



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DOJ OIG Releases Management Advisory Memorandum Regarding the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Practices and Procedures Pertaining to Interviews in Certain Security Division Investigations

Department of Justice (DOJ) Acting Inspector General Don R. Berthiaume announced today the release of a Management Advisory Memorandum to the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) regarding the FBI's practices and procedures pertaining to interviews in certain Security Division (SecD) investigations of FBI employees holding security clearances that are prompted by alleged security concerns.

The DOJ Office of the Inspector General (OIG) identified these concerns in connection with a June 2024 complaint about interview questions that were asked in a SecD investigation of an FBI employee who had entered a restricted area near the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, and whose security clearance was revoked. For example, some witnesses were asked if the FBI employee under investigation had "[v]ocalize[d] support for President Trump." The OIG also learned that in other investigations, SecD investigators asked or prepared questions about FBI employees' political activities, religious expression, and other potentially constitutionally protected activities.

As described in today's memorandum, we found that in some investigations, SecD investigators asked or prepared vague and overly broad interview questions that, as worded, were not sufficiently tailored to address legitimate security concerns and unnecessarily intruded into potentially constitutionally protected activities. However, we did not find evidence that such questions are routinely prepared for, or asked in, investigations of employees holding security clearances. While the issue of concerning questions may not be widespread, it poses significant risk to DOJ and the FBI because of the potential impact on employees' and witnesses' perceptions of the criteria used to adjudicate security clearances, and the potential effect on the public's perception of the FBI's objectivity.

Today's memorandum also describes significant deficiencies the OIG identified in SecD's practices and procedures, including a lack of training and guidance on the sensitivity in SecD investigations of intruding into employees' potentially constitutionally protected activities, inadequate supervision of SecD investigators' preparation for interviews, and inadequate legal consultation regarding the propriety of potential interview questions.

The OIG made three recommendations to the FBI to address the concerns we identified. The FBI concurred with all three recommendations.

Memorandum: Today's memorandum is [available on our website](#).

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