

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL



INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

OIG CASE 339

Issued: August 4, 2025

Jon T. Rymer, OIG Inspector General



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

CASE NUMBER: #331

Jon T. Rymer
Inspector General

Issue Date: August 4, 2025

Review of Solicitation, Award, and Administration of Facilities Maintenance Contract

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) was established in 2018 by Maryland law as an independent oversight entity within the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC). In accordance with the Maryland Code Annotated, Public Utilities Article § 17-604 and Chapter 2.60 of the WSSC Code of Regulations, the OIG is authorized to prevent, detect, and investigate fraud, waste, and abuse involving Commission resources, and to recommend improvements that strengthen compliance with applicable laws, policies, and ethical standards. The OIG's mission is to promote integrity, transparency, and accountability throughout WSSC operations.

The investigation was initiated following the receipt of an anonymous complaint that raised multiple concerns regarding the procurement process and vendor performance. The complaint made allegations related to the vendor's qualifications and favoritism in the award decision. Following the award, the contract was immediately modified, increasing overall costs, which led the complainant to further question the transparency and fairness of the procurement process.

The OIG ***substantiated the complaint in part***. The investigation confirmed notable deficiencies during the solicitation phase, contract administration, and early vendor performance. However, the allegation of favoritism or undue influence in the award decision ***could not be substantiated*** based on the evidence reviewed.

While no conclusive evidence supported the allegation of favoritism or internal influence in the award decision, the investigation exposed critical lapses in procurement practices and oversight that require immediate corrective action. Detailed findings and recommendations were provided to WSSC departments and responsible parties to support appropriate follow-up and sustained corrective actions. WSSC Management, specifically the Procurement Services Division (PSD), responded to the investigation's findings and recommendations. While PSD did not agree with most of the OIG's conclusions, it acknowledged that there were deficiencies in both the solicitation process and contract performance for Contract 48199.

In response, PSD has instituted several corrective measures, including:

- Implementing the formal use of Contracting Technical Representatives (CTRs);
- Reviewing and revising internal operating procedures and procurement forms;
- Improving procurement planning processes;
- Delivering targeted training on updated procurement procedures.

Furthermore, oversight responsibilities have been assigned to the Procurement Compliance Manager and Senior Procurement Compliance Specialist to ensure consistent implementation and monitoring of procurement practices. The OIG will monitor this matter to ensure that the corrective actions have been implemented accordingly.

This investigation was conducted by Daisy Qian, OIG Auditor, and Tami L. Taylor, Esq., Associate General Counsel II. The OIG extends its appreciation to the complainant for bringing this matter to light, and to the staff of WSSC's Facilities Maintenance Division and PSD for their cooperation throughout the investigation. Their assistance was instrumental in supporting a thorough and impartial review.