

Report No. 05-INTEL-20  
September 27, 2005  
Final Report

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
OFFICE OF  
INSPECTOR GENERAL**



**DEPUTY INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR INTELLIGENCE**

**Allegation of an Unfair Promotion  
at the National Security Agency  
Office of the Inspector General**

**~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~**

### **Additional Information and Copies**

The Office of the Deputy Inspector General for Intelligence of the Department of Defense prepared this report. If you have questions or would like to obtain additional copies of the report, contact (b) (6) at (703) 604- (b) (6) (DSN 664- (b) (6) or (b) (6) at (703) 604- (b) (6) (DSN 664- (b) (6)

### **Suggestions for Future Evaluations**

To suggest ideas for or to request future evaluations of Defense intelligence issues, contact the Office of the Deputy Inspector General for Intelligence at (703) 604-8896 (DSN 664-8896) or fax (703) 604-0045. Ideas and requests can also be mailed to:

Office of the Deputy Inspector General for Intelligence  
Department of Defense Office of Inspector General  
400 Army Navy Drive (Room 703)  
Arlington, VA 22202-4704

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

**hotline**

**To report fraud, waste, mismanagement, and abuse of authority.**

Send written complaints to: Defense Hotline, The Pentagon, Washington, DC 20301-1900  
Phone: 800.424.9098 e-mail: [hotline@dodig.osd.mil](mailto:hotline@dodig.osd.mil) [www.dodig.mil/hotline](http://www.dodig.mil/hotline)



INSPECTOR GENERAL  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
400 ARMY NAVY DRIVE  
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22202-4704

SEP 27 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR INSPECTOR GENERAL, NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY  
DIRECTOR, ASSOCIATE DIRECTORATE OF HUMAN  
RESOURCES, NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY

SUBJECT: Assessment of Allegation of an Unfair Promotion at the National Security Agency  
Office of the Inspector General (Report No. 05-INTEL-20)

We are providing this report for your information and use. No written response to this report was required, and none was received. Therefore, we are publishing this report in final form.

We appreciate the courtesies extended to (b) (6). Questions should be directed to (b) (6) at (703) 604-(b) (6) (DSN 664-(b) (6)) or (b) (6) at (703) 604-(b) (6) (DSN 664-(b) (6)). See Appendix B for the report distribution. The team members are listed inside the back cover.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shelton Young".

Shelton R. Young  
Acting Deputy Inspector General  
for Intelligence

~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

**This Page Left Blank Intentionally**

~~**FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**~~

## Department of Defense Office of Inspector General

Report No.05-INTEL-20

(Project No. D2005-DINT01-0257.000)

September 27, 2005

### Allegation of an Unfair Promotion at the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General

#### Executive Summary

**Who Should Read This Report and Why?** Managers and supervisors at the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General who are responsible for selecting subordinates for promotion should read this report because it is an assessment of a Hotline complaint that the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General engaged in unfair promotion practices.

**Background.** We conducted this assessment in response to an allegation made to the National Security Agency Hotline that the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General engaged in unfair promotion practices in the Office of Audits. This report addresses allegations related to the promotion of an auditor to the grades of GG-12 and GG-13.

The allegation consists of four issues:

- Inconsistent and unfair application of guidance regarding the 2 year probationary trial period for all new hires to the Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System.
- Improper certification for promotion to the next higher grade.
- Violation of time-in-grade requirements for promotion.
- Promotion to GG-12 and GG-13 prior to the end of the 2 year probationary trial period.

**Results.** We did not substantiate the allegation. Effective October 1, 2002, the National Security Agency did establish a 2 year probationary trial period for new hires; however, there is no prohibition that states an employee cannot be promoted during that 2 year period, nor does the National Security Agency have a time-in-grade or certification requirement for promotions.

**Management Comments.** We provided a draft of this report on September 2, 2005. No written response to this report was required and none was received. Therefore, we are publishing this report in final form.

~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

**This Page Left Blank Intentionally**

~~**FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**~~

# Table of Contents

---

<b>Executive Summary</b>	i
<b>Background</b>	1
<b>Objectives</b>	1
<b>Finding</b>	
National Security Agency Performance Standards and Promotion Practices	2
<b>Appendixes</b>	
A. Scope and Methodology	5
B. Report Distribution	6

**This Page Left Blank Intentionally**

**~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~**



---

## Background

On June 30, 2005, the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General received an anonymous Hotline complaint from one of its employees alleging that the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General engaged in unfair promotion practices in the Office of Audits. The complaint resulted from the recent announcement of the June 2005 promotions and, specifically, the promotion of an auditor to the grade of GG-13. The complainant alleged that the auditor should not have been eligible for promotion until the auditor's 2 year probationary trial appointment period had been successfully completed in March 2006. The basis for the complaint was a perception of inconsistent and unfair application of the guidance regarding the trial period for all new hires to the Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System.

## Objectives

The overall objective was to assess the validity of the allegation levied in the anonymous Hotline complaint. See Appendix A for a discussion of the scope and methodology.

## Management Control Program Review

We did not review the management control program of the National Security Agency or the Office of the Inspector General because we limited the scope of the assessment to the allegations that the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General engaged in unfair promotion practices in the Office of Audits, violated time-in-grade and certification requirements, and unfairly and inconsistently applied the guidance regarding the trial period for all new hires to the Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System.

---

## **National Security Agency Performance Standards and Promotion Practices**

We did not substantiate the allegation that the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General engaged in unfair promotion practices in the Office of Audits. Specifically, the complaint alleged that:

- The National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General inconsistently and unfairly applied the guidance regarding the 2 year probationary trial period for all new hires to the Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System.
- The National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General promoted a junior auditor who was improperly certified for promotion to the next higher grade.
- The National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General violated time-in-grade requirements for promotion.
- The National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General promoted a junior auditor to the grades of GG-12 and GG-13 before the end of the 2 year probationary trial period.

### **Institution of the Two Year Probationary Trial Appointment Period at the National Security Agency**

We did not substantiate that the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General inconsistently and unfairly applied the guidance regarding the 2 year probationary trial period for all new hires to the Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System. The purpose of the trial period is to allow managers and supervisors enough time to assess the employee's qualifications and suitability for continued employment. The National Security Agency determined that 1 year was often not sufficient to adequately evaluate employees' performance and allow time for necessary training. Therefore, effective October 1, 2002, the Director, National Security Agency increased the probationary trial period from 1 year to 2 years. The new guidance also aligned National Security Agency practices with other intelligence agencies' practices. The new guidance does not require employees who are hired with or without a break in service from another Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System agency to serve another trial period.

### **Certification Requirements**

We did not substantiate that the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General promoted a junior auditor who was improperly certified for promotion to the next higher grade.

---

The complainant alleged that the auditor did not possess a master's degree or any other special certifications that would qualify the auditor for promotion to a higher grade. Certification is not a requirement for promotion. Section 2, "Promotion Criteria," paragraph 2-3 "Self-Development Considerations," subparagraphs a. "College Degrees" and b. "External Certifications and Credentials" of the National Security Agency's Personnel Management Manual – 337 states that while college degrees and certifications provide managers with insight into an employee's technical focus and may enhance an employee's competitiveness for promotion, neither is a mandatory requirement for promotion at any level.

## **Time-in-Grade Requirements**

We did not substantiate that the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General violated time-in-grade requirements. The complainant alleged that the auditor entered on duty to the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General as a GG-11 in March 2004 and was subsequently promoted to GG-12 in the summer of 2004 before the end of the 2 year probationary trial period. The complainant also alleged that the auditor was promoted to the grade of GG-13 prior to the end of the 2 year probationary trial period.

Time-in-grade is not a requirement for promotion within the National Security Agency. Section 2, "Promotion Criteria," of the National Security Agency's Personnel Management Manual – 337 states that to become eligible for promotion employees must achieve an overall rating of "Met Objectives" or higher on their most recent rating of record. In most instances, employees work at least 90 days for their current manager to receive a rating of record; however, managers who wish to nominate an employee who has never received a performance appraisal may do so when an exception to the policy is granted.

## **Promotions to Grades GG-12 and GG-13**

We did not substantiate that the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General promoted a junior auditor to the grade of GG-12 prior to the end of the 2 year probationary trial period. The complainant alleged that the auditor entered on duty to the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General as a GG-11 in March 2004 and was subsequently promoted to GG-12 in the summer of 2004. A review of the auditor's personnel file showed that the auditor was hired on March 10, 2004, as a GG-12, Step 1, with a subsequent report date of March 22, 2004.

Although the auditor was promoted to GG-13, Step 1 in June 2005, we did not substantiate that the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General violated time-in-grade requirements by promoting a junior auditor to the grade of GG-13 prior to the end of the 2 year probationary trial period. A review of the documentation for the auditor's promotion showed that the auditor was promoted within the National Security Agency guidelines for promotion.

---

Because there are no time-in-grade requirements for promotion, the auditor was eligible for promotion within that promotion cycle. The promotion documentation was completed as required and contained the following:

- The promotion review package, which contains the internal staffing resume, copies of performance evaluations (P3s) at the current grade, and the employee and rater profiles. All personnel are responsible for preparing a performance review package for their managers to review. The auditor did complete the performance review package and provided the package to the audit manager.
- Audit Manager's Nomination Justification Statement for Promotion to GG-13.
- Audit Manager's Nomination Priority List – FY 2005.
- National Security Agency Inspector General's FY 2005 Nomination Priority List for the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General.

## **Conclusion**

We did not substantiate that the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General engaged in an unfair promotion in the Office of Audits, nor did we substantiate that the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General violated time-in-grade or certification requirements, or inconsistently and unfairly applied the guidance regarding the 2 year probationary trial period for all new hires to the Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System.

---

## Appendix A. Scope and Methodology

To assess the allegation made to the National Security Agency Hotline that the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General engaged in an unfair promotion in the Office of Audits, we reviewed the auditor's personnel file and promotion package, we reviewed the policies concerning the increase in the probationary trial period from 1 year to 2 years, and we also reviewed the promotion policies of the National Security Agency. We did not discuss the allegations with the complainant because the complaint was submitted anonymously.

We performed this assessment from August 8, 2005, through August 24, 2005. We did not review the management control program because the scope of the assessment was limited to the allegations that the National Security Agency Office of the Inspector General engaged in an unfair promotion in the Office of Audits, violated time-in-grade and certification requirements, and inconsistently and unfairly applied the guidance regarding the 2 year probationary trial period for all new hires to the Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System.

---

## Appendix B. Report Distribution

### National Security Agency

Inspector General, National Security Agency

Director, Associate Directorate of Human Resources, National Security Agency

## Team Members

The Department of Defense Office of the Deputy Inspector General for Intelligence prepared this report. Personnel of the Department of Defense Office of Inspector General who contributed to the report are listed below.

Shelton R. Young

(b) (6)

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the text below the name Shelton R. Young.