

**Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration  
Office of Inspections and Evaluations  
Fiscal Year 2017 Plan**



**October 2016**

## **TIGTA's Vision**

*To maintain a highly skilled proactive and diverse Inspector General organization with a record of protecting and promoting fair tax administration.*

## **TIGTA's Mission**

*Provide integrated audit and investigative, and inspection and evaluation services that promote economy, efficiency and integrity in the administration of the internal revenue laws.*

## **TIGTA's Core Values**

***Integrity*** - Maintain the highest professional standards of independence, objectivity and operational excellence in pursuit of TIGTA's mission.

***Organizational Innovation*** - Model advanced practices in organizational structure, audit, investigative, and inspection and evaluation methodology through adoption of cutting edge information technology.

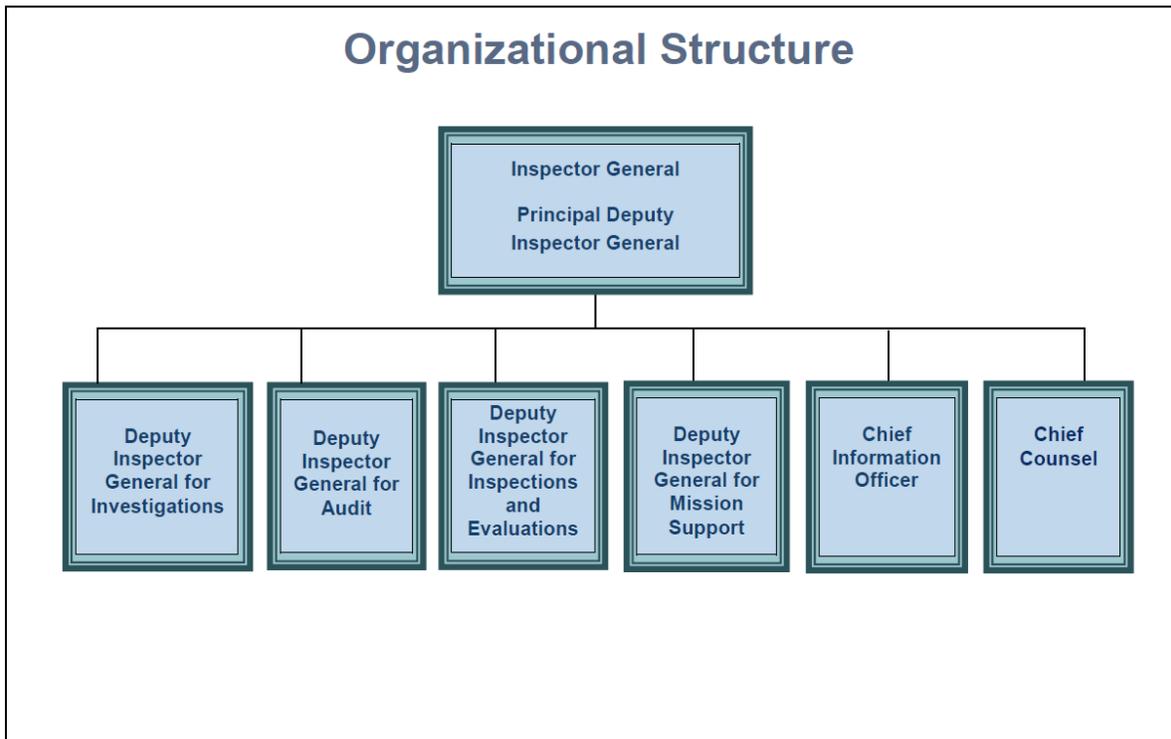
***Value Employees*** - Respect employees' dignity, contributions, work-life balance, and recognize diversity as fundamental to the strength of our organization.

***Commitment to Community*** - Establish and maintain collaborative and professional relationships with other government and non-governmental stakeholders.

Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration  
Office of Inspections and Evaluations  
Fiscal Year 2017 Plan

## Overview

The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) provides independent oversight of the Department of the Treasury matters involving Internal Revenue Service (IRS) activities and the IRS Office of Chief Counsel. Although TIGTA is placed organizationally within the Department of the Treasury and reports to the Secretary of the Treasury and to Congress, TIGTA functions independently from all other offices and bureaus within the Department.



## Office of Inspections and Evaluations

TIGTA's Office of Inspections and Evaluations (I&E) provides a range of specialized services and products, including quick response reviews, on-site office inspections, and more detailed evaluations of IRS operations.

I&E's senior executive and staff engage in an ongoing process to assess the emerging issues likely to affect tax administration. This involves discussions with IRS executives, members of the Congress and their staff, and Department of the Treasury staff. Additionally, I&E staff coordinate their planned activities with TIGTA's Office of Audit and Office of Investigations.

**If the Deputy Inspector General, I&E determines there is a need to respond to priority emerging issues, some of the projects listed may be deferred to a later date or cancelled.**

## Carried Over:

### **Post Filing of Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Outreach**

Through Processing Year 1992, the IRS automatically calculated and refunded EITC benefits to taxpayers who did not claim the credit but appeared eligible based on their tax return.<sup>1</sup> The practice was discontinued in Processing Year 1993 after an IRS study found that 45 percent of taxpayers were ineligible for the credit. The IRS now issues notices to apparently eligible taxpayers. Taxpayers that appear to qualify for the credit but did not claim it on their original return receive a notice three to four months after the original return is received. Taxpayers must complete, sign, and return the notice with the attached worksheet if qualified. Our evaluation seeks to determine the effectiveness of this process in increasing EITC participation rates. (IE-16-006)

---

### **IRS Occupational Safety and Health Program**

The Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA)<sup>2</sup> requires the head of each agency to “provide safe and healthful places and conditions of employment.” The IRS’s occupational safety and health program includes policies and guidelines, program evaluations, and systems designed to report and document injuries and illnesses, and track hazards in the workplace. The objective of this inspection is to determine if select IRS facilities are in compliance with portions of the OSHA designed to prevent electrical hazards and hazards that can result in employee injuries. (IE-16-003)

---

### **Use of Critical Pay by IRS**

The IRS’s Streamlined Critical Pay authority was created to help in hiring top employees without having to go through the typical government hiring process. It was established in 1998 and expired in 2013. The purpose of this review is to determine whether the IRS has attempted to use the existing Office of Personnel Management (OPM) critical pay program as an alternative recruiting and retention tool given the expiration of IRS’s Streamlined Critical Pay authority. This review will also determine the extent to which the OPM program is used by other Federal agencies, the process required to obtain approval from OPM and the average duration to get the approval from start to finish if such data exists. (IE-16-012)

---

<sup>1</sup> If a taxpayer did not claim the EITC but tax return information appeared to meet the EITC requirements, IRS computers automatically calculated the EITC, recomputed the taxpayer’s tax liability and refund, and notified the taxpayer of the change. A tax examiner would then review the return to determine if there was information that indicated the taxpayer was not entitled to the EITC.

<sup>2</sup> Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, Pub. L. No. 91-596.

## **Addressing Egregious Payroll Tax Noncompliance**

Employment taxes amounted to almost \$2.3 trillion, or 69 percent of the \$3.3 trillion collected by IRS in Fiscal Year 2015. Employers are required to deposit withheld taxes on a regularly scheduled basis. The majority of employer's timely remit withheld employment taxes to the IRS. Unfortunately, a small but growing number of employers attempt to evade paying the withheld employment taxes. Employment tax embezzlement is an especially egregious crime since the employer or payroll service provider violates their fiduciary responsibility to remit the taxes on behalf of their employees. Furthermore, the programs funded by employment taxes, such as Social Security and Medicare, provide essential benefits to many citizens. Noncompliant employers or payroll service providers are subject to civil and criminal sanctions for willfully failing to remit employment taxes. The overall objective of this review was to determine the levels of payroll tax noncompliance identified by the IRS and determine the number and characteristics of criminal payroll tax evasion investigations conducted by IRS. (IE-14-032)

### **New starts:**

#### **IRS Taxpayer Assistance Center (TAC) Work Load Planning and Office Staffing**

The IRS TACs provide the IRS a face-to-face opportunity to assist America's taxpayers in understanding and meeting their tax responsibilities. TAC locations are classified as small, medium or large offices. Overall the IRS has TACs in about 370 locations across the country. The IRS Field Assistance staff determines the appropriate staffing in each office annually and the type of services each location will offer. The objective is to evaluate the process and specific data used to determine staffing allocations and services for the Tax Year 2016 filing season. (IE-17-001)

Start: First Quarter

---

#### **Joint Worker Misclassification Initiative with the Department of Labor**

In 2011 the Department of Labor and the Internal Revenue Service signed a Memorandum of Understanding for a joint initiative. The purpose of the agreement was to improve compliance with employment tax laws and regulations and help reduce incidents of misclassification of employees as independent contractors. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine whether the 2011 Department of Labor/Internal Revenue Service Memorandum of Understanding has achieved the intended results. (IE-17-002)

Start: TBD

Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration  
Office of Inspections and Evaluations  
Fiscal Year 2017 Plan

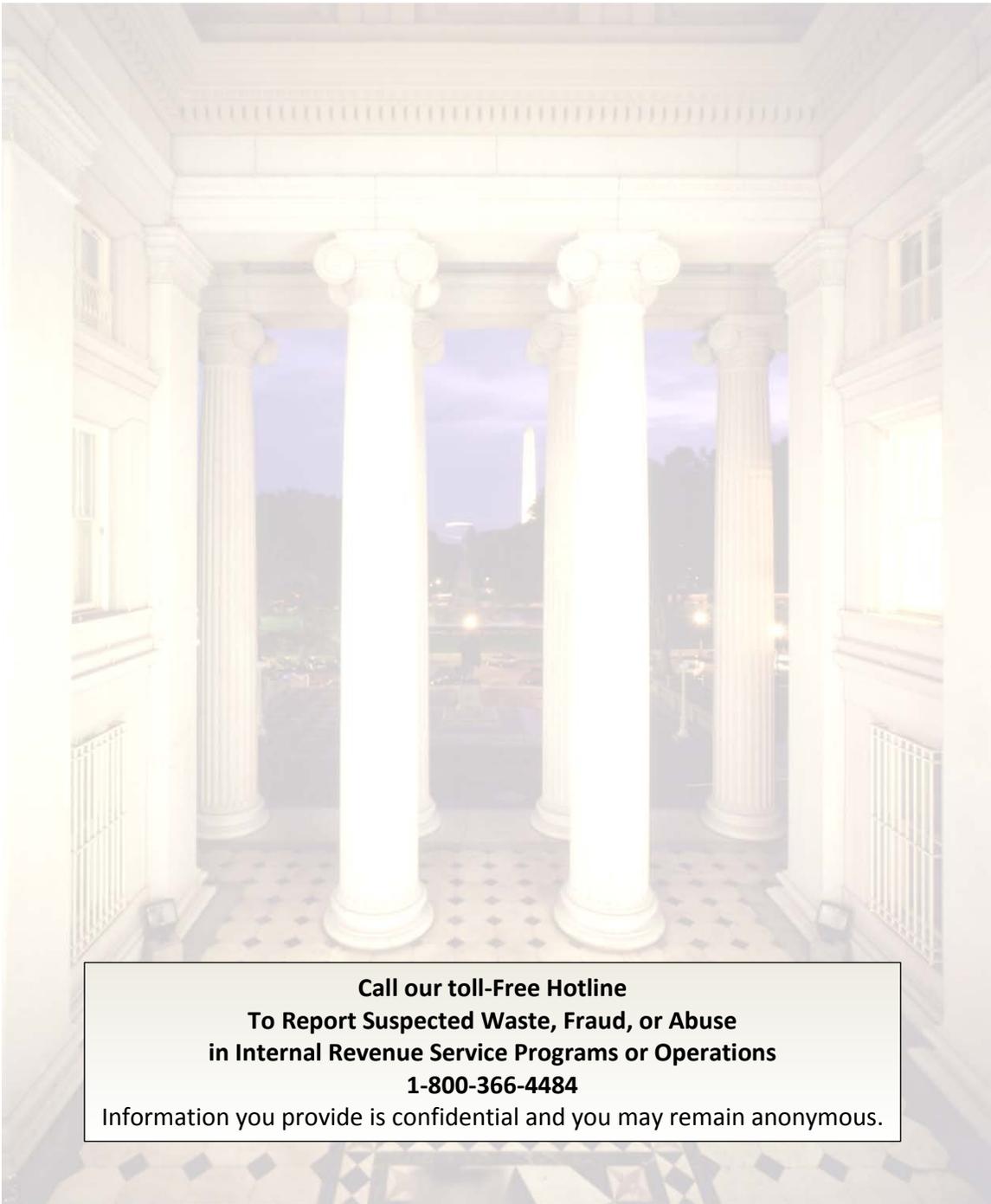
**Accuracy of Information Reporting by Federal and State Governments**

Federal and state agencies report income paid to government contractors on the Form 1099-MISC, *Miscellaneous Income*. The Forms must contain valid Taxpayer Identification Numbers for the IRS to accurately process and match to income tax returns. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine whether the Form 1099-MISC documents are sufficiently accurate to allow IRS to process. In the event the Form 1099-MISC documents submitted by Federal and state agencies are not accurate, what processes does the IRS follow to obtain accurate information to ensure Federal and state contractors are compliant with income tax obligations. (IE-17-003)

Start: TBD

---

Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration  
Office of Inspections and Evaluations  
Fiscal Year 2017 Plan



**Call our toll-Free Hotline  
To Report Suspected Waste, Fraud, or Abuse  
in Internal Revenue Service Programs or Operations  
1-800-366-4484**  
Information you provide is confidential and you may remain anonymous.