



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Department of Homeland Security

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Report Misrepresents OIG Employee Award Program

The watchdog group Cause of Action recently released a report that inaccurately combined the OIG's employee performance award program with an array of questionable, wasteful government agency outlays for commemorative coins and other trinkets. The report covers FY 2010, during which the OIG dispensed a total of nearly \$700,000 in performance awards among its more than 700 employees.

After being alerted to the report, titled "Coin for Coins" we reached out to Cause of Action, asking that it revise its report and remove all references to the OIG. So far, that request has not been honored.

Cause of Action based its report solely on a FOIA request that was fulfilled by the OIG. The produced documents, which contain such notations as "spot cash award," clearly reflect outlays for performance awards.

At no time prior to the release of this report did anyone from Cause of Action contact the OIG or its Office of Public Affairs for comment on its report, or to verify the accuracy of Cause of Action's interpretation of the FOIA documents.

Acting Inspector General Charles K. Edwards stated that the OIG awards program misrepresented by Cause of Action "entails employee bonuses and performance incentives, not promotional items. My office has more than 700 employees. They are eligible for various monetary awards if they excel at their jobs or exceed expectations. Even as we strive to recognize outstanding employee achievement with this program, we are pretty careful on how much money we spend."

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