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*"Rummaging in the government's attic"*

Description of document: Federal Trade Commission (FTC) records provided to Senator Charles E. Grassley and Senator Tom Coburn concerning the independence of Inspectors General necessary to promote efficiency and prevent fraud, waste and abuse in agency programs, in response to the Senators' inquiry, 2011-2012

Requested: 15-April-2012

Released date: 03-July-2012

Posted date: 23-July-2012

Source of document: Freedom of Information Act Request  
Office of General Counsel  
Federal Trade Commission  
600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20580  
Fax: (202) 326-2477  
Email: [FOIA@FTC.GOV](mailto:FOIA@FTC.GOV)

Note: This is one of several files on the same subject for various agencies available on governmentattic.org. See: <http://www.governmentattic.org/6docs/GrassleyCoburn.htm>

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United States of America  
FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20580

JUL 03 2012

Re: FOIA-2012-00850  
Biannual Response to Senators  
Grassley and Coburn

This is in response to your request dated April 15, 2012 under the Freedom of Information Act seeking access to biannual responses to Senators Grassley and Coburn regarding their April 2010 request to the FTC Office of Inspector General. In accordance with the FOIA and agency policy, we have searched our records, as of May 1, 2012, the date we received your request in our FOIA office. We have located eight pages of responsive records. You are granted full access to the responsive records, which are enclosed.

If you are not satisfied with this response to your request, you may appeal by writing to Freedom of Information Act Appeal, Office of the General Counsel, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington D.C. 20580 or by facsimile at (202) 326-2477, within 30 days of the date of this letter. Please enclose a copy of your original request and a copy of this response.

If you have any questions about the way we are handling your request or about the FOIA regulations or procedures, please contact Sarah Corrigan at (202) 326-2363.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah M. Mathias".

Sarah M. Mathias  
Associate General Counsel



OFFICE OF  
INSPECTOR GENERAL

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20580

June 11, 2010

The Honorable Tom Coburn  
Ranking Member  
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations  
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Ranking Member Coburn:

As the Inspector General for the Federal Trade Commission, I thank you for your continued support. Your efforts have been instrumental in maintaining an effective and independent Inspector General community. I am pleased to report that I have strong support from the Chairman of the agency and that there is a healthy tension between the Office of the Inspector General and the agency staff.

In regards to your question regarding agency efforts to interfere, limit or block investigations, audits or evaluations, we have not experienced that in any meaningful way. Any efforts in the past that could be construed as such were quickly resolved when brought to the attention of senior management. In fact, on one sensitive matter, agency management designated a liaison to ensure that Inspector General requests for information are answered completely and in a timely manner.

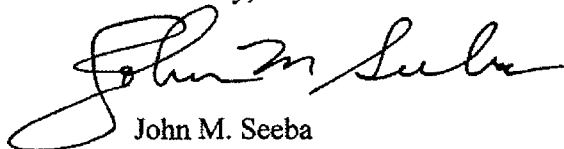
To address your second question on providing biannual reports on all closed investigations, evaluations, and audit conducted by our office that have not been disclosed to the public, we have nothing to report. All information of this nature either has been disclosed to the public in our semiannual reports to Congress or published in separate audit reports that are available on our website. See [www.ftc.gov/oig](http://www.ftc.gov/oig). Any currently-issued internal memoranda to management are part of current projects or investigations and will be reported in the semiannual report to Congress after the matters are closed.

The third issue raised in your letter relates to the budget of the Office of Inspector General. While our budget has been sufficient for our size, we are currently awaiting approval for a requested increase of one FTE to increase our audit staffing. This request has been approved in the past, however due to continuing resolutions and tight budgets,

we have not seen this FTE come to reality. In fact, the most recent budget for fiscal year 2011 eliminated this previously approved FTE for our office. While we understand that the current economic situation may further delay this proposed staffing increase, we are confident that once funding becomes available that our request will be fulfilled. We have never been threatened with a reduction to our budget as a result of any of our work or potential communications with Congress. In fact, any requests for increases in funding for travel, training, or similar expense items have been approved by agency senior management. Again, I would reiterate that we have a healthy tension with management at the FTC, and while we do not agree on all issues, there appears to be a great respect for our independence and the work we do.

Finally, you should be in receipt of a copy of our reply to Representative Issa, the Ranking Member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 202-326-2800.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John M. Seeba". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "S".

John M. Seeba  
Inspector General



FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20580

June 11, 2010

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Ranking Member Grassley:

As the Inspector General for the Federal Trade Commission, I thank you for your continued support. Your efforts have been instrumental in maintaining an effective and independent Inspector General community. I am pleased to report that I have strong support from the Chairman of the agency and that there is a healthy tension between the Office of the Inspector General and the agency staff.

In regards to your question regarding agency efforts to interfere, limit or block investigations, audits or evaluations, we have not experienced that in any meaningful way. Any efforts in the past that could be construed as such were quickly resolved when brought to the attention of senior management. In fact, on one sensitive matter, agency management designated a liaison to ensure that Inspector General requests for information are answered completely and in a timely manner.

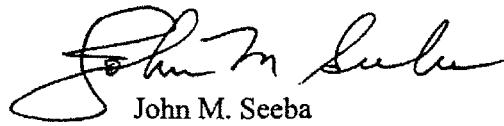
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2011 eliminated this previously approved FTE for our office. While we understand that the current economic situation may further delay this proposed staffing increase, we are confident that once funding becomes available that our request will be fulfilled. We have never been threatened with a reduction to our budget as a result of any of our work or potential communications with Congress. In fact, any requests for increases in funding for travel, training, or similar expense items have been approved by agency senior management. Again, I would reiterate that we have a healthy tension with management at the FTC, and while we do not agree on all issues, there appears to be a great respect for our independence and the work we do.

Finally, you should be in receipt of a copy of our reply to Representative Issa, the Ranking Member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 202-326-2800.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John M. Seeba". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "S".

John M. Seeba  
Inspector General



Office of Inspector General

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20580

January 7, 2011

**VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION**

The Honorable Tom Coburn  
Ranking Member  
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations  
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
199 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Biannual Report on All Closed Investigations, Evaluations, and Audits

Dear Senator Coburn:

Thank you for your request and we appreciate the strong support that you and the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee provide to the Inspector General community.

In response to your April 8, 2010 request that we provide biannual reports on all closed investigations, evaluations, and audits conducted by the Federal Trade Commission Office of Inspector General that have not been disclosed to the public, we have nothing to report for the period ending September 30, 2010. All information of this nature is either included in our semiannual report to Congress or published in separate audit reports that are available on our website. See [www.ftc.gov/oig](http://www.ftc.gov/oig). Any currently issued internal memoranda to management are part of ongoing projects or investigations and will be reported in the semiannual report to Congress after the matters are closed.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 202-326-2800.

Sincerely,

John M. Seeba  
Inspector General



Office of Inspector General

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20580

January 7, 2011

**VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION**

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Biannual Report on All Closed Investigations, Evaluations, and Audits

Dear Senator Grassley:

Thank you for your request and we appreciate the strong support that you and the Committee on Finance provide to the Inspector General community.

In response to your April 8, 2010 request that we provide biannual reports on all closed investigations, evaluations, and audits conducted by the Federal Trade Commission Office of Inspector General that have not been disclosed to the public, we have nothing to report for the period ending September 30, 2010. All information of this nature is either included in our semiannual report to Congress or published in separate audit reports that are available on our website. *See* [www.ftc.gov/oig](http://www.ftc.gov/oig). Any currently issued internal memoranda to management are part of ongoing projects or investigations and will be reported in the semiannual report to Congress after the matters are closed.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 202-326-2800.

Sincerely,

John M. Seeba  
Inspector General





OFFICE OF  
INSPECTOR GENERAL

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20580

June 8, 2011

**Via Electronic Transmission**

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Coburn  
Ranking Member  
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations  
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
United States Senate  
199 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Grassley and Senator Coburn:

In response to your April 8, 2010 request that we provide biannual reports on all closed investigations, evaluations, and audits conducted by the Federal Trade Commission Office of Inspector General that have not been disclosed to the public, we have nothing to report for the six month period ending March 31, 2011. All information of this nature is either included in our semiannual report to Congress or published in separate audit reports that are available on our website. See [www.ftc.gov/oig](http://www.ftc.gov/oig). Any currently issued internal memoranda to management are part of ongoing projects or investigations and will be reported in the semiannual report to Congress after the matters are closed.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 202-326-2820.

Sincerely,

John M. Seeba  
Inspector General



OFFICE OF  
INSPECTOR GENERAL

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20580

January 20, 2012

**Via Electronic Transmission**

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Coburn  
Ranking Member  
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations  
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
United States Senate  
199 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Grassley and Senator Coburn:

In response to your April 8, 2010 request that we provide biannual reports on all closed investigations, evaluations, and audits conducted by the Federal Trade Commission Office of Inspector General that have not been disclosed to the public, we have nothing to report for the six month period ending September 30, 2011. All information of this nature is either included in our semiannual report to Congress or published in separate audit reports that are available on our website. *See* [www.ftc.gov/oig](http://www.ftc.gov/oig). Any currently issued internal memoranda to management are part of ongoing projects or investigations and will be reported in the semiannual report to Congress after the matters are closed.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 202-326-2800.

Sincerely,

John M. Seeba  
Inspector General