

OST Sender
06/22/2007 08:43 AM

To: OST_All
cc:
Subject: Message from the Special Trustee

To all employees:

As most of you know, one year ago, the Department's Inspector General (IG) issued a report that documented his findings relating to allegations of improper socializing with one of OST's contractors. The IG reported that socializing with this contractor resulted in the appearance of preferential treatment toward a contractor. The IG did not make a finding that actual preferential treatment occurred.

The appearance of preferential treatment within OST is a great concern. I and OST's senior management took this report very seriously. In addition to addressing this report with the affected employees, I required additional, substantive, ethics training for all OST managers to ensure their knowledge and compliance with all ethics requirements. And, as many of you know, for the past three years, OST has been utilizing the contracting professionals at the National Business Center to award and administer our contracts, and to ensure the adherence to all contracting laws and regulations. I am confident that appropriate procedures are in place and corrective action has been taken to avoid even the appearance of preferential treatment of any contractor in the future.

Today, I firmly believe that in the year since the report was released, we have put this issue behind us.

Recently, Donna Erwin, Doug Lords, Jeff Lords and I had the opportunity to discuss the report and the steps we have taken to address the report's findings with Albuquerque's News Channel 13 (KRQE) reporter Larry Barker. We appreciated this opportunity to assure Mr. Barker that the report has been adequately addressed and that processes are in place to avoid even the appearance of preferential treatment of a contractor. Mr. Barker indicated that his interview will air sometime in July.

I know that I can count on all employees to work together to ensure that all professional and ethical codes of conduct are adhered to, as we continue to make OST a great place to work. I urge every OST employee to continue to rely on the NBC contracting professionals and our Departmentally-designated ethics officer if you have any questions about contracting or ethics requirements in the future.

Thank you.
Ross Swimmer