



U.S. OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL

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July 14, 2009

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Re: OSC File No. DI-09-0745

Dear Mr. President:

The Office of Special Counsel (OSC) received a disclosure from an employee at the Department of the Interior (DOI), National Park Service (NPS), National Interagency Fire Center, Boise, Idaho. The whistleblower, who has requested anonymity, alleged that an NPS employee, Christine K. Wilson, signed at least 18 contracts in which the dollar value of each contract exceeded her Certificate of Appointment authority in violation of the DOI Contracting Officer Certificate of Appointment Program policy release, dated October 2, 2006.

The whistleblower's allegation was referred to the Honorable Kenneth L. Salazar, Secretary of the Interior, to conduct an investigation pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 1213(c) and (d). Secretary Salazar delegated the authority to investigate the whistleblower's allegation to Jane Lyder, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks. Deputy Assistant Secretary Lyder submitted the agency's report on May 27, 2009. A supplemental report was received on June 16, 2009.

The agency's reports did not substantiate the whistleblower's allegation that Ms. Wilson exceeded her contracting authority. The investigators discovered that Ms. Wilson mischaracterized certain "established source purchases" as "open market purchases." Because her established source purchase authority exceeded her open market purchase authority, this mistake gave the impression that the contracts exceeded her authority. Ms. Wilson subsequently moved to another position with no contracting responsibilities and she was not issued a new warrant authority. In addition, NPS has improved the technical supervision of its contracting officers.

The anonymous whistleblower declined to provide comments on the reports. OSC finds that the agency's reports contain all of the information required by statute and that their findings appear to be reasonable.

I have reviewed the original disclosure, the agency's report, and the agency's supplemental report. Based on that review, I have determined that the agency's reports contain all of the information required by statute and are reasonable.

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As required by law, 5 U.S.C. § 1213(e)(3), I have sent a copy of the reports to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Committee on Natural Resources and the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. I have also filed copies of the agency reports in our public file and closed the matter. OSC's public file is now available online at www.osc.gov.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William E. Reukauf". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

William E. Reukauf
Associate Special Counsel

Enclosures