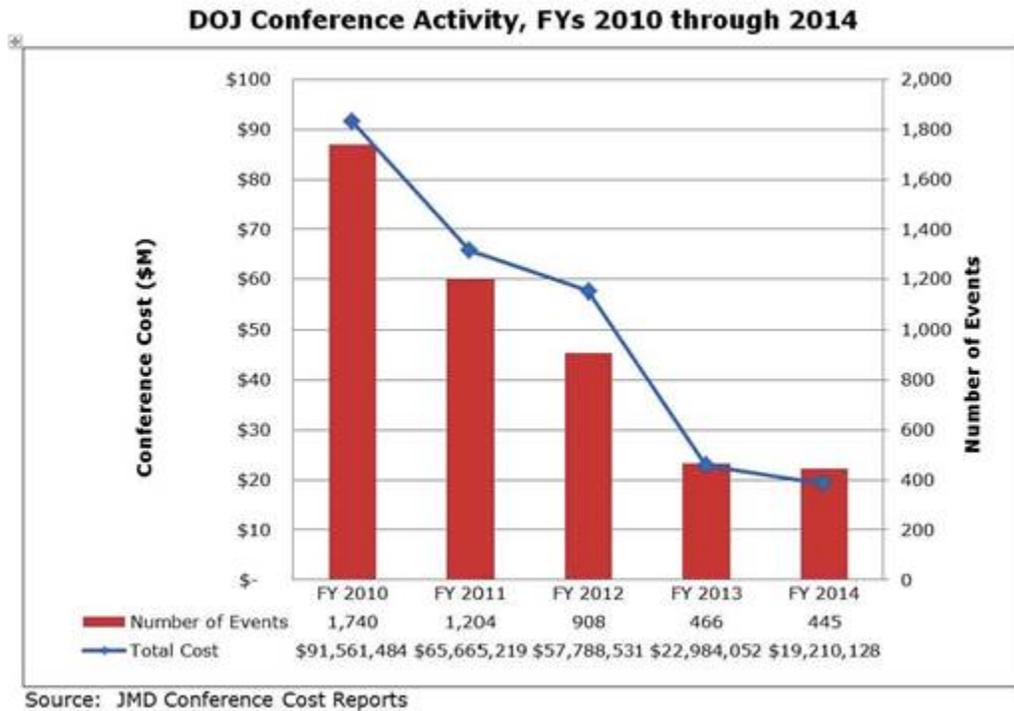


The Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) announced today the release of a report on the DOJ’s compliance with conference planning, approval, and reporting requirements, and its efforts to postpone or scale back spending on conferences during sequestration pursuant to instructions from the Deputy Attorney General in 2013. Based on DOJ reports, we found that the DOJ’s overall conference spending fell from almost \$92 million for 1,740 events in FY 2010 to less than \$20 million for 445 events in FY 2014.



The report released today focuses on 160 events, costing a total of almost \$7 million, that components reported took place between June and September 2013. We further concentrated our review on the conferences supported by four components – the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), and the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) – because these four components collectively funded 149 of the 160 events (93 percent) and accounted for 95 percent of the DOJ’s total conference spending.

Although the DOJ’s overall conference spending fell sharply, we identified multiple instances in which the costs of individual conferences exceeded the events’ estimated costs, and in so doing exceeded various DOJ thresholds for higher-level approvals. In most of these cases, the hosting component either requested prior approval from the Justice Management Division (JMD) to exceed the thresholds, or reported and justified to JMD the additional costs after the event. However, in such six instances we found OJP did not provide post-event justifications to JMD. The audit also identified several conferences for which components did not report their actual costs after the event, usually because the conference was held near the end of the fiscal

year and final costs were not yet available when the DOJ issued its annual conference cost report.

Today's report also assesses the actions taken by the FBI, DEA, OJP, and OVW to postpone or scale back conferences during sequestration. We found that all four components took actions consistent with the memorandum, including postponing or canceling conferences. Three of the four reviewed components – the FBI, DEA, and OJP – reported significant reductions in FYs 2013 and 2014 compared to FY 2012. In contrast, the OVW reported that it held more events and spent more funds in FYs 2013 and 2014 than it did in FY 2012. OVW officials attributed the cause of the increase to additional legislative mandates and the inclusion of indirect costs in its reports to JMD starting in late FY 2012.

Today's report makes five recommendations to help DOJ components improve their compliance with conference planning, approval, and reporting requirements. All relevant DOJ components agreed with the recommendations.

The report can be found on the OIG's website at the following link: <https://oig.justice.gov/reports/2015/a1531.pdf>.