we observed a temporary inspector allowing one unit additional time to set and implement a policy for controlling phone calls, rather than write a deficiency.

Overall, the inspection efforts of both Inspector General offices were compliance oriented with little, if any, effort to identify system problems.

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