FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION01001.201803.31.2019

SEMIANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS

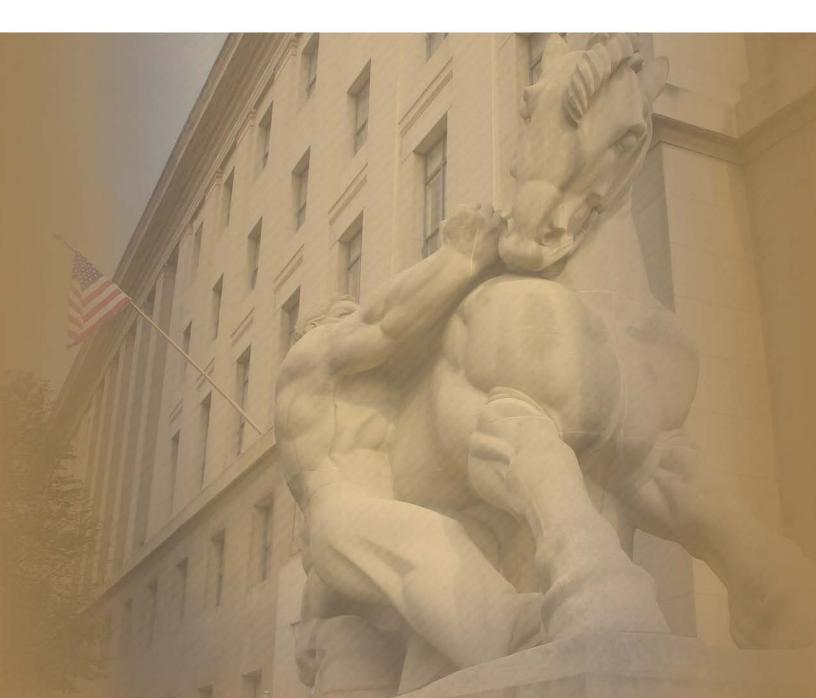


Table of Contents

Message from the Inspector General
Introduction
Audits, Evaluations, and Related Oversight Activities
Completed Products
Ongoing Audit and Evaluation Work
Corrective Actions on OIG Recommendations
Investigative Activities
Investigations Closed or Initiated
Prior Period Investigations
Preliminary Inquiries
Management Advisories and Referrals
OIG Hotline Complaints
Other OIG Activities
Collaboration with Other Agencies
Engagement with the Inspector General Community7
Significant Management Decisions
Review of Legislation
Access to Information
Other Initiatives
Oversight.gov
Appendix I-Peer Reviews
Appendix II – Significant Recommendations in Previous Semiannual Reports on which Corrective Action has not Been Completed
Appendix III – OIG Reports with Questioned Costs
Appendix IV – Inspector General Issued Reports with Recommendations that Funds be Put to Better Use

Appendix V – Summary of each Audit, Inspection, and Evaluation Report Issued before	
Commencement of the Reporting Period	16
Appendix VI – OIG Investigative Activity During this Reporting Period	17
Appendix VII – Completed OIG Investigations Involving a Senior Government Employee Where	
Allegations of Misconduct Were Substantiated	18
Appendix VIII – Substantiated Instances of Whistleblower Retaliation	19
Appendix IX – Attempts by the Agency to Interfere with the Independence of the OIG	20
Appendix X – Closed OIG Matters Not Disclosed to the Public	21
Appendix XI – Inspector General Act Reporting Requirements Index	22



Message from the Inspector General

On behalf of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Office of Inspector General (OIG), I am pleased to present our 61st Semiannual Report to Congress. This report summarizes the OIG's activities and accomplishments from October 1, 2018 through March 31, 2019.

Our audit and related highlights include work on five products, including the annual financial statement audit, the annual Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 evaluation, a charge card risk assessment, an improper payments review, and a progressing audit on the FTC's management of its Expert Witness program. Our investigative work during the period has covered nine separate matters, including two closed investigations, three new investigations, two continuing investigations, and two closed preliminary inquiries.

This period we have become even more active in the larger federal OIG community. This includes work with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency's Council of Counsels Working Group, Small OIG Counsels Working Group, Investigations Committee, Audit Committee, Small OIGs Working Group, and Integrity Committee. As we learn from our participation in these various community-wide activities, our office is becoming even more innovative in both our work and our product offerings. Future semiannual reports will include management advisories, discretionary audits, and investigation closures developed with approaches learned from our community engagement.

We thank Chairman Simons and all of the Commissioners, agency leadership and their staff, and Congress for their continued support of the OIG's mission.

Andrew Katsaros

Introduction

The FTC OIG was established in 1989 as an independent and objective organization within the Commission pursuant to the Inspector General Act Amendments of 1988 (H.R. 4054). Our mission is to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness, and to detect and prevent waste, fraud, abuse, and misconduct in the agency's operations and programs. Since our inception, we have been part of a community that has grown to include 73 statutory Inspectors General who collectively oversee the operations of nearly every aspect of the federal government. The FTC OIG has an operating budget of \$1.640 million for FY 2019.

Individuals who wish to file a complaint about the business practices of a particular company or entity, or allegations of identity theft, deceptive advertising practices, or consumer fraud, should file a complaint with the FTC Consumer Response Center (CRC) at https://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov or by calling 1-877-382-4357. Individuals who wish to file a complaint with the FTC OIG about internal wrongdoing can file a complaint on the OIG website via a specialized link to the FTC Consumer Response Center or by calling 202-326-2800. Complaints to the OIG from the public or from an FTC employee can be made anonymously. The identity of an FTC employee who reports waste, fraud, or other wrongdoing to the OIG will be protected from disclosure consistent with provisions of the Inspector General Act and privacy laws. In addition, the Inspector General Act and the Whistleblower Protection Act prohibit retaliation against employees for filing complaints or cooperating with the OIG.

Every 6 months we provide Congress with a report detailing our independent oversight of the FTC during the reporting period. The report is sent to the FTC Chair, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, and the FTC's appropriating and authorizing committees. This report is our 61st semiannual report. In the years to come, we look forward to continuing our efforts to provide independent and effective oversight of the FTC and working with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) on important issues that cut across our government.

We perform the following services:

AUDITS AND EVALUATIONS. To assess the efficiency and effectiveness of FTC programs and operations; quality of information security and privacy efforts; and adherence to federal requirements for annual financial statements

INVESTIGATIONS. To detect and deter fraud, waste, abuse and misconduct involving FTC employees, programs, and operations, as well as individuals or entities having contracts with or obtaining benefits from the agency

MANAGEMENT ADVISORIES. To guide management and staff on process improvements and ways to avoid recurring patterns of fraud or misconduct identified in our audits and investigations

INFORM STAKEHOLDERS. To keep FTC leadership, Congress, and the public informed of OIG oversight activities

Audits, Evaluations, and Related Oversight Activities

Completed Products

During this period, the OIG issued three oversight products on audit and evaluation activities: the annual audit report on the FTC's financial statements, a risk assessment of charge card activity, and a report on Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 (FISMA) compliance.

Audit of the FTC's FY 2018 Consolidated Financial Statements

The OIG contracted with the independent certified public accounting firm of Brown & Company CPAs and Management Consultants, PLLC (Brown & Company) to audit the financial statements of the FTC as of and for the fiscal years ended September 30, 2018 and 2017, and to provide reports on internal control over financial reporting and compliance with laws and other matters. The contract required the audit to be performed in accordance with U.S. generally accepted government auditing standards, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) audit guidance, and the Government Accountability Office's *Financial Audit Manual*. In its audit, Brown & Company found (1) that the FTC's financial statements as of and for the fiscal years ended September 30, 2018 and 2017, were presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles; (2) no material weaknesses in internal control over financial reporting based on the limited procedures performed; and (3) no reportable noncompliance with provisions of applicable laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements tested. The OIG provided contractor oversight and monitoring over the entire process.

Risk Assessment of the FTC's Charge Card Program

We completed our annual risk assessment of the FTC's charge card program as required by the Government Charge Card Abuse Prevention Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-194) and OMB Memorandum M-13-21. Our objective was to analyze the risks of improper purchases in FTC's fiscal year 2018 purchase and travel card programs. Based on the results of our overall assessment as well as additional tests of transactions, we identified the risk level of the FTC's purchase card and travel card programs as low. The OIG made no recommendations. We will use the results of our assessment to determine the scope and frequency of future audits or reviews of charge card programs.

Report of Federal Information Security Modernization Act Compliance

The Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 requires an annual evaluation of each agency's information security and privacy program and practices to determine their effectiveness. The FY 2018 evaluation was performed by an independent contractor under contract with the OIG. The contractor identified five recommendations and the FTC concurred with all five. The OIG provided contractor oversight and monitoring over the entire process.

Ongoing Audit and Evaluation Work

Federal Trade Commission Compliance with Fiscal Year 2018 Improper Payment Requirements

Under the requirements of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act of 2010 (IPERA), OIGs must annually review agency improper payment reporting and determine whether agencies have complied with IPERA requirements. We will report on the results of our review of the FTC's compliance with the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002, as amended and expanded by the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act of 2010, and the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012. We will conduct this review in accordance with OMB's implementing guidance.

Audit of Expert Witness Activity

FTC's Bureau of Competition routinely retains outside expert witnesses for antitrust enforcement activities to fulfill a variety of roles. Between October 2016 and September 2018, the FTC awarded approximately 60 contracts for expert witness services totaling over \$25 million. The OIG has initiated an audit of FTC's use of external expert witnesses. The objective of the audit is to determine the effectiveness of processes used to acquire and oversee expert witness services.

Corrective Actions on OIG Recommendations

During this reporting period, the FTC continued to make progress in implementing OIG recommendations. Appendix II identifies significant recommendations described in previous semiannual reports for which corrective action has not been completed. During this reporting period, the OIG closed four recommendations by consolidating them into updated FY 2018 recommendations.

Section 5(a)(11) of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, requires a description and explanation of the reasons for any significant revised management decision made during the reporting period. For this reporting period, management did not change its response to any earlier decisions on OIG recommendations.

Investigative Activities

The Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, authorizes the Inspector General to receive and investigate allegations of employee and contractor misconduct, as well as fraud, waste, abuse, and misconduct involving FTC programs and operations. Matters of possible wrongdoing are referred to the OIG in the form of allegations or complaints from a variety of sources, including FTC employees and contractors, other government agencies, Congress, and the general public. Reported incidents of possible fraud, waste, abuse, or misconduct can give rise to criminal, civil, or administrative investigations.

The OIG maintains a toll-free Hotline number and a dedicated email address to enable individuals to bring matters to the attention of the OIG on a confidential basis. The toll-free Hotline number, facsimile, email address, and ground mail services all serve as means for individuals and entities to communicate allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, and misconduct concerning FTC programs and operations to the OIG.

Investigations Closed or Initiated

The OIG closed one investigation initiated in a prior period and one initiated in the current period, and initiated three investigations during this period.

Allegations on the Misuse of Property and the Improper Direction of Contractor Resources (closed from prior period)

The OIG received allegations that an FTC supervisor: (A) committed a *prohibited personnel practice* by providing a FTC contractor with an unfair hiring advantage for employment with the FTC, in violation of 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(6) and internal policy; (B) violated federal laws, regulations, and/or policies by using FTC contractors for her personal use and benefit; and (C) violated federal regulations and/or internal policy guiding the use of personal devices to conduct FTC business. The OIG did not substantiate these allegations. We provided a report of investigation to management following the conclusions of our investigation.

Violation of Financial Conflicts Statute (open and closed this period)

The OIG received a referral from the Office of the General Counsel (OGC) regarding a possible violation of 18 U.S.C. § 208(a), *Acts Affecting a Personal Financial Interest*, by an FTC employee. In its referral, OGC determined that all the elements of a section 208(a) violation were established, and that, while no exemption or waiver was applicable under this statute, several mitigating factors were present. The OIG conducted an independent investigation and concurred with OGC's determination that the employee violated section 208(a). The OIG consulted with the Department of Justice's Public Integrity Section on our investigative findings, which advised the OIG that it would not be opening a criminal investigation on this matter. Following the consultation, the OIG provided a report of investigation to management, and this matter is now closed.

Prior Period Investigations

During the reporting period, the OIG continued working on two investigations opened in a prior period.

Preliminary Inquiries

During the reporting period, the OIG closed two preliminary inquiries both opened in prior periods. Preliminary inquiries can involve conducting interviews and requesting information and records prior to opening a formal investigation. Investigators conducting preliminary inquiries will use many of the lawful methods allowed in full investigations, with the exception of activities like electronic surveillance, physical searches, or the acquisition of foreign intelligence.

Management Advisories and Referrals

During this reporting period, the OIG did not issue a management advisory or referral stemming from investigative activity.

OIG Hotline Complaints

From October 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019, the OIG received 150 consumer complaints, inquiries, and reports of possible wrongdoing, a 54.64% increase from the previous reporting period. The OIG addressed eight of these complaints, as compared to ten in the prior reporting period and six during the same period in FY 2018. The OIG redirected or referred the remaining 142 complaints to either the FTC's Consumer Response Center (CRC) or other FTC offices. No complaints were forwarded to the FTC's Freedom of Information Act office during this reporting period.

Other OIG Activities

Collaboration with Other Agencies

During this reporting period, in conducting audits, investigations, and other activities, the OIG either assisted, sought assistance from, or conferred with various federal agencies and OIGs, including the: Federal Bureau of Investigation's Cyber Task Force; Department of Justice's Public Integrity Section; Department of Homeland Security's Federal Protective Service; Department of Commerce OIG; Federal Election Commission OIG; Federal Labor Relations Authority OIG; Equal Employment Opportunity Commission OIG; Election Assistance Commission OIG; and Social Security Administration (OIG) and Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration.

Engagement with the Inspector General Community

The OIG continued as an active participant in community-wide activities, particularly those coordinated by CIGIE, an independent entity within the Executive Branch comprised of the various federal Offices of Inspectors General. CIGIE's mission is to address integrity, economy, and effectiveness issues that transcend individual government agencies; and increase the professionalism and effectiveness of personnel by developing policies, standards, and approaches to aid in the establishment of a well-trained and highly skilled workforce in the OIG community.

The Inspector General participates on both the CIGIE Audit Committee and the CIGIE Small/Unique OIGs Working Group, and serves on the CIGIE Integrity Committee. He has also provided recruitment support to the Export-Import Bank OIG and served as a panelist for training sponsored by the Association of Government Accountants.

The Counsel to the Inspector General serves on the CIGIE Council of Counsels to the Inspectors General, Small OIG Counsels, and Internal Affairs/Quality Assurance working groups and the Investigations Committee, and he contributes to the legal and investigative discourse on matters germane to the entire OIG community.

During the period, individual members of our Audit team participated as part of a community-wide team developing an interactive training module for Inspections and Evaluations, and as an adjunct instructor for CIGIE Audit Peer Review training.

Significant Management Decisions

Section 5(a)(12) of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, requires that if the Inspector General disagrees with any significant management decision, such disagreement must be reported in the semiannual report to Congress. For this reporting period, there were no significant management decisions made with which the Inspector General disagreed.

Review of Legislation

Section 4(a)(2) of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, authorizes the OIG to review and comment on existing and proposed legislation or regulations relating to the agency or affecting the operations of the OIG. During this reporting period, the OIG also provided responsive information to direct

requests from Congress.

Access to Information

Inspectors General must have ready access to all agency records, information, or assistance when conducting an investigation or audit. Section 6(c)(2) of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, requires the Inspector General to report to the agency head, without delay, if the Inspector General believes that access to required information, records, or assistance has been unreasonably refused, or otherwise has not been provided. A summary of each report submitted to the agency head in compliance with Section 6(c)(2) must be provided in the semiannual report in accordance with Section 5(a)(5) of the Act. During this reporting period, the OIG did not encounter problems or delays in obtaining assistance or access to agency records.

Other Initiatives

Whistleblower Protection

In furtherance of our efforts to educate the FTC workforce on the whistleblower protection laws, the OIG collaborated with management on the implementation of the Office of Special Counsel's (OSC) Section 2302(c) certification program. This program assists agencies in meeting their statutory requirements to inform employees of their rights and remedies under 5 U.S.C. § 2302. Management continues to take the necessary steps towards becoming "OSC certified," including educating employees on their whistleblower protections and providing FTC supervisors with interactive whistleblower training. During this reporting period, the OIG participated in the FTC's supervisory development program for new supervisors to educate them on their whistleblower protection responsibilities, and we will participate in additional trainings in the coming months.

Cross-Community OIG Consumer Fraud Initiative

During this reporting period, the OIG continued its collaboration with the FTC Bureau of Consumer Protection and various OIGs to identify opportunities to increase and enhance consumer fraud investigations. The initiative focuses on extending the use and value of the FTC's Consumer Sentinel Network (CSN) – a secure online database currently housing over 18 million consumer complaints largely dating from 2014. The top identifiable trends in these complaints during the last reporting period were debt collection, imposter scams, and identity theft.

CSN has observed a 47 percent increase in usage by individuals within the OIG community since the initiative began in December 2016. The largest increase in users was from the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA). There are currently 21 OIGs actively utilizing CSN, which have contributed over 4,000 CSN complaints to date. In this reporting period, FTC officials addressed CIGIE at its March group meeting to promote Sentinel. Staff also conducted specialized training sessions for the Social Security Administration's (SSA) Office of Inspector General and TIGTA. Additionally, the Social Security Administration added a link to its website that will allow consumers to submit identity theft complaints directly into CSN and mark the complaints as coming from SSA OIG.

Oversight.gov

<u>Oversight.gov</u> contains a single database of the completed work of all Inspectors General that publicly post reports. Users can sort, search, and filter the database of products from CIGIE's member OIGs, including by geographic location using the map feature. Contact information for each OIG's whistleblower hotline is also available. Users can further receive notifications when new reports are added to the site by following CIGIE's Twitter account: <u>@OversightGov</u>.

Appendix I–Peer Reviews

Peer Review Activity	Results
Peer Reviews conducted by another OIG	There were no peer reviews conducted by another OIG during this reporting period. The last peer review was dated July 2, 2018.
Outstanding recommendations from peer reviews of the FTC OIG	There are no outstanding recommendations from peer reviews of the FTC OIG.
Peer Reviews conducted by the FTC OIG	The FTC OIG did not conduct any peer reviews during this reporting period.
Outstanding recommendations from peer reviews conducted by the FTC OIG	There are no outstanding recommendations from peer reviews conducted by the FTC OIG.

Appendix II – Significant Recommendations in Previous Semiannual Reports on which Corrective Action has not Been Completed

Audit of Federal Trade Commission Acquisition Planning Activities (Issued 9/28/2018)

	Total	2
Recommendations	Management concurrences	2
	Management non-concurrences	
Status of Decommondations	Closed	0
Status of Recommendations	Open	2

Open Recommendations

We recommend that the FTC Executive Director

- a. Develop a policy that clearly identifies the documents required to be in contract files to constitute a complete history of the transaction, including records normally contained in the contract file as identified in FAR § 4.803; and
- b. Develop requirements for a systematic legal review process for acquisitions that meet identified conditions.

Independent Evaluation of the Federal Trade Commission's Information Security Program and Practices for Fiscal Year 2017 (Issued 02/27/2018)

	Total	9
Recommendations	Management concurrences	9
	Management non-concurrences	
Status of Recommendations	Closed	7
Status of Recommendations	Open	2

Open Recommendations

Recommendation FY 2017 – 08, Configuration Management: FTC should develop an agency-wide configuration management policy that applies to any information systems supporting the FTC. The policy should require development of procedures that are specific to individual systems. The FTC configuration management policy should also require configuration control for all system and information security artifacts.

Recommendation FY 2017 – 09, Contingency Planning: FTC should revise its incident response and information system contingency plans to ensure they provide viable procedures for responding to system outages and potential sensitive information compromises. The revised plans should include policies and protocols for US-CERT reporting, maintaining activity logs, communications with stakeholders, and After-Action reporting that includes root cause analyses, activity log analyses, and timely reporting. Plans should be tested at least annually.

Management Letter for the Fiscal Year 2017 Financial Statement Audit (Issued 12/21/2017)

	Total	1
Recommendations	Management concurrences	1
	Management non-concurrences	
Status of Decommon dations	Closed	0
Status of Recommendations	Open	1

Open Recommendation

Recommendation FY 2017 – 01, Employee Debt Receivables Over 120 Days For Which FTC Financial Management Operations Had Taken No Recent Follow-Up Action: We recommend that the Chief Financial Officer:

- a. Ensure the FTC finalizes Agency policies and procedures regarding employee debt receivables
- b. Evaluate the outstanding employee debt receivables and make a decision to collect or refer to Treasury for collections.
- c. Generate demand letters for Agency identified collection initiatives.
- d. Make a decision on how to compute and record additional charges.

Independent Evaluation of the Federal Trade Commission's Compliance with Provisions of the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014 (Issued 11/08/2017)

	Total	1
Recommendations	Management concurrences	1
	Management non-concurrences	
Status of Recommendations	Closed	0
Status of Recommendations	Open	1

Open Recommendation

Recommendation 1: We recommend that the Chief Financial Officer implement procedures to ensure that the Federal Trade Commission Financial Management Office evaluates "Period of Performance"

Start Date," "Period of Performance Current End Date," "Period of Performance Potential End Date," and "Action Date" data elements for accuracy on a consistent basis.

Opportunities Exist to Accelerate Maturation of the FTC's Information Technology Governance Practices (Issued 09/30/2016)

	Total	15
Recommendations	Management concurrences	15
	Management non-concurrences	
Status of Decommondations	Closed	14
Status of Recommendations	Open	1

Open Recommendation

Recommendation 13, System Security Plan: Develop a System Security Plan for the mobile device project based on National Institute of Standards and Technology Special Publication 800-53, Revision 4, *Security and Privacy Controls for Federal Information Systems and Organizations*. The plan should leverage the existing Data Center ATO and Maas360 PATO as appropriate.

Appendix III – OIG Reports with Questioned Costs

	Number	Questioned Costs (dollar value)	Unsupported Costs(dollar value)
 For which no management decision has been made by the commencement of the reporting period 	0	0	0
B. Which were issued during the reporting period	0	0	0
Subtotals (A+B)	0	0	0
C. For which a management decision was made during the reporting period	0	0	0
i. dollar value of the disallowed costs	0	0	0
ii. dollar value of the costs not disallowed	0	0	0
D. For which no management decision was made by the end of the reporting period	0	0	0
E. Reports for which no management decision was made within six months of issuance	0	0	0

Appendix IV – Inspector General Issued Reports with Recommendations that Funds be Put to Better Use

	Number	Dollar Value
A. For which no management decision has been made by the commencement of the reporting period	0	0
B. Which were issued during the reporting period	0	0
C. For which a management decision was made during the reporting period	0	0
 i. dollar value of recommendations that were agreed to by management 	0	0
 based on proposed management actions 		
based on proposed legislative actions		
ii. dollar value of recommendations that were not agreed to by management	0	0
D. For which no management decision was made by the end of the reporting period	0	0
Reports for which no management decision was made within six months of issuance	0	0

Appendix V – Summary of each Audit, Inspection, and Evaluation Report Issued before Commencement of the Reporting Period¹

Fiscal Year	Number of Reports with Unimplemented Recommendations	Number of Unimplemented Recommendations	Dollar Value of Aggregate Potential Cost Savings	No FTC Comment Returned Within 60 Days ²
FY 2018	4	6	0	1
FY 2017	0	0	0	0
FY 2016	1	1	0	0
TOTAL for All Fiscal Years	5	7	0	1

¹ In accordance with section 5(a)(10) of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, there were no reports for which a management decision had not been made by the end of the reporting period. There were no reports containing significant revised management decisions or with which the OIG is in disagreement. There are no cost savings associated with the recommendations in this table.

² There was one report (dated September 28, 2018) for which FTC comments were not returned within 60 days of OIG providing a final report. During the comment period, the FTC sought Office of General Counsel guidance on planned corrective actions. The OIG received the corrective action plan on March 18, 2019.

Appendix VI – OIG Investigative Activity During this Reporting Period³

	Number
A. Number of Investigative reports issued	2
B. Number of persons referred to DOJ for criminal prosecution	14
C. Number of persons referred to State and Local authorities for criminal prosecution	0
D. Number of criminal indictments and criminal information resulting from any prior referrals to prosecutive authorities	0

³ These statistics are based on the number of investigative reports issued during this semiannual reporting period; the number of persons referred to federal, state, or local authorities for criminal prosecution during this semiannual reporting period; and the number of criminal indictments/informations that occurred during this semiannual reporting period resulting from referrals made during the current and previous reporting periods.

⁴ The referenced referrals involve OIG consultations with DOJ's Public Integrity Section (PIN). Per PIN's internal policy, the office does not accept formal referrals or offer formal criminal declinations. However, PIN coordinates with various U.S. Attorney's Offices on these matters as appropriate.

Appendix VII – Completed OIG Investigations Involving a Senior Government Employee Where Allegations of Misconduct Were Substantiated⁵

Number of Investigations Involving a Senior Government Employee where Allegations of Misconduct were Substantiated

There was one investigation involving a GS-15 career employee where allegations of misconduct were substantiated.

	Detailed Description
A. Facts and Circumstances of the investigation	We determined a GS-15 career employee violated 18 U.S.C. § 208(a), <i>Acts Affecting a Personal Financial</i> Interest
B. Status and disposition of the matter, including, if referred to DOJ, the date of referral; and, if declined by DOJ, the date of declination	Referred matter to DOJ's Public Integrity Section on July 2, 2018, which informally declined prosecution on July 3, 2018. The OIG subsequently referred the matter to management, which closed it with an informal consultation with the employee.

⁵ The Inspector General Empowerment Act of 2016 defines "senior government employee" as – "(A) an officer or employee in the executive branch (including a special Government employee as defined in section 202 of title 18, United States Code) who occupies a position classified at or above GS–15 of the General Schedule or, in the case of positions not under the General Schedule, for which the rate of basic pay is equal to or greater than 120 percent of the minimum rate of basic pay payable for GS–15 of the General Schedule; and (B) any commissioned officer in the Armed Forces in pay grades O–6 and above."

Appendix VIII – Substantiated Instances of Whistleblower Retaliation

Number of Substantiated Instances of Whistleblower Retaliation		
There were no substantiated instances of whistleblower retaliation.		
	Detailed Description	
A. Information about the official found to have engaged in retaliation	N/A	
B. Any consequences the agency imposed to hold the official accountable	N/A	

Appendix IX – Attempts by the Agency to Interfere with the Independence of the OIG

Number of Attempts by the Agency to Interfere with the Independence of the OIG

The FTC OIG encountered no attempts to interfere with OIG independence.

	Detailed Description
A. Attempts to interfere with budget constraints designed to limit OIG capabilities	N/A
B. Incidents where the agency has resisted or objected to OIG oversight or restricted or significantly delayed OIG access to information, including the justification of the agency for such action	N/A

Appendix X – Closed OIG Matters Not Disclosed to the Public

	Detailed Description
A. Inspections, evaluations, and audits conducted by the OIG that are closed and were not publicly disclosed	N/A
B. Investigations conducted by the OIG involving a senior government employee that are closed and were not publicly disclosed	N/A

Appendix XI – Inspector General Act Reporting Requirements Index

IG Act Reference	Reporting Requirements	Pages(s)
Section 4(a)(2)	Review of legislation and regulations	7
Section 5(a)(1)	Significant problems, abuses and deficiencies	None
Section 5(a)(2)	Recommendations with respect to significant problems, abuses and deficiencies	None
Section 5(a)(3)	Prior significant recommendations on which corrective actions have not been completed	11-13
Section 5(a)(4)	Matters referred to prosecutive authorities	17
Section 5(a)(5)	Summary of instances where information or assistance was unreasonably refused or not provided	None
Section 5(a)(6)	List of reports by subject matter, showing dollar value of questioned costs and funds put to better use	None
Section 5(a)(7)	Summary of each particularly significant report	3-4
Section 5(a)(8)	Statistical tables showing number of reports and dollar value of questioned costs	14
Section 5(a)(9)	Statistical tables showing number of reports and dollar value of recommendations that funds be put to better use	15
Section 5(a)(10)	Summary of each audit, inspection, and evaluation report issued before the commencement of the reporting period (A) for which no management decision has been made by the end of the reporting period; (B) for which no establishment comment was returned within 60 days of providing the report to the establishment; and (C) for which there are any outstanding unimplemented recommendations, including the aggregate potential cost savings of those recommendations	16
Section 5(a)(11)	Significant revised management decisions	None

Section 5(a)(12)	Significant revised management decisions with which the Inspector General disagrees	None
Section 5(a)(14)	Peer reviews conducted by another OIG	None
Section 5(a)(15)	Outstanding recommendations from peer reviews of the OIG	None
Section 5(a)(16)	Outstanding recommendations from peer reviews conducted by the OIG	None
Section 5(a)(17) and (18)	OIG Investigative Activity during this Reporting Period	17
Section 5(a)(19)	OIG Investigations involving Senior Government Employees Where Allegations of Misconduct Were Substantiated	18
Section 5(a)(20)	Substantiated Instances of Whistleblower Retaliation	None
Section 5(a)(21)	Attempts by the Agency to Interfere with OIG Independence	None
Section 5(a)(22)	Closed OIG Matters Not Disclosed to the Public	None

Contact the OIG

Promote integrity, economy & efficiency. Report suspected fraud, waste, abuse or mismanagement.

(202) 326-2800 Fax (202) 326-2034 OIG@ftc.gov

600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, CC-5206 Washington, DC 20580

Complaints may be made anonymously.

Any information you provide will be held in confidence. However, providing your name and means of communicating with you may enhance our ability to investigate.