



DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20220

February 21, 2006

OFFICE OF  
INSPECTOR GENERAL

The Honorable John P. Higgins, Jr.  
Chairman, PCIE Audit Committee  
Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Chairman Higgins:

I am pleased to inform the PCIE Audit Committee that the IGATI Curriculum Review Board (ICRB) has completed a review of the IGATI course titled Essential Skills and Techniques for Evaluators and Inspectors. We noted a number of weaknesses in the course. For example, the course could use a module specifically covering January 2005 revised PCIE/ECIE *Quality Standards for Inspections*. Additionally, the course needs to better distinguish between the evaluation/inspection standards and auditing standards. The IGATI Director generally agreed with our recommendations to address these matters.

Enclosed is a copy of our final report prepared by the Principal Assistant Inspector General for Auditing, Department of Defense OIG.

This is the last final report for the course reviews the ICRB conducted during fiscal year 2005. We are now preparing a summary report on these reviews which we plan to provide the Audit Committee in the near future.

If you have any questions, please call me on (202) 927-6516.

Sincerely,

/s/  
Marla A. Freedman  
Chair, ICRB

Enclosure

cc: Helen Lew, Chair  
Federal Audit Executive Committee

Danny L. Athanasaw, Director  
Inspectors General Auditor Training Institute



INSPECTOR GENERAL  
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400 ARMY NAVY DRIVE  
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22202-4704

February 17, 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR DANNY L. ATHANASAW, DIRECTOR, INSPECTORS GENERAL  
AUDITOR TRAINING INSTITUTE

SUBJECT: Report on Inspector General Auditor Training Institute (IGATI) Curriculum Review  
Board Review of IGATI Course: Essential Skills and Techniques for Evaluators  
and Inspectors

This memorandum transmits the IGATI Curriculum Review Board's final report on this subject.

The report contains 10 recommendations. IGATI agreed with the first 9 recommendations and we accept its commitment to determine the feasibility of implementing Recommendation No. 10. We have included IGATI's comments in the report.

We appreciate the courtesies extended to the staff. Questions should be directed to Ms. Roberta R. Key (703) 602-0110.

*Robert K. West*

Robert K. West  
Principal Assistant Inspector General  
for Auditing

**Report on Inspector General Auditor Training Institute (IGATI) Curriculum  
Review Board Review of IGATI Course:  
Essential Skills and Techniques for Evaluators and Inspectors**

**Course Title**

Essential Skills and Techniques for Evaluators and Inspectors

**IGATI Curriculum Review Board (ICRB) Review Completed**

In January 2006, the DoD Office of Inspector General with assistance from the Department of Interior Office of Inspector General completed the review of IGATI's Essential Skills and Techniques for Evaluators and Inspectors course.

**Background**

The objective of this review was to determine whether the IGATI "Essential Skills and Techniques for Evaluators and Inspectors" course provided training in FY2004 and FY2005 that was useful to Federal inspectors and evaluators. *(Note that the terms "inspectors" and "evaluators" are used interchangeably.)*

According to the FY2004 and FY2005 IGATI catalogs, this course covered the basic concepts needed to perform effective evaluations and inspections within Federal organizations. The course gave a chronological overview of the entire evaluation process and focused on a practical system for providing rapid feedback to decision-makers on program and policy issues. Drawing from the disciplines of journalism, auditing, investigation, management analysis and evaluations, the course stressed the interdisciplinary team concept for performing evaluations and inspections based on the PCIE Standards for Inspections. The course was taught using team activities and exercises, lectures, discussions, and individual exercises. Application exercises used case study materials developed by the Federal OIG community. It described the different types of evaluations and provided an overview of the entire evaluation process, with practical, easy-to-follow tips to enable Federal evaluators to hone their skills and techniques.

The objectives identified in the FY2004 and FY2005 course catalogs were that participants would be able to: design a project, prepare a report outline identifying findings, and describe and use various evaluations and inspection techniques, such as satisfaction surveys, performance indicator studies, compliance reviews, best practice reviews, and early implementation reviews.

The student manual informed participants that by the end of the course, they would be able to:

- ▶ Define different types of inspections and know when to use them.
- ▶ Identify the steps in an evaluation.
- ▶ Develop a preliminary evaluation design.
- ▶ Identify data sources and data collection techniques.
- ▶ Develop a preliminary analysis plan.
- ▶ Outline an inspection report.
- ▶ Outline a briefing.

According to the catalogs, those who should have attended the course should have been experienced professionals (generally at the GS-11 level and above) who had recently become evaluators or inspectors and those evaluators or inspectors who were seeking a refresher course. Also, the catalogs stated that this course would be particularly useful for auditors and investigators who wished to learn evaluative methods.

This four-day class was conducted live in a classroom setting at IGATI in Rosslyn, VA. Participants earned 32 CPEs for participation in all sessions. Tuition per participant was \$725 in FY2004 and \$760.00 in FY2005. There was no prerequisite for the course, and the course level was listed as "intermediate."

The following table shows for FYs 2004 and 2005 the class schedule, number of classes held, number of students who participated in each class, and the number of times the class was postponed.

### **Class Schedule of Essential Skills for Evaluators and Inspectors**

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Classes Conducted</b>	<b>Students Trained</b>	<b>Classes Postponed</b>
April 13-16, 2004	1	18	0
August 9-12, 2004	1	17	0
April 18-21, 2005	1	19	0
July 26-29, 2005	1	17	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>0</b>

### **ICRB Assessment**

To gain an understanding of the course content, we reviewed the course material for the Essential Skills for Evaluators and Inspectors course presented by IGATI. Our focus was to determine whether the course materials were:

- ▶ Current;
- ▶ Relevant to the course objectives;
- ▶ Substantive;
- ▶ Complete to address the course objectives;
- ▶ Not repetitive of, but build upon, any prerequisite(s); and
- ▶ Useful as a reference resource "back at the office."

The course materials appeared to be current and relevant to the course objectives. The January 2005 revised PCIE/ECIE "Quality Standards for Inspections" was provided as a handout in the April and July 2005 courses; however, no specific lesson/module was devoted to the revised standards. All course materials seemed practical, relatively easy to follow, and provided sufficient information to meet the course objectives. The section on designing an evaluation plan could be more detailed. The handouts did not include actual examples of a good inspection plan, a well-written report, or a well-prepared briefing, which would be useful. There were no prerequisites for this course, and the binder appeared to be a useful resource "back at the office." Please see the Recommendations section, below, for suggestions that if incorporated would, we believe, improve the course.

The ICRB also reviewed the evaluations completed by the students of the classes identified below, including participants' comments. We performed the following to analyze the student evaluations:

- a. Re-computed composite scores for key questions: achieved objectives, content organized, course material relevant and useful, course will help improve current or future job performance, and course was valuable experience;
- b. Determined for each class in FY2004 and FY2005 and for all four classes combined: the highest-scored module, the lowest-scored module, and the average;
- c. Read narrative comments on the evaluations and noted any reoccurring themes; and
- d. Identified significant trends.

The following tables show the analysis of the student evaluations:

**Table 1. Essential Skills for Evaluators and Inspectors: April 13-16, 2004**

<b>Key Questions</b>	<b>(Rank 5) Strongly Agree</b>	<b>(Rank 4) Agree</b>	<b>(Rank 3) Neutral</b>	<b>(Rank 2) Disagree</b>	<b>(Rank 1) Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Composite</b>
1. Achieved Objectives	9	8	1	-	-	4.44
2. Content Organized	13	4	1	-	-	4.67
3. Course Material Relevant & Useful	10	6	2	-	-	4.44
4. Course will help improve current or future job performance	8	8	2	-	-	4.33
5. Course was valuable experience	9	7	2	-	-	4.39
<b>AVERAGE</b>						<b>4.46</b>

The highest score for this class was a composite score of 4.67 for the second key question or module (i.e., content organized). The lowest score was 4.33 for the fourth key question or module (i.e., course helpful in improving current or future job performance). And, the average score was 4.46; i.e., at least 16 of the 18 participants in this class ranked each question or module either "strongly agree" or "agree," and at least one or two course participants (for a total of eight) were "neutral" on each key question or module.

**Table 2. Essential Skills for Evaluators and Inspectors: August 9-12, 2004**

Key Questions	(Rank 5) Strongly Agree	(Rank 4) Agree	(Rank 3) Neutral	(Rank 2) Disagree	(Rank 1) Strongly Disagree	Composite
1. Achieved Objectives	6	10	-	-	-	4.38
2. Content Organized	5	9	2	-	-	4.19
3. Course Material Relevant & Useful	6	8	1	1	-	4.19
4. Course will help improve current or future job performance	8	7	1	-	-	4.44
5. Course was valuable experience	8	8	-	-	-	4.50
<b>AVERAGE</b>						<b>4.34</b>

The highest score for this class was a composite score of 4.50 for the fifth key question or module (i.e., course value). The lowest score for this class was 4.19 for the second and third key questions or modules (i.e., content organization and relevance and usefulness of course material). Four participants rated key questions or modules "neutral" (i.e., two were neutral on content organized, and one each on relevance and usefulness of course material and course would help improve job performance). One participant rated a key question or module as "disagree" (i.e., relevance and usefulness of the course material) and wrote in the comment that the "exercises were confusing." Notwithstanding, the average score was 4.34; i.e., at least 14 of the 16 participants who completed evaluations rated each key question or module as "strongly agree" or "agree." While there were 17 participants listed on the roster, we received only 16 evaluations for review.

**Table 3. Essential Skills for Evaluators and Inspectors: April 18-21, 2005**

Key Questions	(Rank 5) Strongly Agree	(Rank 4) Agree	(Rank 3) Neutral	(Rank 2) Disagree	(Rank 1) Strongly Disagree	Composite
1. Achieved Objectives	10	8	-	-	-	4.56
2. Content Organized	9	10	-	-	-	4.47
3. Course Material Relevant & Useful	8	10	1	-	-	4.37
4. Course will help improve current or future job performance	11	7	1	-	-	4.53
5. Course was valuable experience	10	9	-	-	-	4.53
<b>AVERAGE</b>						<b>4.49</b>

The highest score for this class was a composite score of 4.56 for the first key question or module (i.e., achieved objectives). The lowest score for this class was 4.37 for the third key question or module (i.e., relevance and usefulness of course material). The average score was 4.49; i.e., at least 18 of the 19 participants rated each key question or module as "strongly agree" or "agree." One participant was "neutral" whether course material was relevant and useful, and one participant was "neutral" whether the course would help improve current or future job performance. One participant did not rate key question or module one (i.e., achieved objectives).

**Table 4. Essential Skills for Evaluators and Inspectors: July 26-29, 2005**

<b>Key Questions</b>	<b>(Rank 5) Strongly Agree</b>	<b>(Rank 4) Agree</b>	<b>(Rank 3) Neutral</b>	<b>(Rank 2) Disagree</b>	<b>(Rank 1) Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Composite</b>
1. Achieved Objectives	3	10	-	1	-	4.07
2. Content Organized	6	6	-	2	-	4.14
3. Course Material Relevant & Useful	7	6	-	1	-	4.36
4. Course will help improve current or future job performance	7	5	1	1	-	4.29
5. Course was valuable experience	5	6	2	1	-	4.07
<b>AVERAGE</b>						<b>4.19</b>

The highest score for this class was a composite score of 4.36 for the third key question or module (i.e., relevance and usefulness of the course material). The lowest score for this class was 4.07 for the first and fifth key questions or modules (i.e., achieved objectives and course value). The average score was 4.19; i.e., at least 11 of the 14 participants who completed evaluations rated each key question or module as "strongly agree" or "agree." Three course participants were "neutral" on two questions or modules (i.e., one on whether the course would help improve current or future job performance and two on whether the course was a valuable experience). Six participants "disagreed" with at least one of the key questions or modules (i.e., one disagreed that the course objectives were met; two disagreed that the course content was organized; one disagreed that the course material was relevant and useful; one disagreed that the course would help improve current or future job performance; and one disagreed that the course was a valuable experience). While there were 17 participants on the roster, we received and reviewed only 14 evaluations.

The following table shows for all four classes held on FY2004 and FY2005 the participants' ranks for each key question or module, the composite score for each key question or module, and the overall course average:

**Table 5. Essential Skills for Evaluators and Inspectors: All Classes in FY2004 and FY2005**

<b>Key Questions</b>	<b>(Rank 5) Strongly Agree</b>	<b>(Rank 4) Agree</b>	<b>(Rank 3) Neutral</b>	<b>(Rank 2) Disagree</b>	<b>(Rank 1) Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Composite</b>
1. Achieved Objectives	28	36	1	1	-	4.38
2. Content Organized	33	29	3	2	-	4.39
3. Course Material Relevant & Useful	31	30	4	2	-	4.34
4. Course will help improve current or future job performance	34	27	5	1	-	4.40
5. Course was valuable experience	32	30	4	1	-	4.39
<b>AVERAGE</b>						<b>4.38</b>

When all participants' ranks of the key questions or modules were combined, the highest score for this class was a composite score of 4.40 for the fourth key question or module (i.e., course would help improve current or future job performance). The lowest score was 4.34 for the third key question or module (i.e., relevance and usefulness of course material). The overall average score for the four classes offered in FY2004 and FY2005 was 4.38.

For the most part, the evaluations were very positive. Participant and instructor interaction, networking, developing contacts, and the sharing of experiences and approaches to evaluations and inspections were cited frequently in the comments as being particularly beneficial. Also mentioned as positives were the instructor's knowledge and approachability and the administrative support and IGATI's new location. There were a number of comments that the course materials were dated, better examples could be provided, and more detail would be helpful. Also, there were comments that more feedback and discussion of team presentations and tying in the individual group activities with the objective of the particular course segment would have been helpful. Several experienced participants (i.e., those in the function for more than several months) suggested the course be shortened from four days, citing there was too much "down time" between class assignments and in the working groups and that the material was too elementary and dated to have been of significant value as a refresher for the intended audience (*see background above for who was recommended to attend*).

To gain a further understanding of the value of the course at the workplace, we interviewed 10 former participants who took the class in the last 6 to 21 months and two supervisors who have sent several subordinates each to this course. To conduct the interviews, we used Appendices B and C of ICRB's Course Content Review Methodology and selected former participants from the class rosters and participant lists provided by IGATI. Participants were from several Federal agencies and worked within and outside the Washington, D.C., National Capital Region.

All former students told us that they liked the course. The reasons were consistent with the student evaluations: student/student interaction, student/instructor interaction, networking, varied backgrounds/experience of participants, good for brand new inspectors/evaluators as a supplement to the Introduction to Auditing course. The former students who said that they "somewhat" liked the course stated as their reason that the instructor oftentimes didn't stay on point and follow ideas and teaching points through to conclusion, and that the time allotted to some of the group exercises was excessive, resulting in time lost that could have been better spent on other tasks or to shorten the overall class time.

The expectations for the course varied among the former students. They said they expected to gain a clear understanding of the distinctions between the inspections and auditing standards and an increased knowledge of what evaluations are and what evaluators do. Others were looking for a programmatic walk-through of the responsibilities of and expectations for evaluations/inspections. Others wanted the basic fundamentals for collecting information, pointers for better writing skills, and a frame of reference for developing inspection plans and writing reports.

For the most part, the course curriculum and instruction met the students' expectations. The noted exceptions were that there was no significant discussion devoted to the differences between the audit and inspection standards and some did not come away with a clear understanding of the expectations for evaluators/evaluations (used interchangeably with inspectors/inspections).

The strengths of the course were developing contacts with other agencies, group and one-on-one interaction, the sharing of experience among the participants and by the instructor, and course organization and reference material (handouts).

The weaknesses that were mentioned included that the instructor didn't stay on point and follow teaching points to conclusion. He oftentimes relied on examples and anecdotes from his many and varied years of auditing experience; whereas, the course was supposed to be about evaluator skills and techniques, and the evaluations process and products. Auditing and inspections are different disciplines, with different quality standards, and the feeling by those who mentioned this weakness was that the course would have been stronger if the examples/anecdotes came from inspections and evaluations rather than from audits.

Also noted as a weakness was that the catalogs described the course as at the intermediate level of instruction. Those who had been in the inspections field for some time (e.g., almost a year or longer) felt that the course was an overview of the inspections/evaluations field (i.e., "basic") and thus not particularly helpful; i.e. it didn't offer any new ideas or fresh approaches that energized the experienced evaluators/inspectors. By contrast those who were new to the evaluations career field (and who didn't have previous related experience) felt that the course was great because it developed evaluations from "cradle" (i.e., the evaluation plan) to "grave" (the written report and outbrief).

The interviewees said what they gained from the course that they use most since returning to the worksite has been the course materials for reference, the ability to better organize the evaluation/inspection process, and better report writing skill.

Things the interviewees would change about the course were: increase the time devoted to interviewing role plays, ensure the instructor stays on point and follows teaching points to conclusion, follow the syllabus in logical sequence, identify the course as being for newly appointed evaluators or for experienced auditors or investigators who have worked in a community with evaluators/inspectors and who want an overview of the evaluations function, do not identify the course as a refresher for experienced inspectors/evaluators, and ensure that the course curriculum and material are targeted for evaluators/inspectors and focused on evaluations/inspections and on the PCIE/ECIE Quality Standards for Inspections.

Both supervisors who were interviewed said they sent their inspectors to the course for several reasons, including so that course participants would gain an overview of the inspections/evaluations process, have exposure to the Federal Inspector General academic world, could develop contacts, could learn/experience other ways of performing inspections and evaluations, and because little other training in evaluations is available. Both felt that the training was better suited to and met the needs of newly assigned evaluators, but sometimes schedules didn't permit sending participants until after they had been on the job/in the function for several months, and then the course seemed not to have been as beneficial to participants. One supervisor opined that the instructor for this course should be someone from the inspections community; e.g., from the PCIE/ECIE Inspections and Evaluations Round Table, which would ensure that the primary focus is on what inspections are and are not, as opposed to relying on anecdotes/experience from an auditing perspective.

Finally, we attended the July 2005 course as a participant. The first-hand observations were consistent with those discussed elsewhere in this report. In addition, several class members left early on Friday afternoon (the course was scheduled to end at 4:00 p.m.) due to transportation arrangements, which was disruptive to the afternoon working group sessions and to reporting out.

### **Recommendations, Management Comments, and ICRB Response**

The FY2006 catalog indicates that this course has been revised and that it will be offered only once this year (July 24-27, 2006), but there are no differences in the published course overview, learning objectives, who should attend, course level, etc. Since we were unable to determine how the course has been revised, we are providing the following recommendations.

We recommend that the Director, Inspector General Auditor Training Institute:

1. Revise the course description to reflect that the course is (1) at the basic level and (2) the intended audience is (a) newly assigned inspectors and evaluators and (b) auditors and investigators who would like an overview of inspections and evaluations. Participants noted on their evaluations, focus group interviewees mentioned, and the observer noted there seemed to be a discrepancy among the intended objectives of the course, the intended level of instruction, and the value of the course, depending on the level of experience of the participant. Overall the curriculum and course materials seemed to meet the intent of providing an overview of inspections and evaluations and met the needs of newly assigned inspectors and evaluators, but provided little benefit to seasoned inspectors/evaluators -- other than contacts.

2. Include a copy of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, in the course material and cover the independence principle in a class session. Not all course participants are familiar with the Act, understand the independence issue, or have IG experience.
3. Dedicate a class session to the PCIE Quality Standards for Inspections.
4. Dedicate a class session to the distinction between audits and inspections and to comparing and contrasting the Yellow Book and Blue Book standards.
5. Ensure that anecdotes/examples/references are drawn from evaluations and inspections experience and not from audits.
6. Include in the participant binder examples of real inspection projects including at least one each (preferably more from different agencies) of a complete and well written inspection plan, a well written inspection report, and a well prepared briefing (including talking points, hand-outs, and slides). The PCIE Inspections and Evaluations Round Table may be a resource for obtaining and evaluating such material.
7. Ensure that class time is well managed and teaching points are developed thoroughly.
8. Ensure that all group and individual exercises are tied in to the course objectives of the particular training session.
9. Ensure that all participants complete and turn in an evaluation before departure.
10. Start the course at 1:00 p.m. on Monday and end the course at noon on Friday so that participants can make transportation arrangements outside the scheduled course hours and not disrupt class logistics (i.e., break out sessions and reporting out on the last day).

**Management Response.** IGATI is in a transition year and will consolidate in Fiscal Year 2007 with the Criminal Investigative Academy and the Management Institute. There will be a new Board of Governors that will oversee the training and they will have the final say on the Fiscal Year 2007 course training. IGATI has contracted with George Mason University to review and revise as appropriate this course. The result of this review will be incorporated.

Management agreed with Recommendation Nos. 1 through 9. Management will work with the contractor to determine the feasibility of implementing Recommendation No. 10.

**ICRB Response.** Management comments were responsive to the recommendations.



**The Inspectors General Auditor Training Institute**

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February 8, 2006

**Memorandum For:** Keith West  
Principal Assistant Inspector General  
for Auditing  
DoD Office of the Inspector General

**From:** Danny L. Athanasaw *Danny L. Athanasaw*  
Director,  
Inspectors General Auditor Training Institute (IGATI)

**Subject:** IGATI Response to Draft Report of ICRB Review of IGATI  
Course: Essential Skills and Techniques for Evaluators and  
Inspectors

Thank you for the opportunity to review and respond to the draft report of IGATI's Course titled, Essential Skills and Techniques for Evaluators and Inspectors.

IGATI is presently in a transition year and will consolidate in Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 with the Criminal Investigative Academy and the Management Institute. Additionally, there will be a new Board of Governors that will oversee the new consolidated training center. In light of this consolidation it is expected that the Board of Governors will have final say on the FY 2007 course offering. It is also anticipated that all courses starting in FY 2007 will be contracted. As a result, there will be an opportunity to re-evaluate all course materials and make any necessary changes to course materials. IGATI has just recently prepared a task order to have George Mason University review and revise as appropriate this course. Results of this review will be incorporated as much as deemed appropriate into the revision of this course.

IGATI's response to each recommendation follows:

**Recommendation 1:** Agree

IGATI agrees that the course description be revised to reflect that the course is of a basic level and that the intended audience is newly assigned inspectors and evaluators, and for

those auditors and investigators who would like an overview of inspections and evaluations.

**Recommendation 2: Agree**

IGATI will ensure that a copy of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, be included in the course material and include the independence in a class session.

**Recommendation 3: Agree**

IGATI instructors will include a class section discussing the PCIE Quality Standards for Inspections.

**Recommendation 4: Agree**

IGATI will bring into the class material and through discussions the distinction between audits and inspections and to comparing and contrasting the Yellow Book and Blue Book standards.

**Recommendation 5: Agree**

IGATI will ensure that instructors are familiar with the inspections operations or have knowledge to bring anecdotes/examples/references drawn from evaluations and inspections experience and not from audits.

**Recommendations 6: Agree**

IGATI will include in the participant binder examples of real inspection projects including at least one each of a complete and well written inspection plan, a well written inspection report, and a well prepared briefing (including talking points, hand-outs, and slides).

**Recommendation 7: Agree**

It is always IGATI's intent to have every class well managed and that instructors are well-prepared. IGATI will continue to strive to provide quality training.

**Recommendation 8: Agree**

It is always IGATI's intent to have all group and individual exercises tied to the various course modules. It is the instructors' responsibility to ensure that class projects and exercises relate to important modules of the course. Because of time constraints not every objective or module will have exercises. IGATI will, however, discuss with the instructor the use of exercises.

**Recommendation 9:            Already being accomplished.**

IGATI already has a well defined practice of allowing students the opportunity to complete course evaluations. Evaluations are collected, reviewed by the director, and tabulated for class averages.

**Recommendation 10:        Will take under evaluation.**

IGATI will work with George Mason University or other contractors to determine if starting the course at 1:00 p.m. on Monday and ending the course at noon on Friday can be reasonably included in the schedule.

Again thank you and your team members for the opportunity to comment on this report. I appreciate your time and energy involved in this review. I also believe your review will improve the delivery of this course.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (703) 248-4589.