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Office of Inspector General

**Summary of
Review of Department of State Activities Concerning the Processing
of Refugee Applications and the Provision of Refugee Benefits to
Refugees Later Accused of Terrorism-Related Offenses**

Report Number ISP-I-12-22, May 2012

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SUMMARY

The following is a summary of a Sensitive But Unclassified Office of Inspector General (OIG) report. For information on how to request a copy of the full report, please visit [OIG's Freedom of Information Act page](#).

This special review was conducted in response to a request from Senators Charles E. Schumer and Rand Paul concerning whether certain refugees, who are currently charged with terrorism-related offenses, were incorrectly admitted into the United States and provided with government benefits under the procedures of the United States Refugee Admissions Program in effect at the time. The review looked at procedures for refugee security screening and admissions and the provision of Department of State-funded benefits.

The OIG team held meetings and interviews with the Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) and Bureau of Consular Affairs, and the Department of Homeland Security, and conducted document reviews. The OIG team did not uncover any evidence that Department of State officials had access to derogatory information that should have raised red flags about terrorist activities or connections in the cases under review. Under standard operating procedures in effect at the time, no derogatory information existed within the information sources that were consulted as part of the refugee clearance process. While some discrepancies in the data the inspectors reviewed could indicate instances of human error, the absence of those discrepancies would not have changed the outcome of the admissions process in the cases under review.

Regarding Department of State-funded benefits, refugees typically receive travel loans through the International Organization for Migration. Grants to help with basic living expenses during the first few months of their transition into the United States are administered by nonprofit organizations whose administrative expenses are also at least partially paid by Department of State funds. All refugees are required to repay their travel loans for transportation to the United States. However, there is no established or realistic means to recoup any of the other Department of State-supplied funds used to directly or indirectly provide support to refugees, even if those refugees are subsequently charged with terrorism-related offenses.

Officials from both the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State stated that, in recent years, the Department of Homeland Security has significantly enhanced security screening procedures, further tightening the entry process for all refugees.

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