



**OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** March 25, 2004

**TO:** Inspector General

**THRU:** Thomas Cline *TC*  
Assistant Inspector General, Audits

**THRU:** Walter Opaska *WPO*  
Director IS, Audits

**FROM:** Maureen Doherty *MD*  
Office of Inspector General

**SUBJECT:** Telephone System Survey

The Inspector General (IG) Act of 1978 requires IGs to provide leadership in preventing and detecting fraud and abuse at their agencies. As part of this program, we performed a survey to ensure that no Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) employee or contractor had the opportunity to abuse the telephone system by dialing long-distance or international numbers for personal usage. The objective of this survey was to assess the availability of telephones in the FCC that would accept long-distance and international numbers. If any telephone open to all employees would accept a long-distance or international call phone, records would be obtained from the Commission and examined.

**REASON FOR SELECTION**

This survey was conducted as a follow-up to a similar survey conducted in 1999. The Office of Inspector General wanted to identify what, if any, changes had taken place since the conclusion of the first survey.

**BACKGROUND**

In the survey conducted in 1999, a long-distance number was successfully dialed from a hallway telephone that all employees have access to. We recommended the Commission periodically check vulnerable areas to prevent abuse of the telephone system.

## **SCOPE OF SURVEY WORK PERFORMED**

This project was conducted as a survey. A survey is preliminary audit work done before an audit and is not an audit conducted in accordance with Government Auditing Standards (i.e., GAO "Yellow Book" standards). The purpose of a survey is to gather general working information on important aspects of an entity, activity, or program, and to determine the nature and extent of any subsequent audit effort.

The rationale behind this survey was to test the likelihood of abuse of the telephone system at the FCC. To begin the survey, phone numbers were found for one location each in Ireland, El Salvador, St. John in the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Turks and Caicos Islands in the Caribbean. Ireland and El Salvador were dialed using international country codes. The Turks and Caicos Islands have a U.S. area code but are located outside of the United States.

The next step in the survey was to attempt to dial each of the four numbers from an office telephone and then again from a telephone in a hallway which all employees and public visitors have access to.

## **SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS**

### **Office Telephone**

All four telephone numbers were successfully dialed and connected from an office phone number in a cubicle.

### **Public-Access Telephone**

After repeatedly attempting to dial the four numbers from a hallway telephone to which all FCC employees have access to, we were unable to make a connection. When attempting to dial an international number the operator would respond, "We're sorry, the number you have dialed is not in service." When attempting to call a long-distance number the operator would respond, "We're sorry, your call cannot be completed as dialed." We were unable to make an international telephone call.

## **FUTURE AUDIT COVERAGE**

As neither a long-distance nor international number was successfully dialed from a public-access telephone, no immediate audit is necessary. However, because the Commission is vulnerable to potential abuse, the phone service should continue to be monitored on a periodic basis.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of this survey, an audit is not recommended of the telephone system. There is not sufficient evidence at this point in time to justify such an audit.