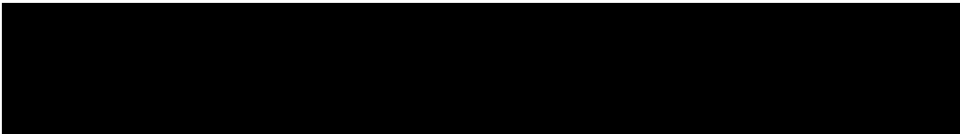


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**Subject:** RE: Letter for The Honorable Phyllis K. Fong, Inspector General, Department of Agriculture

**Date:** Monday, August 10, 2020 at 4:58:39 PM Eastern Daylight Time



As per our emails, below is the USDA OIG statement:

In response to Subcommittee on Government Operations Chairman Connolly's June 15, 2020, letter requesting Inspector General review of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s plans for returning employees to physical worksites, the USDA Office of Inspector General (OIG) has developed an approach to incorporate such work into our current Audit work plan.

The factors that we considered in developing such approach include but are not limited to: USDA plans and procedures for returning employees to Federal offices in the wake of the pandemic; protecting the health and safety of the Federal workforce (Federal employees and contractors); and whether best practices and existing guidance are used by USDA when deciding to return the workforce to Federal offices.

As USDA is comprised of numerous agencies with different missions and methods in which they carry out their work, USDA OIG's approach is to look for opportunities to incorporate the requested work within our engagements, both current and future.

For example, a current engagement includes a review of the Forest Service's Wildland Fire Response Plans for COVID-19, and whether the fundamentals laid out in those plans would enhance the protocols for wildfire response during the COVID-19 pandemic. In reviewing these plans, OIG also considered guidance issued by various health organizations, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and the World Health Organization.

Finally, per its normal processes, USDA OIG will receive and process any allegations it receives from complainants and whistleblowers, including those regarding workforce health and safety.