

May 26, 2020

American Evaluation Association Statement on the Independence of Inspectors General

The American Evaluation Association issued a statement on recent personnel actions affecting federal agency inspectors general and the role of IGs in the accountability community:

The American Evaluation Association strongly supports independence of the evaluation function and related activities that enables evidence building in government. In the American Evaluation Association’s “An Evaluation Roadmap for a More Effective Government,” the Association specifies the need for the real and perceived independence of evaluative activities, in part to preserve and promote objectivity in examining program operations and impact.

The American Evaluation Association supports the independence of evaluation as the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-435) is implemented. The Evidence Act established new evaluation officers, required the implementation of evaluation policies at federal agencies, including with appropriate independence for evidence-building activities, and required development of federal evaluation standards. The principle of independence was also recently articulated as a federal evaluation standard for federal evaluation activities, consistent with long-standing American Evaluation Association views.

Inspectors General offices are a critical component of the ecosystem for advancing evidence-based policymaking, supporting government efforts for accountability and continuous improvement. Efforts to protect the independence of Inspectors General are consistent with a more general need to ensure the independence more broadly in federal units that provide systematic evaluation or, like Inspectors General, perform broader accountability functions.

###

The American Evaluation Association is a professional association of evaluators devoted to the application and exploration of program evaluation, personnel evaluation, technology, and many other forms of evaluation. Evaluation involves assessing the strengths and weaknesses of programs, policies, personnel, products, and organizations to improve their effectiveness. The American Evaluation Association has approximately 7,300 members representing all 50 states in the United States as well as over 80 foreign countries. The American Evaluation Association seeks to act in ways that embody our mission, vision, and values in pursuit of our defined policies and goals.