

The Office of Special Counsel investigates allegations of certain activities prohibited by civil service laws, rules, or regulations and litigates before the Merit Systems Protection Board.

Activities

The Office of Special Counsel (OSC) was established on January 1, 1979, by Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1978 (5 U.S.C. app.). The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. 1101 note), which became effective on January 11, 1979, enlarged its functions and powers. Pursuant to provisions of the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989 (5 U.S.C. 1211 *et seq.*), OSC functions as an independent investigative and prosecutorial agency within the executive branch which litigates before the Merit Systems Protection Board.

The primary role of OSC is to protect employees, former employees, and applicants for employment from prohibited personnel practices, especially reprisal for whistleblowing. Its basic areas of statutory responsibility are to do the following:

- receive and investigate allegations of prohibited personnel practices and other activities prohibited by civil service

- law, rule, or regulation and, if warranted, initiating corrective or disciplinary action;

- provide a secure channel through which information evidencing a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, gross mismanagement, gross waste of funds, abuse of authority, or substantial and specific danger to public health or safety may be disclosed without fear of retaliation and without disclosure of identity, except with the employee’s consent; and

- enforce the provisions of the Hatch Act.

Sources of Information

Field offices are located in Dallas, TX (525 Griffin Street, Room 824, Box 103, Dallas, TX, 75202; phone, 214-767-8871; fax, 214-767-2764) and Oakland, CA (Suite 365S, 1301 Clay Street, 94612-5217; phone, 510-637-3460; fax, 510-637-3474).

For further information, contact the Office of Special Counsel, 1730 M Street NW., Suite 218, Washington, DC 20036-4505. Phone, 202-254-3600 or 800-872-9855 (toll free). Fax, 202-653-5151. Internet, www.osc.gov.

OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION

*1100 New York Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20527
Phone, 202-336-8400. Fax, 202-408-9859. Internet, www.opic.gov.*

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Executive Vice President
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Vice President, Office of Investment Policy
Vice President, Structured Finance Department
Vice President, Small and Medium Enterprise Finance
Vice President, Insurance Department
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Vice President and Chief Financial Officer

MARK A. GARFINKEL
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[For the Overseas Private Investment Corporation statement of organization, see the *Code of Federal Regulations*, Title 22, Chapter VII]

The Overseas Private Investment Corporation is a self-sustaining Federal agency whose purpose is to promote economic growth in developing countries and emerging markets by encouraging U.S. private investment in those nations.

The Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) was established in 1971 as an independent agency by the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act (112 Stat. 2681–790). OPIC helps U.S. businesses invest overseas, fosters economic development in new and emerging markets, complements the private sector in managing risks associated with foreign direct investment, and supports U.S. foreign policy. OPIC charges market-based fees for its products, it operates on a self-sustaining basis at no net cost to taxpayers.

OPIC helps U.S. businesses compete in emerging markets when private sector support is not available. OPIC offers up to \$250 million in long-term financing and/or political risk insurance to U.S. companies investing in over 150 emerging markets and developing countries. Backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. Government, OPIC advocates for U.S. investment, offers experience in risk management, and draws on an outstanding record of success.

OPIC mobilizes America's private sector to advance U.S. foreign policy and development initiatives. Projects supported by OPIC expand economic development, which encourages political stability and free market reforms. Since 1971, OPIC has supported \$150 billion in investments that have helped developing countries to generate over 690,000 jobs. OPIC projects have also generated \$66 billion in U.S. exports and supported more than 257,000 American jobs. OPIC promotes U.S. best practices by requiring projects to adhere to international standards on the environment, worker rights, and human rights.

Activities

OPIC insures U.S. investors, contractors, exporters, and financial institutions against political violence, expropriation of assets by foreign governments, and the inability to convert local currencies into U.S. dollars. OPIC can insure up to \$250 million per project and has no minimum investment size requirements. Insurance is available for investments in new ventures, expansions of existing enterprises, privatizations, and acquisitions with positive developmental benefits.

OPIC provides financing through direct loans and loan guaranties for medium and long term private investment. Loans range from \$100,000 to \$250 million for projects sponsored by U.S. companies, and financing can be provided on a project finance or corporate finance basis. In most cases, the U.S. sponsor is expected to contribute at least 25 percent of the project equity, have a track record in the industry, and have the means to contribute to the financial success of the project.

To address the lack of sufficient equity investment in emerging markets, OPIC has supported the creation of privately owned and managed investment funds that make direct equity and equity-related investments in new, expanding, or privatizing companies. These funds, which have a regional or sectoral focus, provide the long-term growth capital that can serve as a catalyst for private sector economic activity in developing countries and the creation of new markets and opportunities for American companies.

Helping America's small businesses grow through investments in emerging markets is an important OPIC priority. Any small business with annual revenues

less than \$35 million is eligible for small business center programs. For businesses with annual revenues over \$35 million and under \$250 million, OPIC's regular small business programs are available. OPIC provides direct loans to U.S. small

businesses, and offers insurance products to meet the special needs of small businesses. Other client services include streamlined applications and processing procedures, and a small business hotline.

Sources of Information

General Inquiries Inquiries should be directed to the Information Office, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, 1100 New York Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20527. Phone, 202-336-8799. E-mail, info@opic.gov. Internet, www.opic.gov.

Publications OPIC programs are further detailed in the *Annual Report* and the *Program Handbook*. These publications are available free of charge and on the Web site.

For further information, contact the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, 1100 New York Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20527. Phone, 202-336-8400. Fax, 202-408-9859. Internet, www.opic.gov.

PEACE CORPS

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