



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Agricultural  
Marketing  
Service

1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Room 3071-S, STOP 0201  
Washington, DC 20250-0201

The Honorable Carolyn N. Lerner  
Special Counsel  
U.S. Office of Special Counsel  
1730 M Street, NW, Suite 218  
Washington, DC 20036-4505

**DEC 20 2012**

Dear Ms. Lerner:

This letter is to update the Office of Special Counsel on the status of implemented actions related to the September 2011 referral of a whistleblower complaint that employees of the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) Information Technology Service (ITS) were engaged in a violation of law, rule or regulation and gross mismanagement by failing to record millions of dollars of information technology equipment. The November 2011 Report of Investigation concluded that there was insufficient evidence to substantiate the allegations of wrongdoing. However, several actions were planned to tighten management controls related to the ITS hardware inventory management process.

The following actions have been taken as a result of the investigation:

1. The ITS program directive was revised to explicitly require that all accountable property, including employee-assigned and rack-mounted equipment, be managed using the same set of management controls;
2. The ITS program directive was revised to implement a quarterly validation process to ensure the accuracy of all ITS IT inventory reports;
3. ITS will incorporate inventory management support functions into the Agency's new enterprise incident management system to be implemented in Fiscal Year 2013;
4. ITS managers will work with the ITS inventory manager in an on-going fashion to be certain that asset management duties are being competently performed.

Please let us know if there are any questions about these actions or the AMS response to this investigation. We remain committed to providing effective management controls that safeguard accountable assets and maintain the public's confidence in the management of all Agency programs.

Sincerely,

David R. Shipman  
Administrator