

INSPECTION & EVALUATION PEER REVIEW

What is a Peer Review?

A peer review is an independent, structured process by which experienced professionals review each other's work to maintain standards, improve performance, and enhance the credibility of the work. Beginning in 2018, Office of Inspector General (OIG) Inspection and Evaluation (I&E) units that conduct inspections and evaluations in accordance with CIGIE's *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation* (Blue Book) must undergo an external peer review every three years.

Who Will Conduct These Peer Reviews?

CIGIE peer reviews will be conducted by multi-agency teams comprised of OIG evaluators or inspectors. All peer reviewers will have significant experience conducting inspections or evaluations under the Blue Book standards. Before a peer review begins, the CIGIE Training Institute's Audit, Inspection, & Evaluation Academy will provide training to the reviewers and reviewees.

What Will the Peer Reviews Cover?

For the first three-year peer review cycle, I&E units will be assessed on their compliance with the following Blue Book standards: (1) Quality Control, (2) Planning, (3) Data Collection and Analysis, (4) Evidence, (5) Records Maintenance, (6) Reporting, and (7) Follow-up. The review team will determine whether an I&E unit's internal policies and procedures address these standards and whether the reviewed I&E projects and reports meet Blue Book standards as well as the associated internal policies and procedures.

What Are the Benefits of a Peer Review?

The Blue Book standards were developed to help ensure a level of quality, objectivity, and independence in inspections and evaluations. Peer reviews are designed to assure OIGs and their parent agencies, Congress, and the public, that individual I&E units are adhering to these quality standards. They provide objectivity and independence in making this determination as well as offer learning opportunities for both the reviewed organization and those conducting the reviews. For example, these reviews can help an I&E unit withstand challenges to its credibility by validating the unit's objectivity and independence. Peer reviewers are also exposed to different approaches for conducting I&E work, which they can share with their own unit, potentially leading to more robust I&E practices across the OIG community.

How Did We Get Here?

OIG audit and investigation units are currently required to undergo CIGIE peer review every three years to ensure that their policies and procedures for conducting audits and investigations are consistent with applicable professional standards. In 2012, CIGIE began a peer review pilot to develop a process for peer reviewing I&E units. Six OIG I&E units were peer reviewed by multi-agency teams of volunteers from 16 I&E units in three rounds of the pilot

process (pilot reviews were conducted in 2012, 2013, and 2015). The CIGIE I&E Committee convened the Process Oversight Workgroup to oversee the process. The workgroup met with the reviewers and units reviewed following each of the three peer review rounds to solicit feedback. This feedback was used to refine the peer review training and tools and inform the development of the Guide for Conducting Peer Reviews of Inspection and Evaluation Organizations of Federal Offices of Inspector General. In January 2017, CIGIE approved and adopted the guide, which is available on CIGIE's website at www.ignet.gov/content/manuals-guides. The first peer review cycle will be 2018-2020.

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Contact Information

If you have questions, please contact the I&E Peer Review Implementation Committee at CIGIE.IEPeerReview@oig.hhs.gov.

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