Presentation to the Federal Audit Executive Council Washington, D.C. November 27, 2012

# Conference Costs and Other Issues

Brian D. Miller Inspector General, U.S. General Services Administration





- Audits
- Investigations
- Forensic Auditing, Evaluation and Analysis



## The Washington Post

NEWS | LOCAL | POLITICS | SPORTS | OPINIONS | BUSINESS | ARTS & LIVING | GOING OUT GUIDE | JOBS | CARS | REAL ESTATE |SHOPPI

### GSA seeks to recover artwork produced in New Deal project

By Ed O'Keefe Washington Post Staff Writer Monday, June 7, 2010; A15

Government watchdogs spend most of their time tracking allegations of waste, fraud and abuse, but some investigators pursue long-lost or stolen government art.

A project quietly launched nine years ago by the agency responsible for most federal property is encouraging art dealers, auctioneers, museums and yard- sale customers to look out for paintings, drawings and sculptures produced by artists paid by the New Deal's Works Progress Administration.

During the Depression, the government paid artists as much as \$42 a week, resulting in more than 20,000 images of sandy beaches, snowy farmland and portraits of everyday people. Many submissions are still displayed at schools, libraries, hospitals and post offices. The art usually carries a WPA marker, and National Archives records can account for most of the pieces.

Responsibility for the art -- valued from \$3 to \$250,000 for a painting by John French Sloan -- was transferred to the General Services Administration when the WPA was dissolved after World War II. GSA's <u>Fine Arts Program</u> manages more than 19,000 paintings, murals and statues at federal buildings nationwide, because federal law requires government-owned buildings to display artwork.

But the office is also on the lookout for WPA art that was misplaced, stolen or given away when the program ended. GSA's inspector general got involved in 2001 when some of the art started showing up on eBay and at auction houses.



## **GSA OIG Fiscal Year 2012 Results**

• \$298.5 million in criminal, civil, administrative and other recoveries

 \$663 million in recommendations of funds be put to better use and in questioned costs

 \$547 million in management decisions agreeing with audit results

- 70 criminal indictments / informations
- 67 successful prosecutions
- 10 civil settlements
- 99 audit reports, 24 audit memoranda
- 284 suspensions/debarments

## **Audits**



"By doing that, we assure that the federal government is getting the best deal and the best prices that it can get," hittier said in a recent interview with Federal Times. "Obviously, if we had more resources, we could do more."

#### GSA must secure online construction data, audit

#### finds

Public Building Service needs to lock down sensitive building project data when posting in a shared online intranet

By <u>Matthew Weigelt</u> - Apr 05, 2010

The General Services Administration needs greater security for its sensitive building information in online environments, according to a <u>new report</u>.

Officials in GSA's Public Building Service (PBS) began using electronic project management software applications (e-PMs) in the 1990s to more easily share project information.

However, they put sensitive information at risk by using the e-PMs and other "groupware," such as intranet Web sites, according to a GSA inspector general's audit report. The report was released March 31. Even so, officials have not included these online systems under the purview of its security program or ensured that the e-PMs comply with Federal Information Security Management Act requirements.

#### News: Watchdog WATCHDOGS: IG says GSAers don't know their stuff

May 30, 2012 0 Comments

A new report from the General Services Administration's Inspector-General (IG) says managers of the telecommunications division in the agency's Pacific Rim Region don't know what's in their inventory, what they are paying for some of it, or even, at least recently, who is in charge of the shop that does the buying.

## Investigations

### Former White House official in prison for lying about ties to lobbyist

SEPTEMBER 23RD, 2011 | UNCATEGORIZED | POSTED BY SARAH CHACKO

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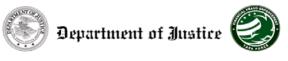
David Safavian, the Bush-era White House official who accepted a lavish trip to Scotland from lobbyist and friend Jack Abramoff, has entered federal prison for lying to federal officials about his dealings with the lobbyist.

Safavian is serving a year sentence at Federal Medical Center Devens in Massachusetts for obstruction of justice and lying to federal ethics officers, investigators and Congress about his relationship with Abramoff and the 2002 excursion. He entered the prison's custody on July 26, according to the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

Safavian was first convicted in 2006. That conviction was overturned by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, which said the Justice Department failed to show Safavian had a legal obligation to disclose such information to the ethics officer and found the trial court had improperly barred Safavian from calling expert witnesses who could have helped his defense.

Safavian was convicted a second time in December 2008 and attempted to overturn his conviction. But Judge Paul Friedman of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia ruled that Safavian was not entitled to have his conviction overturned or a new trial.

Safavian was General Services Administration chief of staff at the time of the golf trip. He was head of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy at the time of his arrest.



United States Attorney Loretta E. Lynch Eastern District of New York

> 271 Cadman Plaza East Brooklyn, New York 11201

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 24, 2012

Contact:

Robert Nardoza United States Attorney's Office (718) 254-6323

#### PRESS RELEASE

#### CONSTRUCTION GIANT LEND LEASE (Dk/n BOVIS) CHARGED WITH DEFRAUDING CLIENTS IN THREE SEPARATE SCHEMES – WILL PAY OVER \$50 MILLION AND INSTITUTE COMPREHENSIVE REFORMS

#### Former Principal in Charge of Bovis's New York Office Pleads Guilty to Fraud Charge – Faces up to 20 Years in Prison

Earlier today, the U.S. Attomey's Office for the Eastern District of New York filed fraud charges against the construction firm Lend Lease (US) Construction LMB Inc. (formerly Bovis Lend Lease LMB Inc.) ("Bovis") and James Abadie, the former Principal in Charge of Bovis's New York office. Abadie pled guilty this morning in United States District Court to conspiring to commit mail and wire fraud by fraudulently overbilling Bovis's clients for over a decade. Also this morning, Bovis entered into a deferred prosecution agreement with the U.S. Attomey's Office for the Eastern District of New York and the New York County District Attomey's Office in which Bovis admitted to fraudulently overbilling clients for over 10 years. Bovis also admitted defnauding two of its public clients by falsely misrepresenting the work performed by its minority business enterprise partners, thus fraudulently obtaining payments on lucrative contracts. The deferred prosecution agreement requires Bovis to pay up to \$56 million in penalties to the federal government and restitution to victims, and to institute far-reaching corporate reforms designed to eliminate future problems and enforce best industry practices.



#### Pay phone owner gets 3 months in \$4M fraud case

Wedneeday - 1/4/2012, 6:02pm ET By JESSICA GRESKO Associated Press

GREENBELT, Md. - A Washington-area pay phone owner who rigged phones to automatically dial toll-free numbers, fraudulently ringing up \$4 million in 50-cent fees, was sentenced Wednesday to three months in prison.

Nicolaos Kantartzis pleaded guilty in September to using more than 100 pay phones to make phantom calls. Because the calls are free to legitimate users, the party getting the call pays costs that include a cut for the pay phone operator. Kantartzis, 63, was paid each time his phones rang the numbers, even though most calls lasted only a few seconds.

Authorities said his scheme spanned six years and some 8 million bogus calls

### Daily Press

#### Man guilty in \$298,000 gas fraud case

Couple bilked government by using gas cards designed for fleet of cars at Fort Monroe

#### June 06, 2011 | By Peter Dujardin, pdujardin@dailypress.com 247-4745

NEWPORT NEWS — A Hampton man was found guilty Monday of biking the government out of \$298,000 by traudulently using gas cards designed for a feet of government-owned vehicles at Fort Monroe.

After deliberating for about three hours, the jury found Lanaire E. White, 30, pully of all 16 charges he faced: conspiracy to commit area flaud, nine counts of wire flaud; theft of government property, unsuthinized access to a device, and fation in occasion of a finame.

Surveillance video shot in June 2010 showed White using sands to gas up several people's vehicles at a Hampton gas station. Winnesses said heay'd pay a out rate for the gas — 31.60 a gallon in cash — with White postering the monay. Proseculars and the advence work of not more than here varse.

Eight people — just a haolon of the actual number, proseoutors say — said they bought gas from White, often at a gas station on Harry Cash Dine. One businer tested in the bught 30 tanks of desail fuel at the suit rate. Another man said he bought aboud 50 tank loads for in a turnmen.

Another key witness. White's ex-write. Collean Newton-White. 36, once the galakseper for 68 base vehicles at Fort Konnex, was includy charged in the scheme along with White. But the pleaded guity on May 4, saying she took the cards from the base. She testified india week against here ex.

The three-day tilal at U.S. District Court in Newport News was not without some theater, with White saying he's a member of the Moorish National Republic, a separatist group claiming not to be bound by U.S. Iaw.

## **Forensic Auditing**

## **A new tactic in the fight on fraud** Federal auditors launch forensics teams

#### By ELISE CASTELLI

ecastelli@federaltimes.com

hen most people think of forensics, they think of the TV show "CSI" where fibers can unravel a suspect's alibi in 60 minutes flat, less commercials.

Now, federal auditors are starting to use forensic methods to

#### root out fraud.

Inspector general criminal investigators have used forensics techniques for years to investigate fraud, embezzlement, cyber espionage and other crimes. But not IG auditors — until recently.

Forensic auditing combines advanced computer investigative work — such as data mining and analysis, combing the content of computer hard drives, and conducting in-depth Web searches with traditional auditing and accounting techniques to investigate fraud.

The General Services Administration inspector general's office last summer rolled out a five-person team devoted to using forensic auditing techniques to dig up evi-*See FORENSICS, Page 19* 





#### MATT J. WHITWORTH

Contact Don Ledford, Public Affairs • (816) 426-4220 • 400 East Ninth Street, Room 5510 • Kansas City, MO 64106 www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/index.html

AUGUST 13, 2009 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### FORMER FEDERAL EMPLOYEE SENTENCED FOR EMBEZZLING NEARLY \$600,000

KANSAS CITY, Mo. - Matt J. Whitworth, Acting United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a former federal government employee was sentenced in federal court today for embezzling nearly \$600,000 from the government.

Michael T. Harrington, 44, of Lee's Summit, Mo., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Dean Whipple this afternoon to three years and one month in federal prison without parole. The court also ordered Harrington to pay \$593,549 in restitution.

Harrington was employed as a supervisory accountant at GSA. On Feb. 24, 2009, Harrington pleaded guilty to stealing \$593,549 between May 9, 2006, and May 5, 2008, while he was employed at the GSA office at 1500 E. Barnister Rd., Kansas City. Harrington admitted that he created 13 government refund payment vouchers made payable to the MWR Fund, a fictitious business entity he created, and directed the checks to be deposited into the find's bank account.

New tactics reduce purchase card fraud



GSA Inspector General Brian Miller warned that those who abuse federal fleet, travel and purchase cards will be caught. (Chris Maddaloni / Staff)

## Western Regions Conference

## OIG found:



Office of Investigations Office of Inspector General U.S. General Services Administration

Management Deficiency Report: General Services Administration Public Buildings Service

2010 WESTERN REGIONS CONFERENCE

April 2, 2012

GSA followed neither federal

procurement laws nor its own policy on conference spending in many instances.

Excessive, wasteful, and

impermissible expenditures.

Phase	Description	Costs
Pre-Conference	Travel, Catering, Vendors, and Other Hotel Costs	\$136,504
Conference	Travel, Catering, and Vendors	\$686,247
TOTAL		\$822,751



1800 F Street, NW | Washington, DC 20405

www.gsaig.gov

## **Conference Planning**

<pre><a \$="" \$<="" <="" a="" pre="" r=""></a></pre>	March '09	Five GSA employees conducted a "scouting trip" to visit nine Las Vegas- area hotels.	
PALACE LAS VEGAS	March '09	Fifteen GSA employees returned to visit two of the nine hotels again, staying at the M Resort and the Ritz-Carlton.	
	August '09	Seven GSA employees stayed at the M Resort for a planning meeting.	THE RITZ-CARLTON*
	November '09	A second WRC planning meeting, attended by 11 GSA employees, was held at the M Resort following Region 9's leadership council meeting.	HERE'S CALLOUT
	March '10	Sixteen GSA employees stayed at the M Resort again for a planning meeting.	
Marriott	June '10	Nine GSA employees attended another planning meeting, this one at a Marriott Hotel in Denver, Colorado.	M
	August '10	Twenty-one GSA employees attended a conference planning meeting at the M Resort.	resort - spa - casino Las vegas
	October '10	Thirty-one GSA employees traveled to the M Resort for a "dry run" of the conference to be held later that month.	

- Over \$130,000 to plan the conference
  - \$100,405 in employee travel costs
  - \$30,000 for "scouting trip", planning meetings, and dry run
- \$44 lunches and \$40 breakfasts

## **Improper Contracting**







## **Excessive Spending on Food**



Food and Beverage Catering	Costs
Light Refreshments and Breakfast Buffets	\$ 79,511
In-Room Parties	\$ 5,600
Networking Reception	\$ 31,208
Cocktail Reception and Award Dinner	\$ 30,208
TOTAL	\$146,527









## Other Impermissible and Questionable Expenses













## The Washington Post

### GSA chief resigns amid reports of excessive spending

### By Lisa Rein and Joe Davidson, Published: April 2

The chief of the General Services Administration resigned, two of her top deputies were fired and four managers were placed on leave Monday amid reports of lavish spending at a conference off the Las Vegas Strip that featured a clown, a mind reader and a \$31,208 reception.

Administrator Martha N. Johnson, in her resignation letter, acknowledged a "significant misstep" at the agency that manages real estate for the federal government. "Taxpayer dollars were squandered," she wrote. At the start of her tenure in February 2010 she called ethics "a big issue for me."

Public Buildings Service chief <u>Robert A. Peck</u>, a fixture in the Washington area real estate community on his second stint running the department, was forced out, along with Johnson's top adviser, Stephen Leeds. Four GSA managers who organized the four-day conference in October 2010 have been placed on adminstrative leave, officials said.

The leadership collapse came hours before <u>GSA Inspector General Brian D. Miller released a scathing report</u> on the \$823,000 training conference, held for 300 West Coast employees at the M Resort and Casino, an opulent hotel in Henderson, Nev., just south of Las Vegas. From \$130,000 in travel expenses for six scouting trips to a \$2,000 party in Peck's loft suite, event planners violated federal limits on conference spending.

### The Washington Times

### Top GSA official tried to hide report on Vegas bash

Wanted to avoid 'muffin' scandal

💭 COMMENTS (85) 🖓 SIZE: + / - 📇 PRINT



By Jim McElhatton - The Washington Times

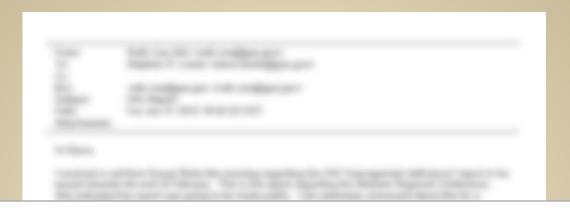
Tuesday, June 5, 2012



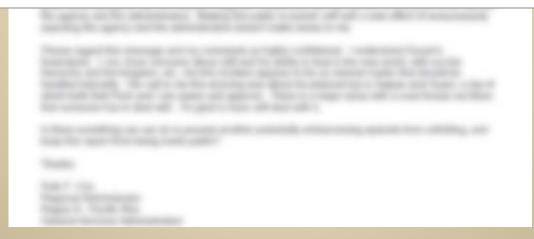
Enlarge Photo 🕀

Some of the hundreds of snapshots posted on an internal GSA website ... more > A top administrator at the General Services Administration who worked on President Obama's presidential transition team sought to keep secret the agency report that uncovered massive waste at a lavish taxpayerfunded GSA conference in Las Vegas, records show.

The 2010 conference, which cost \$823,000 and featured a mind-reader, clowns, magicians and a red-carpet party, forced the ouster of several top GSA officials after the agency's Office of Inspector General released its findings in April.

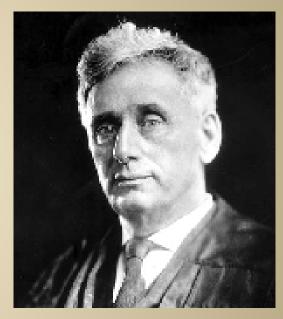


Is there something we can do to prevent another potentially embarrassing episode from unfolding, and keep this report from being made public?



"Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants; electric light the most efficient policeman."

- Justice Louis D. Brandeis



# GSA is achieving greater efficiencies and more savings as a result of GSA OIG's work.

## GSA Saves More Than \$11 Million in Initial Travel and Conference Reforms

August 27, 2012

WASHINGTON — Today, the U.S. General Services Administration announced that the agency is projected to save more than \$11 million in taxpayer dollars through an initial set of policies implemented in April 2012 by the new head of the agency, Dan Tangherlini, to cut travel and conference costs. A financial audit showed that since April 2012 and through the rest of the fiscal year, more than \$11 million has been saved in meetings, conferences, trainings and travel costs. This is just one step in the ongoing top to bottom review of all agency operations.

"Four months ago we began a rigorous top to bottom review of all agency operations. We've made significant cuts in travel and conference spending and these savings are just the beginning," said GSA Acting Administrator Tangherlini. "We are deepening our commitment to promoting efficiency, driving steeper bargains, delivering better value, and creating greater opportunities for savings here at GSA and across the government."

To date, GSA has cancelled 47 conferences and implemented strong oversight to ensure that all travel and events are limited to necessary and essential functions. Tangherlini has consolidated oversight of conference and travel expenses in the new Office of Administrative Services.

Recently, Tangherlini also cut \$500,000 in executive bonuses and instituted a hiring freeze across the agency through the end of the fiscal year while his review of all agency operations is underway.

The new leadership at GSA will continue to make changes to make the agency more accountable, transparent, and efficient as part of the ongoing top to bottom review.

#### Last Reviewed 08/27/2012

## Fraud



"There is no kind of dishonesty into which otherwise good people more easily and frequently fall than that of defrauding the government."

-Benjamin Franklin

## Oracle to pay government \$200M in false-claims settlement

#### By SARAH CHACKO schacko@federaltimes.com

Oracle Corp. will pay \$199.5 million to settle claims that it lied about sales practices and discounts and ultimately cost the government millions of dollars in higher prices, the Justice Department announced last week.

Oracle, based in Redwood City, Calif., was awarded a contract in 1998 to sell software licenses and technical support to government agencies through the General Services Administration's Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) program, which allows companies to sell to multiple agencies under one contract. 'It's more important now than ever before to make sure that taxpayer dollars are not wasted on higher prices.'

Brian Miller GSA INSPECTOR GENERAL

To be awarded an MAS contract, contractors must agree to disclose commercial pricing policies and practices. Oracle's contract also included a price reduction clause, which required the company to offer greater discounts to the government than it did its commercial customers.

The settlement resolves a False Claims Act lawsuit that alleges Oracle intentionally gave GSA inaccurate information about discounts it gave to commercial customers and failed to pass those discounts on to the government.

It is the largest False Claims Act settlement that GSA has ever obtained, according to the Justice Department.

"It's more important now than ever before to make sure that taxpayer dollars are not wasted on higher prices," GSA Inspector General Brian Miller said in a statement. "We will not let contractors victimize the taxpayers by hiding their best prices."

Oracle denies any wrongdoing, company spokeswoman Deborah Hellinger said in an email.

"The company has always had strong controls in place to insure that the government agencies who purchased from the GSA schedule received fair pricing," she said.

Given the amount of time since the contract was awarded, many witnesses are no longer available or do not clearly recall the events, Hellinger said. Oracle settled to "avoid the distraction and high cost of litigation," she said.

"We remain committed to the highest principles of integrity in our relationships with government customers," she said.

The lawsuit was filed on behalf of the government by former Oracle employee, Paul Frascella, who will receive \$40 million as his share of the recovery in the case. □

## **Fraud Prevention**

- Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force
- Information sharing
  - FAPIIS, Public and Private Sector Outreach Committee
- Suspension and debarment
- New regulations (FAR Contractor Reporting Rule)
- More proactive efforts

## **Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force**

Established by Executive Order 13519

 "Broadest coalition of law enforcement, investigatory and regulatory agencies ever assembled to combat fraud."

The Washington Post

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#### Task force to take up financial fraud cases

By Zachary A. Goldfarb Washington Post Staff Writer Wednesday, November 18, 2009; A15

Top Obama administration officials on Tuesday announced a new federal task force to combat financial fraud after deciding that the number and complexity of investigations linked to the economic crisis require a more coordinated response from government agencies.

Created by executive order, the Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force targets fraud related to mortgage lending and modification, securities law, stimulus spending and the government's bailout of the financial sector.

"This task force's mission is not just to hold accountable those who helped bring about the last financial meltdown, but to prevent another meltdown from happening," Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. said at a news conference at the Justice Department.

# Co-chair Public and Private Sector Outreach Committee

http://www.gsaig.gov/index.cfm?LinkServID=C4C89080-D2BE-D29A-96355D44A13E4356

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### State Sites with Excluded Vendor Information

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Window on State Government   Páginas en español   Con     Susan Combs Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts   Site Search							
				(	Quick Start for: Citize	ns Business Gov	rernment
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FAQ Debarred	Vendor List		Vendor ID Number	Vendor Name/Addre	Date of ss Debarrment	Length of Debarrment	
			17601350246	Blast Incorporated 1208 Iowa Street South Houston, TX 77587	November 2, 2009	6 Years	
			14319583135	Blue Moon Solutions, Inc. 12117 Bee Caves Rd. Sui 180 Austin, TX 78738		, 5 Years	
			17603361605	Daystar Residential, Inc. 3926 Bahler Manvel, TX 77578	May 17, 2011	5 Years	
			11343506066	DBuilders2 LLC. PO Box 248 Mansfield, TX 76063	September 19 2011	9, 5 Years	
			1311799583000	Fine Line Products 5533 Glasgow Place Columbus, Ohio 43235	October 15, 2009	5 Years	
			16114778208	Robopack Systems Corporation 10836 Grissom Lane Ste. 110 Dallas, TX 75229	December 11, 2009	, 3 Years	
			12001717417	Spartan Filtration dba: New Life Environmental, Inc. 1461 Avilla Drive Perris, CA 92571	November 2, 2007	5 Years	



#### Silvers Sold Counterfeit Smoke Detectors Before

Submitted by Jennifer Mayerle - email



ATLANTA (CBS ATLANTA) - Atlanta News has uncovered the company that sold the fake smoke detectors to the Atlanta Fire Rescue Department had done it before.

Before Silver Sails sold counterfeit smoke detectors to Atlanta, they sold fakes to the federal government. Owners Bob and Judie Silver plead guilty in that case.

The Silvers won a bid to provide smoke detectors to General Services Administration in 2004. That's the federal government.

"GSA purchased over 20,000 of these smoke alarms," said GSA Inspector General Brian Miller. The smoke detectors were sent to various federal offices around the country. But soon after receiving them, Miller said they realized there was a problem.



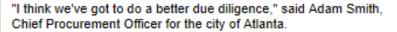


### Atlanta's Department of Procurement will change policy after CBS Atlanta News Investigation

Posted: Jun 09, 2011 4:57 PM EDT Updated: Nov 08, 2011 7:15 PM EST

By Jennifer Mayerle - email

ATLANTA (CBS ATLANTA) - CBS Atlanta's Jennifer Mayerle uncovered a five minute search on the Internet could have saved the Atlanta Fire Rescue Department from buying more than 18,000 counterfeit smoke detectors. The exclusive investigation led to the recall. And it prompted an internal investigation in the Department of Procurement.





## **Suspension and Debarment**



## FAR Contract Clause – Mandatory Disclosure

### 52.203–13 Contractor Code of Business Ethics and Conduct.

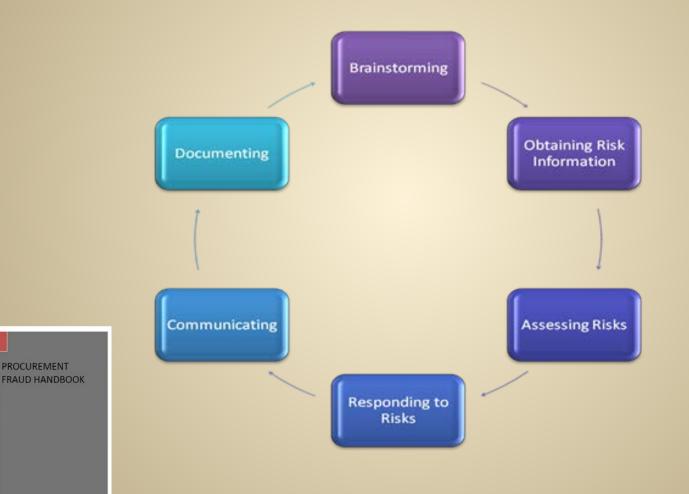
(3)(i) The Contractor shall timely disclose, in writing, to the agency Office of the Inspector General (OIG), with a copy to the Contracting Officer, whenever, in connection with the award, performance, or closeout of this contract or any subcontract thereunder, the Contractor has credible evidence that a principal, employee, agent, or subcontractor of the Contractor has committed—

(A) A violation of Federal criminal law involving fraud, conflict of interest, bribery, or gratuity violations found in Title 18 of the United States Code; or

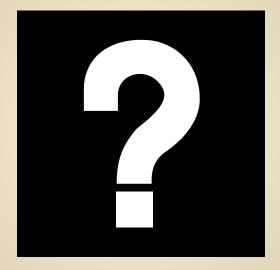
(B) A violation of the civil False Claims Act (31 U.S.C. 3729–3733).



## **Fraud Audit Process**



## Questions



Brian D. Miller brian.miller@gsaig.gov

Sarah Breen sarah.breen@gsaig.gov