



## **Office Assessment & 90 Day Plan**

**LaDawn Blackett**

**Interim Inspector General**

**March 2025**

In accordance with *Section 8-105(h)(2)* of the revised Charter, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) is required to submit quarterly public reports to the Governing Board to support transparency and accountability. Interim Inspector General LaDawn Blackett officially began her tenure on March 3, 2025. Given the recent transition in leadership, in lieu of a full quarter report, presented below are the findings from a full office assessment and plan of action for the immediate future for the OIG. A separate outline for future Quarterly Reports is attached.

**INTERIM INSPECTOR GENERAL  
2025 FIRST QUARTER REPORT: OFFICE ASSESSMENT & 90 DAY PLAN**

March 2025

**Summary**

As part of my initial onboarding, I have conducted a high-level evaluation of OIG's current operations. This report outlines my observations and identifies the immediate steps necessary to align the office with our Charter obligations. This report provides an overview of our initial direction. While not exhaustive, it represents a firm first step toward strengthening the OIG's operations, restoring transparency, and delivering value to the people of Atlanta. I look forward to further engagement and collaboration in the weeks and months ahead.

**Key Areas of Review:**

1. **Staffing Assessment**
2. **Operational Independence**
3. **Mission Statement Update**
4. **Charter Compliance Strategy**
5. **IPro Review**
6. **Case Review and Backlog Strategy**
7. **Intake Process Modernization**
8. **Stakeholder Engagement and Departmental Introductions**

*Staff Assessment*

The OIG remains operationally intact but requires revitalization to meet current expectations. Rebuilding staff morale is critical, and I am confident that, with time and consistent leadership, we can restore a culture of integrity and productivity within the office.

I. Vacancies:

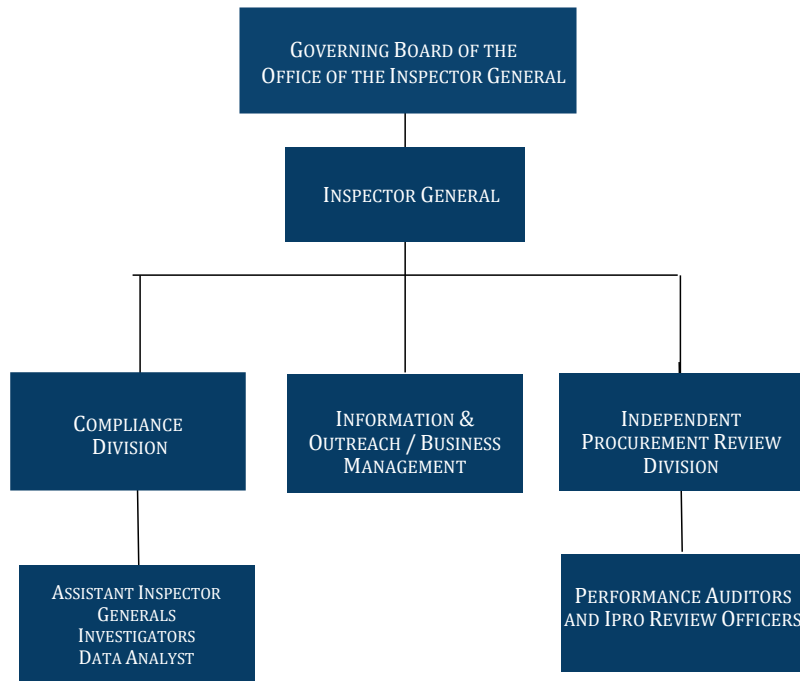
- a. Deputy Inspector General - Compliance,
- b. Assistant Inspector General, and
- c. IPro Performance Auditor

II. Current Staff:

- 1 – Assistant Inspector General
- 5 – Investigators/ Sr. Investigators
- 1 – Deputy IG for IPro
- 1 – Business Manager
- 3 – IPro Review Officers
- 1 - Director of Information and Outreach

## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

*Office of the Inspector General*



### *Independent OIG Assessment*

Stakeholder interviews have highlighted the need for greater clarity regarding OIG's independence. While our investigations must remain free from external influence, we will not operate in isolation. Appropriate communication with departmental leadership regarding relevant investigations will be prioritized—balancing transparency with the confidentiality required by the Charter. We are also updating processes and notices to ensure fair and respectful treatment of complainants, subjects, and witnesses.

### *Mission Update*

This revision reflects our Charter's emphasis on proactive education and collaborative problem-solving, rather than adversarial enforcement.

### **Mission Statement**

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) seeks to ensure that the government of the City of Atlanta operates with integrity, by thoroughly investigating complaints of fraud, waste, abuse, and procurement deficiencies, OIG works to uphold public trust. To eliminate waste OIG will educate the City of Atlanta on best practices and inefficiencies in policies and procedures in all departments. (Revised 3.2025)

**Deleted:** efficiency and

**Deleted:** . By rooting out

### *Independent Procurement Review (IPro)*

IPro is operating consistently with the following observations:

- Issued 48 reports of findings of solicitation reviews in advance of City Council hearings to consider legislation with a total contract value of more than \$1.15 billion.
- Conducted trainings with the Department of Procurement regarding the IPro process.
- Piloted a discretionary review project with a focus on alternative procurements.
- Collaborated with Compliance on procurement fraud investigations.
- Broadened weekly communications with Department of Procurement staff to increase transparency surrounding solicitation progress in order to assure timely issuance of reports.

However, the IPro team is short one staff member which does not allow for the discretionary review of procurements below \$1M. This presents a considerable challenge to which we seek remediation through extra help or other viable options. If the positions are fully staffed, a strategic plan to review discretionary spending between \$200,000 and \$999,999.00 would continue. Goals for IPro include:

- Adapt protocol of solicitation reviews to adjust to shifted standard operating procedures of the Department of Procurement.
- Increase discretionary review of City solicitations.
- Strengthen procurement review by incorporating additional training and analytical tools.
- Introduce quarterly reporting to highlight systemic issues and observation trends, and identify potential causes.

### *Compliance Case Review*

A preliminary review of 122 open compliance cases revealed a significant backlog, including matters dating back to 2021. Of these:

- **64 cases** appear ready for closure and are under review by the Interim Inspector General
- **58 cases** remain under active investigation

Efforts are underway to finalize and close eligible cases by **April 3, 2025**, in accordance with Section 8-106(g).

We also identified 53 intake complaints from **August–December 2024** that remain unassigned. Intake slowed considerably around December 2024. A full review of the intake backlog (through March 2025) is scheduled for completion by **April 30, 2025**, in compliance with *Section 8-106(e)*. We are in the process of organizing complaints from December 2024 to March 2025 for immediate assignment and review. To expedite this process, we are working with our case management software provider to simultaneously launching the software with this intake backlog review. Training for the intake software, Opexsus, is scheduled for April 3<sup>rd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. The full launch will occur immediately thereafter.

#### Whistleblower matters

The cases referenced in the “whistleblower” letter were identified by former staff members as potentially significant due to their perceived criminal nature. The Interim Inspector General is reviewing the cases on the whistleblower list subject to close first, followed by any open matters. Further, not each of the cases listed on the “whistleblower” letter were initiated by a complaint or other source as identified by the Charter. The OIG is undergoing both an investigative and Charter compliance review of each case.

Given the sensitive subject matter and the public attention surrounding these investigations, the status of each individual matter listed is not ready for publication. The potential assessment for all matters within the OIG include: unsubstantiated, substantiated, under review, or require further investigation. Upon completion, a detailed investigative report will be prepared and shared with the appropriate parties. These cases and all others will be placed in the 90-day investigation rotation.

#### *1<sup>st</sup> 30 days plan (March – April 2025)*

1. Close all cases with completed investigations
2. Introduce revised intake procedures and intake assessments
3. Solicit departmental input on unresolved concerns for backlog cross-reference
4. Initiate hiring process for three recently vacated staff positions
5. Ensure IPro performance team resources are in place
6. Launch case management software with workflow tracking

#### *90 Day Action plan*

1. Close all cases from 2021–2023
2. Resolve intake backlog and assign outstanding complaints
3. Develop and implement internal reporting protocols
4. Formalize new procedures for:
  - Departmental communications on active cases
  - Notifications to subjects, witnesses, and complainants
  - Transparency on investigation outcomes
5. Launch department-wide education initiatives
6. Resume paused investigations
7. Place all 2024 and 2025 cases into a 90-day resolution cycle
8. Fully deploy case management platform with automated workflows

## PERFORMANCE METRICS

Office of the Inspector General

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	FY2023 ACTUAL	FY2024 ACTUAL	FY2025 TARGET	FY2026 TARGET
<b>Effective and Ethical Government</b>				
<b>Independent Procurement Review</b>				
Solicitation Reviews Initiated	73	95	74	N/A
Reports Issued	47	56	48	N/A
Submissions Reviewed	161	175	186	N/A
Findings	152	220	217	N/A
Contract Value	\$1.001b	\$1.65b	\$1.15b	N/A
<b>Compliance</b>				
Cases Closed	N/A	12	7	120
Administrative Referrals	N/A	2	9	TBD
Policy and Procedure Recommendations	N/A	0	14	TBD
Best Practices Trainings	N/A	12	57	50
Anti-corruption Trainings	N/A	12	7	TBD

### Intake Process Modernization

Opexsus was previously retained to build a custom case management program for OIG. This process had stalled during the transition. As of today, the project is back on track with anticipated deployment April 9, 2025. After deployment an backlog intake project will commence for all investigative staff.

The software has the capability for workflows, external communications and timeline tracking. Using this software all newly open investigations will be placed on a 90 day investigation plan.

## Investigator Intake 90 Day timeline

DAY 1	ACTION
1	INTAKE FORM (SIGNED)
3	ADDED TO INVESTIGATIONS DATABASE
4	ASSIGNED
5	REVIEW OF INTAKE AUTHORITY
6	RESEARCH/INVESTIGATION FILE BEGINS
7-14	INVESTIGATIVE MEETING REVIEW
14	REFERRAL DECISION

<b>60</b>	<b>CASE CHECK IN</b>
<b>75</b>	<b>INVESTIGATION COMPLETED</b>
<b>76-86</b>	<b>FINAL TEAM REVIEW</b>
<b>87</b>	<b>CLOSING MEMO COMPLETED</b>
<b>88</b>	<b>REFERRAL FORM TO EXTERNAL/INTERNAL AGENCIES</b>
<b>85</b>	<b>SUBMIT TO OIG FOR REVIEW</b>
<b>89</b>	<b>PAPER AND ELECTRONIC FILES PREPARED FOR CLOSURE</b>
<b>90</b>	<b>FINAL CLOSING FORM</b>

5 - INTAKE DAYS

80 - INVESTIGATIVE DAYS

*Stakeholder Engagement and Departmental Introductions*

OIG has begun interviews with various department stakeholder leadership including: City Clerk, Ethics, Human Resources and OLER, Law Department, Department of Procurement and AIM. Meeting agendas include identifying backlog cases, understanding areas of improvement for interdepartmental communication, understanding how the departments intersect, requesting communication to improve transparency.