



Inspector General Bullet in



Shooting You in the Right Direction

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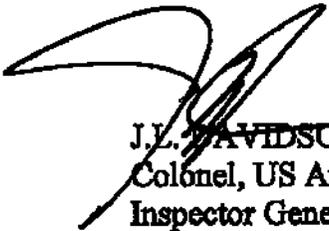
P.O. BOX 41502
3041 SIDCO DR.
NASHVILLE, TN
37204-1502



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Greetings from the IG Office. According to the dictionary, credentials are: **“an attestation of qualification, competence, or authority issued to an individual; evidence or testimonials concerning one's right to credit, confidence, or authority.”** As Leaders in the Army and Air National Guard, we have all received our credentials at one time or another. Graduation diplomas and certificates, qualification badges and awards all serve as part of credentials in regards to military service. There are other kinds of credentials that can potentially have a greater impact (either positive or negative) and require periodic “recertification” that we as leaders need to be aware of. One such credential, is the semi-annual Physical Fitness Test and/or weigh-in. Taking the PT test with our Soldiers is one of those shared tests or hardships that bind units and organizations together and instills confidence in Soldiers and Airmen of their leaders as well as their fellow Soldiers and Airmen. Taking and passing the APFT/ weigh-in, allows leaders to lead by example and openly demonstrate their “credentials” in their ability to meet the physical standards and demands of military service. Another way in which we re-establish our credentials on a **daily** basis is in regards to Army and Air Force Values/Ethics and Standards. Soldiers and Airmen are fully aware when a Values/Ethics or Standards issue is being violated. Every time you pass or conveniently look the other way, you have undermined your own Values/Ethics and established a lower Standard. Lets do our best to re-establish our credentials whenever and we can. Trust me, our Soldiers and Airmen know the status of your credentials. Don't let them down!



J.L. DAVIDSON
Colonel, US Army
Inspector General

Stopping Gossip

What's something everyone does and is difficult if not impossible to stop? The answer: Gossip! All too often we in the IG office are the recipients of allegations that were actually initiated by an individual(s) that knowingly or unknowingly spread gossip or rumors. Due to the nature of assignments in the National Guard, rumors and gossip can pose a significant problem and challenge to leaders.

Gossip or rumors are detrimental to the good order and discipline of any unit. Not only is gossip detrimental to the good order and discipline of an organization it is also counter to Army Values of Loyalty, Honor, Respect, Integrity, Duty and Personal Courage. The causes of gossip are pretty straight forward. It is human nature to want to know information and many individuals have an inherent need to talk and share information. However there is a line that is often crossed with gossip.

Generally speaking, there tends to be two types of gossip: gossip/rumors that involve the workplace or organization and gossip/rumors that involve an individual.

Gossip involving other individuals, in plain and simple words, involves spreading lies, truths



with bad intention, and half truths. Typically, gossip flourishes in an environment where there is a lack of transparency - which may be between supervisors and subordinates. People who spread gossip in the workplace, generally feel insecure of their own positions at work, and aim for success without considering the interest of their fellow Soldiers or Airmen. Gossip and rumor mongers are usually jealous by nature, and may find some level of satisfaction in spreading rumors about those who are more popular and successful in their endeavors and projects. Just because there is nothing you can do to *completely* eliminate it from your workplace, doesn't mean you shouldn't do anything about it. On the contrary, all leaders can and should take steps to eliminate harmful rumors and gossip from circulating in your workplace/organization.

- Foster an environment of open and honest communication. Keep all members of your organization informed about good *and* bad news to decrease their need to speculate and contribute to or rely on the office grapevine.

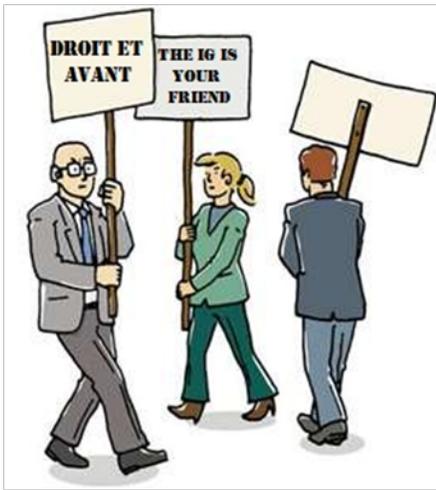
- Make sure Soldiers and Airmen and civilian employees are fully aware that starting and spreading rumors and gossip is unacceptable. If gossipers persist, formally counsel them on their behavior and its negative impacts.

The best way to reduce gossip and workplace rumors is to preempt them from happening in the first place. Leaders must enforce workplace rules so that all personnel understand the boundaries of bad behavior.

All members of the Tennessee National Guard both Air and Army should take the necessary measures to insure that gossip/rumors are not allowed in a professional work environment. Help send the message that troublemakers (including rumor mongers) will not be tolerated, after all, gossip doesn't tend to go very far around the office if the answer to "Have you heard the latest?" is always "Yes, I have."

COL Jeff Davidson

Political Activities



The 2012 general election is just months away. The closer November gets, the more inundated we are by campaign activity, both on the Presidential and national level as well as, at the state and local level.

It is DoD policy to encourage employees and members of the Armed Forces to carry out the obligations of citizenship to the maximum extent possible.

Even though there are different rules, depending on a member's status, one theme resonates throughout the policy. All political activity should avoid inferences that imply or appear to imply official sponsorship, approval, or endorsement of a political party or candidate by a member of the DoD.



All service members, regardless of status, can participate in political activities in the following manner:

- Register and vote for individual candidates, initiatives and referendums.
- Express his or her personal opinion on political candidates and issues but not as a representative of the Armed Forces.
- Make monetary contribution to a political organization.
- Attend partisan and non-partisan political meetings or rallies as a spectator when not in uniform.
- Display tasteful political stickers on privately owned vehicles.

Certain restrictions apply to active Title 10 or Title 32 members. An exhaustive list can be found in DoDD 1344.10, but some more noteworthy prohibitions are as follows:

- Use official authority or influence to interfere with an election.
- Solicit votes or contribution or act as advocate of a particular party, candidate or issue.
- Be a candidate for civil office in federal, state or local government.

- Participate in any program or discussion as an advocate or a partisan political party or candidate or march or ride in a partisan political parade.

- Display a large political sign, banner, or poster (as distinguished from a bumper sticker) on the top or side of a private vehicle.

- Participate in any organized effort to provide voters with transportation to the polls if the effort is organized by, or associated with, a partisan political party or candidate.

Additionally, according to 10 USC 888, commissioned officers are prohibited from making contemptuous statement against the President, the Vice President, Congress, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of military department, the Secretary of Homeland Security, or the Governor or legislature of any State, Commonwealth or Territory. Contemptuous speech can be defined as that which is insulting, rude, disdainful or otherwise demonstrates a lack of respect or reverence for the office.

In summary, you are encouraged to get out there and vote. You have certainly earned the right! However, in exercising your freedoms, just keep in mind these important points so you don't mistakenly violate policies or regulations or bring discredit on the service.

MAJ Tim Roberts

Site Visits



When most units get contacted by the IG to conduct a site visit they panic! What did we do?...What are they going to check?...Who sent them? These are questions that go through the FTSP's minds when they are notified that the IG is coming. Usually there is short notice of the visit and they think there isn't time to prepare. IGs refer to this as the "Black Hat" syndrome.

The IG team will have a checklist of things to look at. The list includes



such things as training records, HT/WT program, APFT binder, UMR, LOD files, Physical Security Program, Safety binder and physical safety items, supply records, GPC files, and overall armory appearance/maintenance. In addition, we may look at unit policy letters and SOPs. These are the type of items that would be checked in the formal inspection setting.

A Site Visit is just a way of gathering information about the

general condition of the TNNG, not an inspection. Its' purpose is to evaluate the true status of a unit in the areas covered. It is supposed to reflect the current status of unit programs without the frenzied preparation that occurs in formal announced inspections. As the eyes and ears of the commander, the IG uses this type of assistance visit to see units in their true form. This way we can relay to the commander, general trends within the Tennessee National Guard, both good and bad. If the command doesn't know its' broken they can't fix it.

One important course of action for units to take, if they are having issues, is to request a Staff Assistance Visit from their higher command. The Staff Assistance visit is part of the Command's Organizational Inspection Program (OIP) and should be established at the BN/SQDN and BDE levels, which keeps the "fix" at the lowest level possible.

A common misconception is the unit will be singled out for its shortcomings. In most cases, the unit is not identified outside of the IG database. If a unit requests specific assistance or other specific requirement such as armory repair, or shortage of equipment then the unit will be identified.

Another important part of a Site visit is the "teach and train" aspect. The IG team is there to

help units with problems they are encountering. If we have the ability to correct issues, while at the unit, we work with the unit to get resolution. Sometimes we have to follow up with the unit on resolution after researching the subject further. The most common solution is referring the issue to the appropriate Subject Matter Expert (SME). During the course of the visit, we will relay best practices from other units and even other agencies.

IGs have an inherent responsibility to extend their Commander's eyes and ears, all the while focusing on methods that will assist the commander with enhancing the readiness and war fighting capabilities of our organizations. One such method that can (and in many cases already has) prove beneficial is the IG Site Visit.

The current IG inspection plan calls for the IG to Visit each unit and armory on a biannual basis. Currently, we will complete this by the end of TY 2012. These visits will be conducted during weekly visits as well as during IDT weekends. So when you see us come to your unit and say we're here to help, we really mean it.

MAJ Doug Gale

The True IG Role: Assist

I believe a fair assessment of the IG job in the Air National Guard would be to say that 95% of it involves assisting members of the wing with issues when the individual just doesn't know who else to turn to for answers. Perhaps the member has asked their First Sergeant and was not satisfied with the answer, or (gulp) received no answer at all. Perhaps the member has spoken to others in his/her squadron and was advised to just come to the IG immediately. Perhaps the member has been suffering in silence and saw my picture on a flyer and decided today was the day to discuss their concerns. The road to the IG office is varied, but the path that was traveled by the member is unimportant; helping them, however, is crucial.

AFI 90-301 states the following: **Assisting a Complainant.** IGs assist complainants in resolving personal problems when there is no evidence or assertion of wrongdoing. To remedy a problem, IGs may make phone calls, ask questions of functional experts, solicit helpful information from the appropriate organization or agency, or put the complainant in contact with the person, organization, or agency that can appropriately address their problem. The purpose of assistance is to quickly resolve personal issues and allow the complainant to refocus on the assigned mission.

I like to focus on the last line in that statement: **quickly resolve personal issues and allow the complainant to refocus on the assigned mission.** I am often asked

by members of the unit "what, exactly, do you do all day?" At first my reaction is, well, I am the 'eyes and ears of the commander' or 'I keep my finger on the pulse of the organization to identify any potential problems before they become actual problems,' but both of those answers, while factual, are not an actual description of what an IG actually "does all day." Having had some time to reflect on that question over the years, here is my new answer: I help people! I am the person that members come to when they haven't been paid in a timely manner and they just want to make sure it doesn't happen to anyone else. I am the person who listens to a problem and helps them brainstorm a solution. I am the person who will sit down with a young airman and their First Sergeant or their Commander for their first face to face meeting about a problem that has been bothering the member; a problem often unknown to the first sergeant or the commander. I loan the airman some of my courage when they just don't believe they have enough of their own to have the first meeting with a Senior NCO or an officer in their chain of command. I am the officer that they see walking through their shops and stopping for a brief chat about nothing in particular, who has just a few moments to ask them how their day is going and about their family. For that 95% of my job, I have the greatest job in the Air Force!

What about the other 5%? Well, I do meet with individuals who are

just unhappy, but there is really no one at fault. Personality conflicts and lack of promotion opportunities will continue to exist, regardless of anyone's efforts. I still listen, offer advice when and where appropriate, document and dismiss. I meet with members who have seemingly legitimate concerns and I make the initial contact with the responsible organization, document and refer. And occasionally, I meet with members who feel that their supervisor has violated AFI 90-301 through reprisal or abuse of authority. These are investigated accordingly. I have never had a complaint of restriction or IMHE, but I have briefed every commander and supervisor on base countless times about the IG role, and seemingly, they are listening to at least that portion of the briefing! So, all in all, even the last 5% of my job entails helping people.

The next time someone asks an IG what exactly they do all day, my hope is they will be able to say, with confidence, "I help people!". A follow-up question occasionally flows from that answer: "Why?" and what the individual is asking is not why do you help people, per se, but why do you stay late, come in on your own time, and post your personal cell phone number on the web page? My answer to that question has never required additional thought. My answer: Because I am the IG and I have the best job in the Air Force! I help people.

Lt Col Kristina Whicker

Did Ya Know?

In the last Inspector General “Bullet-In” I introduced my article and, to my surprise, found that more Soldiers and Airmen than just me actually liked it. I have been approached by several people with suggestions on what to include and came up with the following that you can ask: “Did ya know...?”

Did ya know... While ALARACT 136/206 does permit the wear of the foliage green t-shirt, it does not permit it for everyone, or all the time. The purpose of the ALARACT was to announce the wear policy for the foliage green t-shirt. Just on my observations, not everyone read the entire memo. The foliage green t-shirt is a standard 100 percent cotton green t-shirt and IS authorized for wear by those Soldiers in jobs that have an associated flame risk or hazard. Those jobs are actually outlined in CTA 50-900, Table 4. The foliage green t-shirt is required to support those individuals in Armor and Aviation fields that cannot wear the sand moisture wicking t-shirt, to include fuel handlers and others who handle hazardous materials. The difference in color allows leaders at all levels the ability to visually ensure their Soldiers are wearing the correct garment during required times. The policy does not prevent Soldiers from wearing the sand moisture wicking t-shirt with the Army Combat



Uniform (ACU), but it will allow those Soldiers who have an associated flame risk in their job to have alternative wear when appropriate. The policy also states that the foliage green t-shirt is only authorized by personnel performing missions mentioned above. What does all this mean? In short, **ONLY** those persons assigned to jobs that have an associated flame risk can wear the foliage green t-shirt. Those persons that are allowed to wear the foliage green t-shirt can **ONLY** wear them during required times, when appropriate, and performing those jobs that were mentioned earlier. As an example, a fuel handler performing fuel handling duties is authorized to wear the foliage green t-shirt. A fuel handler that is performing recruiting duties would not quite fit into the authorized category.

Did ya know... according to the Tennessee National Guard Basic Standards Book (the blue book you keep in your left shirt pocket), the Army Combat Uniform (ACU) shirt is not

authorized for removal during hot weather. Keeping the shirt on protects Soldiers from the sun and is designed to provide adequate cooling. However, the Blue Book also states that during work details it is at the discretion of the Commander or NCOIC whether or not the ACU shirt is removed. So, keep your shirt on unless directed by your Commander or NCOIC.

Did ya know... IAW “The Blue Book”, the sleeve cuffs of the ACU coat are not authorized to be rolled inside or outside of the ACU coat and the hook and loop fastened sleeve tabs will be fitted snugly around the wrists. This means that Soldiers that like to turn their shirt cuff under because the sleeves are too long or their arms are too short are in violation of Army Regulation and Tennessee National Guard Policy. Airmen have a little more leeway however. Airmen are authorized to roll the sleeves of their ABU’s during hot weather, but the sleeve material must match the shirt and come within one inch of the forearm when the arm is bent at a 90-degree angle.

“Now You Know”

MSG David Malone

Improper Mental Health Evaluations

All leaders should be aware of emergency procedures to take in the event that a Soldier or Airman presents them with safety concerns. Emergency Behavioral or Mental Health evaluations should be a part of every organization's standard operating procedure .

On the **Air Guard** side, supervisory personnel, including commanders, may encourage Wing members to voluntarily seek mental healthcare (e.g., "You seem to be under a lot of stress." "As your supervisor/commander/first sergeant, I'd like to remind you that the base has a variety of support agencies available to help you: chaplain, life skills, family support classes, etc.").

Supervisors and commanders may not, however, under any circumstances attempt to coerce members to voluntarily seek a mental health evaluation (e.g., "I'll have the commander make you.") These statements are unacceptable.

Only the member's commander may direct the member to undergo a mental health evaluation or to submit to involuntary admission to an inpatient medical or mental health (psychiatric) unit.

Any failure by the commander to follow the commander-directed procedures, direction by anyone other than the commander (including another healthcare provider), or coercion makes the MHE referral improper. AFI 44-109, Mental Health, Confidentiality, and Military Law, DoDD 6490.1, and DoDI 6490.4 are the standards commanders and mental healthcare providers must follow when military members are directed by their commander for mental health evaluations.

There are two types of commander-directed referrals, emergency and routine, and there is a different process for each. **Emergency referrals** are only used when a service member appears likely to cause serious injury to self and others and the commander believes the service member may be suffering from a severe mental disorder.

Routine referrals require the commander to consult with a mental healthcare provider (as defined by DoDI 6490.4) prior to the referral.

Complaints may be filed with the Wing IG when a military member believes they were improperly referred for a mental health evaluation.

On the **Army Guard** side, unit leaders at all levels have multiple levels of COSC support services available to them, some organic to their organizations, some attached and some area or garrison support. The following assets are generally available to leadership, in all tactical environments:

- Organic medical assets to include enlisted medics and medical officers.
- Chaplains.
- Behavioral health assets organic and attached to organization. Combat stress control team working in unit's area of responsibility (AOR).

Command Directed Evaluation (CDE) in accordance with (IAW) DODD 6490.1, commanding officers (CO) may direct Soldiers to undergo a MH evaluation. A CDE is appropriate whenever the CO believes that the Soldier's mental state renders them a risk to themselves or others or may be affecting their ability to carry out the mission. Examples of questions commands may pose include—

- Does the Soldier have a MH condition that is contributing to current difficulty?
- What is the potential for the Soldier to return to full functioning given successful treatment?
- Is the Soldier suitable for carrying a weapon at the current time?
- Is it appropriate for the Soldier to have access to classified information?
- Is the Soldier qualified for deployment?

● A CDE can be accomplished on a routine or an emergency basis.

Legal protections for the rights of Soldiers prohibit a command from improperly referring for a CDE. It is improper to refer a Soldier for a CDE to buy time, as a disciplinary tool, or as a reprisal for the individual's attempt or intent to make a lawful communication (see DODD 6490.1, paragraphs 4.3.1-4.3.5). When referred for a non-emergency CDE, the Soldier has some of the following rights prior to the evaluation—

- A two business day waiting period between the CDE notification and evaluation.
- The right to consult with the Inspector General (IG) and the Area Defense Counsel if they believe the CDE violates policy.
- Communication with the IG, his/her attorney, Members of Congress, or others.
- What commands can expect from the MH provider following a CDE request—

- Provider may request documents supportive of the request for a CDE (documentation of problem behaviors, letters of reprimand or counseling, Article 15s, past performance reports).

- Provider may request interviews with unit leaders, immediate supervisors, or other appropriate personnel to obtain collateral information on the individual.

- Provider may perform psychological testing or conduct clinical interviews with the Soldier.

- Notification of required hospitalization if one is required
- Notification of medical evaluation board if one is initiated by the medical treatment facility (MTF).

If you have any further questions regarding Behavioral or Mental Health evaluations, please call the TN JFHQ Inspector General Office at 615-313-3066 or go to our splash-page at: <https://home.tn.ngb.army.mil/IG/default.aspx>

Lt Col Ben Welch

OER/NCOERs Redress Procedures

A recent review of several inquiries and investigations revealed that many Soldiers were uncertain over the proper redress procedures for Officer Evaluation Reports (OERs) and Non-Commissioned Officer Evaluation Reports (NCOERs). Redress procedures for evaluation reports protect the Army's interest and ensures fairness to the rated Soldier and the rating officer.

First and foremost, in accordance with Army Regulation (AR) 20-1, Inspector General Activities and Procedures, a complainant must exhaust their established means of redress on evaluation reports before an Inspector General (IG) can accept their allegations. IGs will encourage Soldiers to first discuss their complaints, allegations, or requests for assistance with their commander or chain-of-command. If a Soldier does not wish to do so, IGs will inform them of their established means of redress, and only after they have exhausted their forms of redress will IGs accept their complaints. IGs will limit their assistance to a review into whether due process was afforded to the complainant.

The following describes the evaluation report redress program:

a. Referred reports (officers): OERs containing negative comments or ratings and relief for cause reports must be referred to rated officers for acknowledgment and comment before they are sent to Headquarters, Department of the Army. Although the rated officer's comments are attached to the report, they do not constitute a request for a commander's inquiry (CI) or an appeal. Such requests are submitted separately.

b. Commander's Inquiry (CI) (officers and NCOs): Commanders are required to look into alleged errors, injustices, and illegalities when brought to their attention by the rated individual or anyone authorized access to the evaluation report.

The following facts are appropriate to CIs:

(1) The primary purpose of the CI is to provide a greater degree of command involvement in preventing obvious injustices to rated individuals and correcting errors before they become a matter of permanent record. A secondary purpose is to obtain command involvement in clarifying errors or injustices after the evaluation report has become a matter of permanent record.

(2) To ensure the availability of pertinent data and timely completion of a CI, the inquiry must be completed no later than 120 days after the "thru" date of the evaluation report.

(3) A CI is not a prerequisite for an appeal.

c. Appeals (Officers and NCOs):

(1) Evaluation reports accepted for inclusion in the official military personnel file are presumed to be administratively correct, prepared by the proper rating officials, and represent the considered opinion and objective judgment of the rating officials.

(2) A rated individual or another interested party who knows the circumstances of an evaluation report and believes the report is incorrect, inaccurate, or in violation of regulatory guidance may submit an appeal.

(3) Appellants have the burden of proving clear and convincing evidence that action is warranted to correct a material error, inaccuracy, or injustice in their report.

(4) There are no prescribed time limits for administrative

5) OER appeals based on administrative error are adjudicated by the Appeals and Corrections Branch, PERSCOM (active component), the National Guard Bureau (ARNG), or the CDR, ARPERCEN (USAR). The NCO Evaluation Report Appeals Section, US Army Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center (active component), the appropriate State Adjutant General, (ARNG), or the CDR, ARPERCEN (USAR), adjudicates NCOER appeals based on administrative error.

(6) OER appeals based on substantive error are adjudicated by the DCSPER Officer Special Review Board (OSRB) and NCOER appeals based on substantive error are adjudicated by the DCSPER Enlisted Special Review Board (ESRB). The boards are composed of at least three senior officers for OER appeals and three senior NCOs for NCOER appeals; board recommendations are based on a majority vote.

(7) Appeals may be approved in whole or in part and evaluation reports are either corrected or deleted. If the appeal is denied, an appellant may seek new or additional evidence and submit a new appeal, or may submit an appeal to the Army Board for Correction of Military Records (ABCMR). The ABCMR may correct any military record when necessary to correct an error or remove an injustice. The Secretary of the Army approves ABCMR recommendations on OER/NCOER appeals.

References:
AR 623-3, Evaluation Reporting System, chapter 6, dated 10 August 2007, prescribes the policies and tasks associated with the OER/NCOER system.

MSG Cindy Layton

NGTN-JHQ-IG
P.O. Box 41502
3041 SIDCO DR.
Nashville, TN 37204-1502

COL Jeff Davidson
jeffrey.l.davidson@us.army.mil
(615) 313-3068
Inspector General

Lt Col Ben Welch
ben.welch@us.army.mil
(615) 313-0797
Deputy IG, Air Guard

MAJ Doug Gale
doug.gale@us.army.mil
(615) 313-3064
Detailed IG, Chief, Inspections Branch

MAJ Timothy Roberts
timothy.e.roberts@us.army.mil
(615) 313-3067
Detailed IG, Chief, A&I Branch

MSG Cindy Layton
cindy.layton1@us.army.mil
(615) 313-3065
Assist IG, NCOIC A&I Branch

MSG David Malone
david.c.malone@us.army.mil
(615) 313-3063
Assist IG, NCOIC Inspections Branch

Connie Witherow
connie.witherow@us.army.mil
(615) 313-3066
Assist IG, Management Assistant

AIR Wing IGs

Lt Col Kristi Downey—118th
kristi.downy@ang.af.mil
615-399-5608

Lt Col Kristina Whicker—164th
kristina.whicker@ang.af.mil
901-291-7492

Lt Col Sandra Grice—134th
sandra.grice@tnknox.ang.af.mil
865-985-4444



Inspector General

ngtnig2@ng.army.mil

About The Inspector General:

- Acts as impartial fact-finder and honest broker
- Is a problem solver; recommending solutions to Commanders
- Maintains open communication through non-attribution, but cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality
- Participates in regular staff planning and functions
- Shall not recommend adverse or punitive action
- Does not compare units for favorable or unfavorable recognition (inspections)

IG Mission:

Extend the Eyes, Ears, Voice and Conscience of The Adjutant General. Identify problems or Issues; determine their Root Causes; teach systems, processes and procedures; identify responsibility for corrective action and promote and spread innovative ideas.

IG Vision:

Professional, competent special staff element that lives by the Army Values, has fun and gets the job done while demonstrating caring and concern in every action.

Before You Contact the Inspector General:

- Be sure you have a problem, not just a peeve (are the cooks turning out lousy chow or was it just one bad meal?)
- Give your chain of command a chance to solve the problem (many problems must be addressed to the chain of command for resolution anyway)
- If IG assistance is needed, contact your local IG first. (IG's at higher commands will normally refer the case to the local IG for action)
- Be honest and don't provide misleading information (IGs will discover the truth quickly in most cases and there are penalties for knowingly providing false information)
- Keep in mind that IGs are not policy makers (if a policy is flawed, you can submit proposed changes on a DA Form 2028)

We're on the Web
<https://tn.ngb.army.mil/tnmilitary/IG/Default.htm>

