

**Department of Labor
Office of Inspector General
Office of Audit**

BRIEFLY...

Highlights of Report Number: 09-05-004-03-370, a report to Emily Stover DeRocco, Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training.

WHY READ THE REPORT

This report discusses why student attendance and training data reported for the San Diego Job Corps Center (San Diego) were not reliable and contains recommendations to improve that reliability.

WHY OIG DID THE AUDIT

The Office of Inspector General conducted an audit at San Diego to determine the merits of a hotline complaint alleging that San Diego management ordered staff to tell students to leave their resignation forms undated. The complainant alleged that this allowed San Diego personnel to manipulate student resignation dates to inflate student attendance, as reflected on the On-Board Strength (OBS) performance measure. This audit was also one in a series of planned audits to assess Job Corps' processes for ensuring the reliability of performance outcomes reported by center operators.

READ THE FULL REPORT

To view the report, including the scope, methodology, and full agency response, go to: <http://www.oig.dol.gov/public/reports/oa/2005/09-05-004-03-370.pdf>

September 2005

SAN DIEGO JOB CORPS CENTER: STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND TRAINING DATA OVERSTATED

WHAT OIG FOUND

We found the substance of the allegation was valid. San Diego staff obtained undated resignation forms from students so that they could make up a separation date later. In fact, the practice of prolonging student stays after separation was widespread, and included students who completed a vocation. We found that San Diego extended the stay of about 50 percent of the 717 students who left the center in program year 2003. As a result, the OBS was overstated and liquidated damages of a maximum of \$618,369 could be due to Job Corps.

We also found that two of the four selected performance measures we tested – the 60-Day Commitment Rate and GED/ High School Diploma Attainment Rate – were reliable. The other two-- OBS (noted above) and Vocational Completion Rate, were not.

The number of vocational completions was overstated by over 50 percent. Training records did not support that students had completed all the vocation's tasks with an appropriate level of proficiency.

WHAT OIG RECOMMENDED

We recommended that the Assistant Secretary ensure that Job Corps management takes corrective action. Our key recommendations were to strengthen controls at San Diego and increase monitoring over San Diego to ensure compliance with Job Corps' requirements for the student accountability and vocational completions.

ETA agreed with our recommendations. Job Corps had already begun taking action to ensure performance data reliability at all its centers. Further, Job Corps obtained a Corrective Action Plan specifically for San Diego and corrective actions have begun.