

National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration

**Office of the Inspector General**  
Washington, D.C. 20546-0001



Reply to Attn of: W

July 31, 2003

TO: A/Administrator

FROM: W/Inspector General

SUBJECT: Intergovernmental Personnel Act Agreements  
Assignment Number A-03-005-00

This memorandum presents the results of an Office of Inspector General (OIG) audit addressing concerns that Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) employees received non-peer reviewed grants or other benefits after completing assignments at NASA. We concluded that the Agency did not give preferential grants or contracts or otherwise extend special benefits to IPA agreement employees in connection with the conclusion of assignments at NASA. We found that grants received by IPA employees during fiscal years 2000 through 2002 had been peer reviewed and awarded based on merit. We did not identify any other benefits that were extended to IPA employees.

During FY 2000 - 2002, NASA had a total of 175 IPA assignees within the Offices of Space Flight, Aerospace Technology, Space Science, Biological and Physical Research, and Earth Science and the 10 NASA installations. As of March 31, 2003, 61 of the 175 IPA assignees were still on assignment at NASA, 105 had completed their assignments and received no further funding, and 9 had completed their assignments and received grants. The nine individuals who received grants after their IPA assignments were contacted to discuss their roles and responsibilities while at NASA. The nine grants were subject to peer review. We determined that the nine IPA assignees did not receive preferential grants or contracts or otherwise receive special benefits by virtue of completing an IPA assignment at NASA.

This audit was performed as a result of a referral that an IPA assignee within the Office of Earth Science appeared to direct that funds, for which he had oversight responsibility, be set aside for a future grant for himself. The IPA assignee submitted a grant proposal to the Associate Administrator for the Office of Earth Science and expected to receive a grant award after his IPA term was completed. Upon the advice of NASA's Office of the General Counsel, NASA terminated its internal review of the assignee's grant because the employee had improperly submitted the grant proposal. The OIG presented the results of our

investigation to the Department of Justice, Office of Public Integrity, for a prosecutive determination. The Department of Justice declined to prosecute.

[original signed by]

Robert W. Cobb

cc:

AE/Chief Engineer

AS/Chief Scientist

F/Assistant Administrator for Human Resources and Education

G/General Counsel

M/Associate Administrator for Space Flight

R/Associate Administrator for Aerospace Technology

S/Associate Administrator for Space Science

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JM/Director, Management Assessment Division