



# OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

## U.S. Department of Justice

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### DOJ OIG Releases Report on the FBI's New Jersey Regional Computer Forensic Laboratory

The Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) announced today the release of a report examining the operations of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) New Jersey Regional Computer Forensic Laboratory (NJRCFL) located in Hamilton, New Jersey. The DOJ OIG found that the NJRCFL had mixed results in achieving its performance goals and, as of June 2015, had a material backlog of cases. We also identified concerns that could leave the NJRCFL's Cell Phone Investigative Kiosks vulnerable to abuse, and found that the NJRCFL cannot accurately determine the number of law enforcement personnel it has trained.

The specific findings in the report released today include:

- **NJRCFL's Case Backlog.** Although the FBI revised the definition of a backlog case in a manner that reduced the number of backlog cases at the NJRCFL, a material backlog still existed as of June 2015. We found the backlog was attributable to a number of factors, but chief among them was the need for more examiners and additional advanced training for those already conducting exams. However, we also found that participating agencies were generally satisfied with the work performed by the NJRCFL.
- **Cell Phone Kiosk Program.** Similar to the findings in a 2015 audit of the FBI's Philadelphia RCFL, we identified material weaknesses in Kiosk usage that, if not addressed, could leave the NJRCFL's Kiosks vulnerable to abuse. Kiosks, which are available at select FBI field offices and regional computer forensics laboratories, allow users to quickly and easily view, extract, and compile data stored on a cell phone or other electronic media. While the OIG did not find any evidence that the NJRCFL Kiosks had been misused, we did find that the NJRCFL lacked sufficient controls to ensure that users accessed Kiosks only for law enforcement matters. We also found that 26 percent of Kiosk users who examined a cell phone did not certify that they had completed self-paced or hands-on training as required by FBI policy. As we note in today's report, after our audit fieldwork was complete, the RCFL National Program Office implemented a mandatory electronic form that law enforcement officers must complete before logging onto a Kiosk that mitigates the Kiosk vulnerabilities we identified.
- **Training.** We found that the NJRCFL's process to capture data for the number of law enforcement personnel that it trained did not include adequate supporting

documentation. For example, we found that not everyone who registered for a class actually attended the class, and that the registration data was never updated to reflect actual attendance information. As a result, the FBI was unable to accurately determine the degree to which the RCFL program accomplished one of its core missions.

Today's report makes three recommendations to the FBI to minimize the potential for abuse or mishandling of the Kiosk program, maintain adequate supporting documentation to support training, and manage the current backlog. The FBI agreed with all three recommendations.

**Report:** Today's report is available on the OIG's website at the following link: <https://oig.justice.gov/reports/2016/a1611.pdf>.