

## Office of Inspector General Raising Profile with MTA Employees

By BILL HEARD,  
Editor

(June 25, 2003)

Most employees probably know that the MTA's Office of the Inspector General was formed to root out fraud, waste and abuse within the agency.



PHOTO: BILL HEARD

MTA Inspector General Bill Waters, center, with deputies Jack Shigetomi and Mimi Strauss. The OIG offices are at 818 West 7th Street in downtown LA.

Maybe they've even seen the OIG posters. But, as far as Inspector General Bill Waters is concerned, much of the time his department has been out of sight, out of mind.

"We need to develop more awareness and visibility among employees," says Waters. And that's exactly what he and his staff of investigators and auditors have been doing lately.

Since mid-May, a team has been visiting service sectors, operating divisions and MTA Headquarters offices to give presentations about the work of the Office of Inspector General.

The OIG vision, mission, goals and organization chart have been revised. The Internet web site has been updated (<http://mymetro/oig/Pages/default.aspx>)

### New OIG Hotline number

There's a new OIG Hotline number – 1-800-221-1142 – and a new address: P.O. Box 811190, Los Angeles, CA 90081-1190. Departments can schedule an OIG presentation by contacting Senior Investigator Charlotte Holmes at 213-244-7382.

The OIG also publishes a report each year of its activities. The 2002 Annual Report was issued March 19, 2003, and is available to employees and the public.

"We want to explain how we work, what we do and how employees and others can contact us," says Waters.

The Office of Inspector General was enacted by charter in 1993 under the same state legislation that merged the former SCRTD and LACTC into a single agency, the MTA.

"We're watchdogs for the taxpayers," says Waters, who is appointed by and reports directly to the MTA Board of Directors.

### Two primary sections

The OIG is divided into two primary sections with five auditors and a dozen or so investigators. Waters, two deputy IGs and a support staff

round out the 26-member organization, which is located at 818 West 7th Street.

The auditing staff is responsible for evaluating MTA policies and procedures, testing internal controls and recommending corrective actions that will better protect MTA from fraud, waste and abuse.

The investigations staff probes allegations of fraud, waste and abuse in MTA operations, programs and activities. The complaints may come from employees, the public or elected officials.

The introduction to the OIG's latest annual report says, in part, "... (W)e conduct investigations and audits to promote economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the MTA. We remain vigilant in our efforts to detect and deter fraud, waste and abuse...."

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