Social Security

Office of the Inspector General

Strategic Plan

Fiscal Years 2006 – 2010

Revised

A Message From The Inspector General Of Social Security

Revised Strategic Plan

Our Fiscal Years 2006 through 2010 Strategic Plan was designed to be responsive to a dynamic, changing environment. After conducting a thorough review, we deemed it necessary to revise some elements of the Plan to ensure it remains relevant and up-to-date. The revisions highlighted, while subtle, provide assurance that the Plan acts as an accurate tool to guide us in reaching our goals.

The Plan continues to reflect our vision, values, goals, objectives and responsibilities. We track progress with 14 self-measuring goals. These measures were developed in light of our commitment to addressing critical issues such as maintaining the integrity of the Social Security number, preventing improper payments and protecting the Social Security Administration's (SSA) critical infrastructure.

The successful execution of our Plan will be a measure of the achievements of this Office to accomplish our overall mission: inspiring public confidence by detecting and preventing fraud, waste and abuse in SSA's programs and operations.

Our commitment to achieving excellence is echoed in our teamwork and quality-of-life work environment. We believe that with this commitment we will attain our Strategic Plan's goals.

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Patrick P. O'Carroll, Jr.
Inspector General

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 1
Mission Statement 1
Vision and Values 2
General Goals 2
Statutory Responsibilities 3
OIG Organization 4
Strategic Planning Process 6
Stakeholder Feedback 6
Internal Factors Affecting the Achievement of Strategic Goals 6
External Factors Affecting the Achievement of Strategic Goals 7
Summary of Program Evaluations 7
Goals, Strategies and Measures 7
Goal 1: Impact 7
Goal 2: Value 9
Goal 3: People 11

Executive Summary

Our Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years (FY) 2006 through 2010 conforms to the statutory responsibilities of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) and the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended (IG Act). These Acts set the course for our Plan. Three general goals serve as the Plan's overall framework.

The first goal focuses on the **impact** we have on the Social Security Administration's (SSA) programs and operations. All components within the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) are committed to improving SSA's effectiveness and efficiency through our investigations, audits and legal activities.

The second goal reflects the **value** we provide to SSA, Congress and to the public by delivering timely and reliable products and services. It is imperative that we deliver products and services that effectively meet the needs of our stakeholders. Therefore, we must integrate best–practice strategies and cutting-edge technology to maximize efficiency while producing a positive return on investment to the public we serve.

The third goal includes strategies and self-measuring goals to enhance the work experience of our **people**, who are the foundation of the OIG organization. A well-trained and motivated workforce is crucial to our success. We believe our commitment to professional development and skills enhancement while sustaining a quality-of-life work environment will return rewards of superior work efficiency and effectiveness.

To achieve these goals across the OIG organization, our Plan directs and targets crosscutting efforts. For example, the Plan recognizes that data on potential SSA systems vulnerabilities maintained by the Office of Investigations will also have value to the Office of Audit's planning and analysis functions. In an environment of limited resources, this integration of efforts is essential.

This Plan includes assessment tools that will gauge customer and employee satisfaction. The Office of Quality Assurance and Professional Responsibility will administer a tool that assesses the level of internal and external user satisfaction with OIG products and services. In addition, our Organizational Health Committee will implement an annual employee job-satisfaction survey to gather the views and opinions of our employees on a variety of factors relating to the overall OIG work experience.

The goals, objectives and performance targets under our Plan are designed to improve OIG, and by extension, will assist SSA in attaining its own desired performance levels.

Mission Statement

By conducting independent and objective audits, evaluations and investigations, we inspire public confidence in the integrity and security of SSA's programs and operations and protect them against fraud, waste and abuse. We provide timely, useful and reliable information and advice to Administration officials, Congress and the public.

Vision and Values

We strive for continual improvement in SSA's programs, operations and management by proactively seeking new ways to prevent and deter fraud, waste and abuse. We commit to integrity and excellence by supporting an environment that provides a valuable public service while encouraging employee development and retention and fostering diversity and innovation.

General Goals

The FY 2006 – 2010 Strategic Plan includes three general goals, each containing a series of crosscutting strategies. We used these strategies to develop our 14 self-measuring goals. For the general goals in the following chart, the strategies and associated self-measuring goals are described in the Goals, Strategies and Measures section beginning on page 7.

General Goals	
Impact	**Enhance the integrity, efficiency and effectiveness of SSA programs and operations.**
Value	**Provide quality products and services of value in a timely manner to Congress, SSA and other key decision-makers while sustaining a positive return for each tax dollar invested in OIG activities.**
People	**Promote a skilled, motivated, diverse workforce in a positive and rewarding work environment.**

We accomplish these goals by:

- Investigating complaints from any person or entity, including Congress, while protecting the identity of whistleblowers.
- Reviewing existing and proposed legislation and regulations.
- Conducting audits and investigations of SSA programs and operations.

We communicate the results of our efforts by:

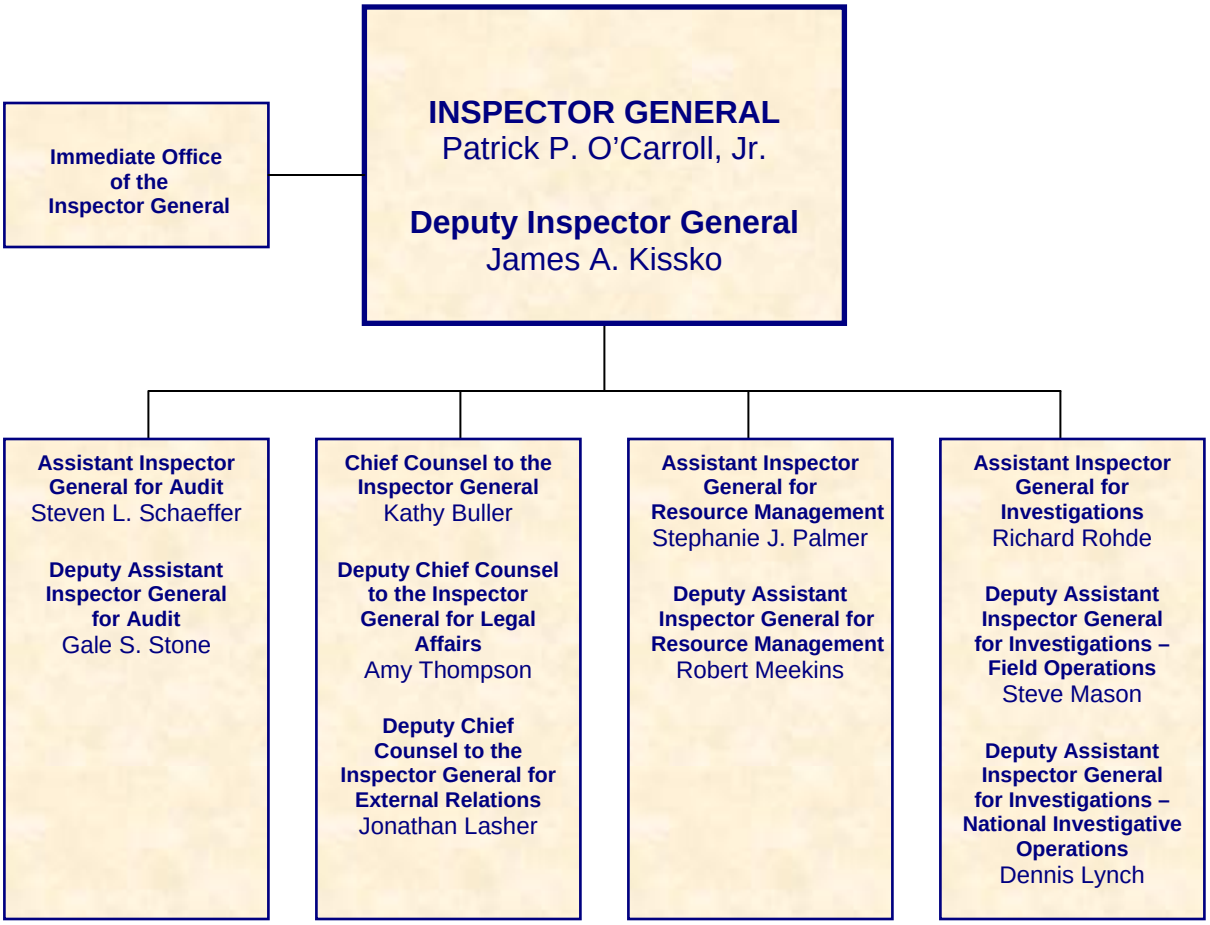
- Reporting violations of law to Offices of the U.S. Attorney.
- Informing Congress and the Commissioner of our findings and recommending corrective action when problems are identified.
- Submitting semiannual reports to Congress and the Commissioner.

Statutory Responsibilities

On March 31, 1995, the SSA OIG was established pursuant to Public Law 103-296 known as the Social Security Independence and Program Improvements Act of 1994. General OIG authority is established under the IG Act, which provides statutory responsibility to protect the integrity of SSA programs and operations. We are an independent and objective organization within SSA dedicated to preventing and detecting fraud, waste and abuse in SSA's programs and operations and we are guided by various laws described in the following chart:

Legislation	Provisions Impacting OIG
The Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act of 1982	Requires Federal managers to identify weaknesses in programs and operations and take corresponding corrective actions and report annually on management controls.
The Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990	Requires assessments of SSA's internal control environment to assure the issuance of reliable financial information and to deter fraud, waste and abuse of SSA resources.
The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993	Requires the assessment of the internal control environment over SSA's performance measures.
The Government Management Reform Act of 1994	Requires an assessment of the reliability of SSA's performance data and evaluates the extent to which SSA's performance plan describes its planned and actual performance meaningfully.
The Welfare Reform Act of 1996	Denies Supplemental Security Income payments for fugitives, probation and parole violators. Requires that we manage the partnership between SSA and local law enforcement to identify and apprehend these individuals.
The Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996	Requires Office of Management and Budget compliant financial management systems.
The Reports Consolidation Act of 2000	Requires Inspectors General to provide a summary and assessment of the most serious management and performance challenges facing Federal agencies and their progress in addressing them.
The Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002	Requires that OIG evaluate SSA's overall information security program and practices.
Improper Payment Act of 2002	Requires annual reviews by OIG or SSA of programs to identify those susceptible to significant improper payments.
The Social Security Protection Act of 2004	Denies Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance benefits and representative payee status to persons fleeing prosecution, custody or confinement after conviction and to persons violating probation or parole. Requires that we manage the partnership between SSA and local law enforcement to identify and apprehend these individuals.

OIG Organization



OIG is comprised of five components: The Immediate Office of the Inspector General (IO), Office of Audit (OA), Office of the Chief Counsel to the Inspector General (OCCIG), Office of Resource Management (ORM) and Office of Investigations (OI).

Immediate Office of the Inspector General

IO provides the Inspector General (IG) and the Deputy Inspector General with staff assistance on the full range of the IG's responsibilities and administers a comprehensive Professional Responsibility and Quality Assurance program that ensures the adequacy of OIG compliance with its policies and procedures, internal controls and professional standards. In addition, IO serves as the liaison with Congress, Federal agencies and other public and private interest groups.

Office of Audit

OA conducts comprehensive financial, performance and systems audits and evaluations of SSA programs and makes recommendations to ensure that program objectives are achieved. Financial audits, required by the *Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990*, assess whether SSA's financial statements fairly present the Agency's financial position, results of operations and cash flow. Performance audits review the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of SSA's programs. OA also conducts short-term management and program evaluations on issues of concern to SSA, Congress and the general public. Evaluations identify and recommend ways to prevent program fraud and inefficiency.

Office of the Chief Counsel to the Inspector General

OCCIG reviews and evaluates legislation, regulations and standard operating procedures for their impact on program economy and efficiency. It also provides legal advice and counsel to the IG on various matters, including: (1) statutes, regulations, legislation and policy directives governing the administration of SSA's programs; (2) investigative procedures and techniques; and (3) legal implications and conclusions to be drawn from audit and investigative material produced by OIG. OCCIG also administers the Civil Monetary Penalty (CMP) program, which the Commissioner of Social Security delegated to OIG. The Office of Communications within OCCIG administers OIG's public affairs, media and interagency activities and coordinates responses to congressional requests.

Office of Resource Management

ORM supports OIG by providing information resource management; systems security and development; and the coordination of budget, procurement, telecommunications, facilities, equipment and human resources. In addition, ORM is responsible for strategic planning, organizational performance management and reporting.

Office of Investigations

OI conducts and coordinates investigations related to fraud, waste, abuse and mismanagement of SSA programs and operations, in accordance with the Quality Standards for Investigations published by the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency (PCIE); the SSA/OIG Special Agent Handbook; and other applicable laws, regulations and policies. These activities include wrongdoing by applicants, beneficiaries, contractors, physicians, interpreters, representative payees, other third parties and SSA employees. Additionally, OI conducts criminal investigations independently and jointly with other Federal, State and local law enforcement agencies.

Strategic Planning Process

GPRA requires Federal agencies to develop goals, strategies and performance indicators for gauging progress. A Strategic Planning Team comprised of OIG headquarters and field personnel was established to develop this Plan. The Team was chartered to develop a Plan that would be useful in every component throughout the organization. The Team:

- Examined the prior Strategic Plan.
- Reviewed the IG Act, GPRA and other relevant laws and regulations.
- Analyzed SSA's Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Reports.
- Evaluated other Federal OIG goals and indicators.
- Developed crosscutting strategies.
- Suggested new goals, indicators and target levels of performance.

Stakeholder Feedback

Our stakeholders include: Congress; congressional staff; SSA's Commissioner; SSA managers and staff; PCIE and the IG community at large; all OIG employees; Government Accountability Office; the Office of Special Counsel; the Office of Government Ethics; Department of Justice; other Federal, State and local law enforcement agencies; other outside groups both public and private; the general public; and other parties interested in improving the efficiency, effectiveness and integrity of SSA programs and operations. We meet periodically with stakeholders, particularly SSA management officials, U.S. Attorneys and congressional representatives and staff to obtain feedback on our work.

Internal Factors Affecting the Achievement of Strategic Goals

For the Strategic Plan to succeed as a management tool, all OIG employees must embrace and commit to this Plan. Major internal challenges include:

- Implementing unified leadership, commitment and involvement to ensure effective execution of the Plan.
- Designing and implementing processes and technology needed to enhance information sharing.
- Adjusting to changing workload requirements and resource constraints.

External Factors Affecting the Achievement of Strategic Goals

External factors such as budget constraints, SSA's ability to implement recommendations, congressional and SSA priorities and political mandates can affect the achievement of OIG strategic goals. Additional factors include:

- Redirecting resources to address national security and public safety issues.
- Contracting for outside services with regard to the integrity and reliability of external auditors and consultants.
- Preventing fraud, waste and abuse stemming from vulnerabilities in SSA's online services.
- Competing with other organizations for skilled staff.

Summary of Program Evaluations

GPRA requires agencies to describe the program evaluations used to establish or revise general goals and objectives. Although there were no formal internal or external program evaluations of OIG to consider in developing this Plan, the Team evaluated several other sources of information to include:

- OIG Semiannual Reports
- OIG Congressional Budget Justifications
- PCIE Annual Reports
- Office of Audit PCIE Peer Review
- Results of Quality Assurance Reviews
- Management information systems of individual OIG components
- SSA's Strategic Plan

Goals, Strategies and Measures

Goal 1: Impact

Enhance the integrity, efficiency and effectiveness of SSA programs and operations.

STRATEGIES

1. Promote an OIG-wide process for cross-component communications on potential programmatic and operational vulnerabilities.

2. Communicate with the Agency to identify mission-critical issues and operations that would benefit from OIG audit and investigation services and develop practical solutions to address identified weaknesses or deficiencies.

3. Prioritize investigations, audits and counsel actions to effect more efficient and effective SSA programs and operations.

Performance Measure 1.1

Maintain an annual acceptance rate of at least 85 percent for all recommendations.

Definition: The number of legislative, policy and regulatory recommendations accepted by SSA and/or Congress (included in proposed legislation) during the FY divided by the total number of recommendations with a management decision and legislative proposals made during the FY.

Demonstrates: OIG's ability to produce improvement ideas valued by SSA and Congress. Recommendations are contained in OIG Audit, Evaluation, Management Advisory, legislative proposals and Regulatory Commentary Reports.

Source: OA's management information system

Performance Measure 1.2

Through FY 2010, achieve a 5-year average implementation rate of 85 percent for accepted recommendations aimed at improving the integrity, efficiency and effectiveness of SSA.

Definition: The total number of accepted recommendations implemented by SSA during the past 5 FYs divided by the total number of recommendations SSA agreed to implement during the past 5 FYs.

Demonstrates: The impact of OIG recommendations on the integrity, efficiency and effectiveness of SSA programs and operations.

Source: OA's management information system

Revised Performance Measure 1.3

Achieve a positive action on at least 80 percent of all cases closed during the FY.

Revised Definition: The total closed cases that resulted in a positive action during the FY divided by the total cases closed during the FY. If the subject has been sentenced, the case referred for a CMP, and/or an administrative action has been taken against the subject, it is considered a positive action in the closed case. In addition, if certain money types have been collected or certain referrals have been made it is considered a positive action. *Qualifying Money Types* include recoveries, assessments, fines, judgments, penalties, restitution, savings, and settlements. *Qualifying Referral Types* include referrals to SSA for administrative action and administrative sanction.

Demonstrates: OIG productivity in reducing fraud, waste and abuse.

Source: National Investigative Case Management System (NICMS)

Goal 2: Value

Provide quality products and services of value in a timely manner to Congress, SSA and other key decision-makers while sustaining a positive return for each tax dollar invested in OIG activities.

STRATEGIES

1. Maintain a "positive-return" culture within OIG.

2. Ensure continual improvement of OIG products by using a product and service quality assessment instrument to measure internal and external user satisfaction.

3. Implement best practices to ensure quality and timeliness of OIG products and services.

4. Utilize information technology investments to enhance OIG work products and service delivery.

Performance Measure 2.1

Generate a positive return of $4 for every tax dollar invested in OIG activities.

Definition: The total amount of all OIG savings identified during the FY divided by the total amount of appropriated funds during the same period.

Demonstrates: The dollar value returned for each tax dollar invested in SSA OIG.

Source: Division of Budget and Logistics files, OA's management information system, OCCIG's control database, and NICMS

Performance Measure 2.2

Evaluate and respond to 90 percent of all allegations received within 30 days.

Definition: The total number of allegations closed or referred within 30 days during the FY divided by the total number of allegations closed or referred during the FY.

Demonstrates: OIG's ability to initiate timely action on allegations received.

Source: NICMS

Performance Measure 2.3

Complete investigative fieldwork on 75 percent of all cases within 180 days.

Revised Definition: The total number of investigations closed or referred for prosecution, CMP, SSA or other State or Federal agency action within 180 days during the FY divided by the total investigations closed or referred during the FY.

Demonstrates: The ability to conduct investigations in an efficient, timely manner.

Source: NICMS

Performance Measure 2.4

Respond to 90 percent of congressional requests within 21 days.

Revised Definition: The total congressional requests responded to within 21 days during the FY divided by the total number of congressional requests responded to during the FY. Processing days are the days elapsed from receipt of a congressional request to the date of a response.

Demonstrates: OIG's ability to provide a rapid response to congressional decision-makers.

Revised Source: OCCIG database

Performance Measure 2.5

Take action on 90 percent of CMP subjects within 30 days of receipt.

Definition: The total number of CMP subjects against whom action was taken within 30 days of receipt during the FY divided by the total number of CMP subjects where action was taken during the FY. Actions include sending initial letters, requesting investigative assistance or closing the CMP.

Demonstrates: The ability to identify and take timely action on CMP cases.

Source: OCCIG database

Performance Measure 2.6

Achieve a positive internal and external user assessment rating of 85 percent for product-service quality.

Definition: This measure uses a 5-tier rating scale measuring the degree of satisfaction with OIG products and services by recipients and users, including SSA and other government entities, such as Congress, Offices of U.S. Attorney, and external law enforcement agencies. The numeric response is translated into a percentage with 85 percent indicating satisfaction.

Demonstrates: The overall quality of OIG products and services as seen by their users.

Source: Quality Assurance Review Assessment Questionnaire

Performance Measure 2.7

Issue 75 percent of final audit reports within 1 year of the entrance conference with SSA.

Definition: The total number of audit reports issued during the FY within 1 year of the entrance conference divided by the total number of audit reports issued during the FY.

Demonstrates: OIG's ability to efficiently focus, plan, conduct and report timely audit information.

Source: OA's management information system

Performance Measure 2.8

Complete 80 percent of requests for legal advice and review within 30 days.

Definition: The total number of legal opinions, subpoenas and audit reviews completed by OCCIG within 30 days of receipt during the FY divided by the total number of requests for legal opinions, subpoenas and audit reviews completed during the FY.

Demonstrates: The ability to complete timely legal analysis of OIG products and to issue prompt legal guidance and support.

Source: OCCIG database

Goal 3: People

Promote a skilled, motivated, diverse workforce in a positive and rewarding work environment.

STRATEGIES

1. Identify assignment interests and developmental needs of all employees.

2. Provide OIG components with training and tools necessary to ensure professional development and skills enhancement.

3. Maintain a proactive approach in recruiting and hiring candidates to meet different needs.

Performance Measure 3.1

Achieve an annual attrition rate of 5 percent or less.

Definition: The total number of employees separated (excluding retirements and deaths) during the FY divided by the OIG Full-Time Equivalents for the FY.

Demonstrates: OIG's ability to provide a quality work experience that encourages staff to pursue their career goals within the SSA OIG.

Revised Source: OIG Staffing Data

Performance Measure 3.2

Conduct an annual employee job-satisfaction survey and implement corrective action plans to identify areas where improvement is needed.

Revised Definition: OIG's Organizational Health Committee implemented an annual employee job-satisfaction survey. The survey was administered in FY 2006 to establish a baseline level of employee satisfaction. In subsequent years covered by this Strategic Plan, the tool shall be re-administered to measure progress against the baseline.

Demonstrates: That OIG's quality work environment is attentive to the people, technology, communications and other human capital factors influencing the job performance of its employees.

Source: Annual employee job-satisfaction tool

Performance Measure 3.3

Ensure that 90 percent of OIG staff receives 40 or more hours of appropriate developmental and skill-enhancement training annually.

Definition: The total number of OIG staff on board for the entire FY receiving at least 40 hours of training during the FY divided by the total number of OIG staff on board for the entire FY.

Demonstrates: OIG's commitment to continual staff development and skill enhancement.

Revised Source: OIG Training Database