UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

**OFFICE OF THE
INSPECTOR GENERAL**

April 6, 2015

MEMORANDUM TO: Mark A. Satorius
                   Executive Director for Operations

FROM: Stephen D. Dingbaum */RA/*
                   Assistant Inspector General for Audits

SUBJECT: STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS: AUDIT OF NRC'S
                   PROCESS FOR ENSURING INTEGRITY IN SCIENTIFIC
                   RESEARCH (OIG-15-A-08)

REFERENCE: DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR MATERIALS,
                   WASTE, RESEARCH, STATE, TRIBAL, AND
                   COMPLIANCE PROGRAMS MEMORANDUM DATED
                   MARCH 17, 2015

Attached is the Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) analysis and status of
recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 as discussed in the agency's response dated
March 17, 2015. Based on this response, recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are
resolved. Please provide an updated status of the resolved recommendations by
September 30, 2015. If you have questions or concerns, please call me at 415-5915, or
Sherri Miotla, Team Leader, at 415-5914.

Attachment: As stated

cc: M. Johnson, OIS
        M. Galloway, OEDO
        B. Pham, OEDO
        J. Arildsen, OEDO
        B. Sheron, RES
        EDO_ACS Distribution Resource

Audit Report

**AUDIT OF NRC'S PROCESS FOR ENSURING INTEGRITY IN
SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
OIG-15-A-08**

Status of Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Designate an Information Quality Program owner and clearly delineate roles and responsibilities among involved offices.

Agency Response Dated
March 17, 2015: Agree. The Office of Information Services (OIS) is the owner of the Information Quality Program. OIS is currently in the process of revising Management Directive 3.17, "NRC Information Quality Program" (MD 3.17) with the support of a newly formed working group featuring representatives from the program offices. The working group will meet to align on the roles and responsibilities of each of the involved offices and to provide proposed changes to OIS. These changes will then be incorporated into the revised MD 3.17.

Estimated Completion Date**:** 6/30/2016 Contact: F. Majeed

OIG Analysis: The action proposed by the agency meets the intent of the recommendation. This recommendation will be closed after OIG reviews the revised MD 3.17 and determines the guidance identifies an Information Quality Program owner (i.e., office) and clearly articulates and delineates the roles and responsibilities among involved offices.

Status: Resolved.

Audit Report

**AUDIT OF NRC'S PROCESS FOR ENSURING INTEGRITY IN
SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
OIG-15-A-08**

Status of Recommendations

Recommendation 2:

Assign responsibility for routinely checking, responding to, and tracking the resolution of information correction requests submitted via vehicles identified on the NRC's public Web pages regarding Information Quality Guidelines.

Agency Response Dated
March 17, 2015:

Agree. As currently stated in MD 3.17 (ML083360173), OIS has the responsibility [for] appointing the NRC Information Quality Coordinator (IQC). The IQC's responsibilities include:

- managing the ICR review and appeal process of the NRC Information Quality Program,
- maintaining the official ICR files,
- preparing the annual report to OMB and other necessary reports to keep management abreast of the status and issues relating to ICR reviews,
- and assessing the consistency of decisions to correct or not correct information.

These responsibilities currently include routinely checking, responding to, and tracking the resolution of information correction requests submitted via vehicles identified on the NRC's public Web pages regarding Information Quality Guidelines.

Estimated Completion Date: Completed   Contact: F. Majeed

OIG Analysis:

The actions proposed by the agency meet the intent of the recommendation. However, during the audit, OIG noted that information correction requests were not being checked or responded to. This recommendation will be closed when OIG reviews the revised MD 3.17 and confirms that it assigns responsibility for routinely checking, responding to, and tracking the resolution of information correction requests and confirms that those steps are being done.

Status:

Resolved.

Audit Report

**AUDIT OF NRC'S PROCESS FOR ENSURING INTEGRITY IN
SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
OIG-15-A-08**

Status of Recommendations

<u>Recommendation 3</u>:	Hold an annual meeting with involved NRC staff and management to discuss the requirements and responsibilities associated with the identification and reporting of Influential Scientific Information and Highly Influential Scientific Assessment information products.
Agency Response Dated March 17, 2015:	Agree that there needs to be a mechanism to ensure Offices are aware of the requirements and responsibilities associated with the identification and reporting of Influential Scientific and Highly Influential Scientific Assessment information products. OIS, as the owner of the Information Quality Program, will collaborate with the MD 3.17 working group to determine the best method for ensuring overall staff awareness of requirements and responsibilities associated with the identification and reporting of Influential Scientific Assessment Information products. This method will be incorporated into the revised MD 3.17.
	Estimated Completion Date: 06/30/2016 Contact: F. Majeed
OIG Analysis:	The action proposed meets the intent of the recommendation. OIG will close this recommendation when the agency implements a mechanism by which involved NRC staff and management discuss, on at least an annual basis, the requirements and responsibilities associated with the identification and reporting of Influential Scientific Information and Highly Influential Scientific Information.
Status:	Resolved.

**AUDIT OF NRC'S PROCESS FOR ENSURING INTEGRITY IN
SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
OIG-15-A-08**

Status of Recommendations

<u>Recommendation 4</u>:	Develop a schedule to ensure that RES' internal office instructions are regularly reviewed and revised, as appropriate.
Agency Response Dated March 17, 2015:	Agree. RES will ensure effective mechanisms are in place to regularly review and revise, if needed, the RES office instructions (OI), as appropriate and practical.

The current process for reviewing and updating RES OIs is contained in OI-ADM-001, "Preparing and Maintaining RES Office Instructions." Although OI-ADM-001 specified the need for RES to periodically review and update, all of the OIs, as necessary, it was not followed in the case of updating the OI that implemented MD 3.17. RES is reviewing the list of current OIs and prioritizing those that are outdated to most efficiently update the OI. Once prioritized, RES will use its internal ticketing system (ATMIS) to assign and track the due dates for the OI updates. Reports from ATMIS are sent to the RES supervisors weekly, which will ensure continued management focus on the OI updates. RES will also revisit ADM-001 to determine if the periodicity for reviewing and updating OIs should be changed.

Estimated Completion Date: 5/29/15 Contact: K. Johnson

OIG Analysis:	The actions proposed by the agency meet the intent of the recommendation. This recommendation will be closed when OIG reviews the prioritized list of RES Office Instructions to be revised as listed and tracked in ATMIS.
Status:	Resolved.

**AUDIT OF NRC'S PROCESS FOR ENSURING INTEGRITY IN
SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
OIG-15-A-08**

Status of Recommendations

<u>Recommendation 5</u>:	Direct all offices to review and revise office guidance on peer review to align with requirements established by OMB and the National Academy of Sciences.
Agency Response Dated March 17, 2015:	Agree. As stated in the response to Recommendation 1, OIS is currently revising MD 3.17 with the support of a working group. These updates will include organizational responsibilities and simplified processes to implement the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) "Guidelines for Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility, and Integrity of Information Disseminated by Federal Agencies."
	Upon completion of the revision to MD 3.17, each office will be directed to revise their office guidance on peer review, or reference MD 3.17 to ensure office guidance is consistent with the revised MD 3.17 and the requirements established by OMB and the National Academy of Sciences.
	Estimated Completion Date: 12/30/16 Contact: F. Majeed
OIG Analysis:	The actions proposed by the agency meet the intent of the recommendation. This recommendation will be closed after OIG reviews 1) the written direction to offices to revise their office guidance so that it aligns with MD 3.17 and requirements established by OMB and the National Academy of Sciences and 2) reviews all office specific guidance and determines that it aligns with the requirements on peer review established by OMB and the National Academy of Sciences.
Status:	Resolved.