



**OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**  
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**Almost 15 Years after the September 11<sup>th</sup> Terrorist Attacks, DHS  
Still Has Not Achieved Interoperable Communications**

In November 2012, the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General (DHS OIG) published an audit, *DHS' Oversight of Interoperable Communications* (OIG-13-06), concluding that DHS components could not talk to each other in the event of a terrorist event or other emergency. The DHS OIG has just completed a verification review and concluded that, two and a half years later, DHS components' inability to communicate with each other persists.

In its November 2012 report, the Inspector General concluded that less than one fourth of one percent of DHS radio users tested could access and use the specified common channel to communicate. Moreover, only 20% of those tested contained the correct program settings for the common channel. At the time, the OIG made two recommendations to the Department to improve interoperable communications so that the \$430 million worth of radios purchased could be used effectively.

As a result of its recent verification review, *Corrective Actions Still Needed to Achieve Interoperable Communications* (OIG-15-97-VR), the Inspector General concluded that corrective actions, including a draft communications interoperability plan and draft management directives to standardize Department-wide radio activities, have not been finalized. Moreover, DHS was unable to provide a timetable for finalizing and disseminating these documents throughout the Department.

"We are disappointed to see the lack of progress in this area. DHS leadership must prioritize effective interoperable communications, a fundamental aspect of the homeland security mission," said Inspector General John Roth.

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