MEMORANDUM

Date: September 23, 2015

To: The Commissioner

From: Inspector General

Subject: Hearing Office Average Processing Times (A-05-15-50083)

The attached final report presents the results of the Office of Audit’s review of average processing time at the Social Security Administration’s hearing offices.

If you wish to discuss the final report, please call me or have your staff contact Steven L. Schaeffer, Assistant Inspector General for Audit, at (410) 965-9700.

Patrick P. O’Carroll, Jr.

Attachment
Hearing Office Average Processing Times
A-05-15-50083

September 2015

Office of Audit Report Summary

Background

We are issuing this report to convey information related to average processing time (APT) at the Social Security Administration’s (SSA) hearing offices.

Claimants who are denied disability benefits at a State disability determination services can appeal the decision to an administrative law judge (ALJ) in the Agency’s Office of Disability Adjudication and Review (ODAR). SSA maintains 164 hearing and satellite offices as well as 5 National Hearing Centers in 47 of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

ODAR’s initial appeals process generally entails a hearing before an ALJ as well as the participation of expert witnesses, as appropriate. These hearings can be in-person or via a videoconference.

SSA has a long-term goal of completing the average initial appeals process, from the time it receives the hearing request to the final decision on the case, in an average of 270 days. The Agency calls this the APT.

Summary

As of May 2015, ODAR’s national APT for hearing decisions was 463 days. APT has been increasing since Fiscal Year (FY) 2012, when it averaged 353 days. The Agency’s performance plan expects APT to be 470 days at the end of FY 2015 and 490 days at the end of FY 2016.

Three of SSA’s 10 regions had an APT that exceeded the national average. The Denver Region maintained the lowest APT of 391 days, whereas the Atlanta Region had the highest APT of 508 days—a 117-day variance.

We also reviewed APT at hearing offices in the 10 largest States to identify variances. For example, in May 2015, we found 15 of the 17 hearing offices in California had an APT better than the national average, whereas all 8 offices in Florida had an APT that was worse than the national average. As a result, someone living in Miami, Florida, would wait about 300 days (about 10 months) longer for a hearing than someone living in Orange, California.

ODAR managers said they had a number of tools to address APT issues at hearing offices, including national and regional assistance with case adjudication, case pulling, and decision writing. The Agency was also expanding its hearing capacity through additional hiring and new offices.
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ABBREVIATIONS

ALJ Administrative Law Judge
APT Average Processing Time
FY Fiscal Year
JOV Judge-Only Video
NCAC National Case Assistance Center
NHC National Hearing Center
OCALJ Office of the Chief Administrative Law Judge
ODAR Office of Disability Adjudication and Review
OIG Office of the Inspector General
RVP Representative Video Project
SAR Service Area Realignment
SSA Social Security Administration
BACKGROUND

We are issuing this report to convey information related to average processing time (APT) at the Social Security Administration’s (SSA) hearing offices.1 Claimants who are denied disability benefits at a State disability determination services can appeal the decision to an administrative law judge (ALJ) in the Agency’s Office of Disability Adjudication and Review (ODAR). As of May 2015, SSA had 164 hearing offices and satellites as well as 5 National Hearing Centers (NHC)2 nationwide including Puerto Rico.3

The ODAR appeals process generally entails a hearing before an ALJ and the participation of expert witnesses, as appropriate. These hearings can be in-person or via a videoconference. Moreover, while hearings are usually performed by local ALJs and staff, when an office needs assistance, its workload can be assigned to another hearing office, an NHC, or a National Case Assistance Center (NCAC).4

SSA stated its long-term goal for hearing office APT is 270 days.5 The Agency has determined that this amount of time is sufficient to ensure due process.6

We analyzed hearing workload data and related management information. We also met with ODAR management to discuss workload goals and any actions to adjust hearing office workloads as a result of backlogs and APT variations.

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1 The Agency defines APT as the average number of calendar days from the hearing request date to the disposition date for all dispositions in a report period.

2 NHCs generally conduct their hearings by videoconference. NHCs are in Albuquerque, New Mexico; Baltimore, Maryland; Chicago, Illinois; Falls Church, Virginia; and St. Louis, Missouri.

3 We used the term “office” in this report to represent the 164 hearing and satellite offices and 5 NHCs. SSA’s Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 public use data through May 2015 reflected workload statistics for 163 hearing offices and 1 satellite office.

4 NCACs assist offices with case assembly, or pulling, and decision writing.

5 Former SSA Commissioner Michael J. Astrue, in a June 2012 hearing, stated APT was the “best metric for tracking progress.” He also stated, “When people request a hearing, they want to know how long it will take to get a decision. Much like a line in a store, the customer’s experience depends not on how many other people are waiting, but on how quickly we help them …With grocery stores, we can choose where we get our groceries and decide if we are willing to accept a particular store’s customer service, but Americans seeking Social Security benefits have only one place to go.” The Appeals Process: Hearing Before H. Ways and Means Committee, Subcommittee on Social Security, 112th Cong. (June 27, 2012) (statement of Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner, Social Security Administration).

AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME TRENDS

We reviewed APT trends at the national, regional, and hearing office levels. We also reviewed APT by State, focusing on the 10 largest States based on population, to identify variances.

National Average Processing Time

As of May 2015, ODAR’s national APT for hearing decisions was 463 days. APT has been increasing since FY 2012, when it fell to its lowest level in years and averaged 353 days (see Figure 1). In SSA’s FY 2016 Annual Performance Plan, the Agency stated it anticipates APT will be 470 days at the end of FY 2015 and 490 days at the end of FY 2016.

Figure 1: Trends in APT for FYs 2007 to 2015
(as of May 29, 2015)

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7 We plan to report on the status of the Agency’s 2007 hearings backlog initiatives. See SSA OIG, Agency Progress in Eliminating the Pending Hearings Backlog and Improving Hearing Timeliness (A-12-15-15005).

Regional Average Processing Time

As of May 2015, the Denver Region had the lowest APT of 391 days while the Atlanta Region had the highest APT of 508 days, a variance of 117 days. The APT for 3 of the 10 Regions\(^9\) exceeded the national average (see Table 1).\(^{10}\)

**Table 1: Regional APT in FYs 2012 and 2015**
(As of May 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Percent of Total Workload</th>
<th>FY 2012 APT</th>
<th>FY 2015 APT</th>
<th>APT Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Region I: Boston</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region II: New York</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>43.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region III: Philadelphia</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region IV: Atlanta</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional V: Chicago</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region VI: Dallas</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region VII: Kansas City</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region VIII: Denver</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional IX: San Francisco</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region X: Seattle</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Hearing Centers</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Average</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>353</strong></td>
<td><strong>463</strong></td>
<td><strong>31.2%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Percent of total dispositions workload determined using May 2015 data.

In terms of worsening APT since FY 2012, the New York Region’s processing time increased by 44 percent whereas the Kansas City Region’s processing time increased by 8 percent, though it was already high in FY 2012.

Average Processing Time by Office

We found that 80 hearing offices (47 percent) had exceeded the 463-day national APT as of May 2015 while 89 offices (53 percent) were less than the national APT.\(^{11}\) Of the 80 offices that exceeded the national APT, 28 (35 percent) were located in the Atlanta Region.\(^{12}\) Nationally,

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\(^9\) As Table 1 reflects, the three regions that exceeded the national APT average in May 2015 processed 44 percent of the total national hearings workload.

\(^{10}\) As we note later in this report, during FY 2015, ODAR began realigning offices in West Virginia (from the Philadelphia Region) and Kentucky (from the Atlanta Region) to the Kansas City Region. However, in its technical comments for this report, the Agency stated that it has not yet finalized the formal reorganization and delegations. We did not find these changes reflected in ODAR’s management information, so our data reflects the status of the hearing offices before the FY 2015 realignment.

\(^{11}\) The median APT in May 2015 was 461 days.

\(^{12}\) The Atlanta Region had 37 hearing offices in May 2015.
hearing office APT ranged from 305 days in the Alexandria, Louisiana, Hearing Office to 699 days in the Fort Myers, Florida, Hearing Office.\textsuperscript{13} We determined that 3 percent of the offices had an APT less than 350 days while 9 percent of the offices had an APT greater than 550 days (see Figure 2).

\textbf{Figure 2: FY 2015 APT Range for Hearing Offices (as of May 2015)}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{APT_Hearing_OFFICE_Fig_2.png}
\caption{FY 2015 APT Range for Hearing Offices (as of May 2015)}
\end{figure}

\textbf{Note:} We included a satellite office that reported APT separately from its parent office.

As Figure 3 shows, hearing offices tended to have a higher APT in FY 2007 than May 2015, and APT among hearing offices was more widely dispersed in FY 2007.

\textsuperscript{13} FY 2015 public Agency data we obtained for this review listed the Fort Myers Office as a hearing office. It was previously one of two satellites that reported APT separately from the parent office. Also, the Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, Hearing Office had an APT of 91 days in May 2015. Since it was not functioning as a hearing office in FY 2015, we excluded it from our APT variance assessment. See Appendix B for data on APT by hearing office.
Figure 3: Shift in APT from FY 2007 to May 2015

Note: ODAR supported 141 hearing offices in FY 2007 and 163 in FY 2015. We excluded NHCs from our comparison, since they did not exist in FY 2007, as well as the Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, Hearing Office since it was not functioning as a hearing office in FY 2015.

Average Processing Time by State

As Figure 4 reflects, Agency data on APT indicated the States in the Philadelphia and Atlanta Regions had higher APTs than elsewhere in the Nation.
Figure 4: APT by State for May 2015

Note: SSA does not have hearing offices in the States of Idaho, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming. Hence, there was no APT data to measure in those States.

We focused on the 10 most populous States based on 2014 U.S. Census data to identify variances. These 10 States represented 54 percent of the U.S. population. California had the lowest APT in May 2015, whereas Florida had the highest APT (see Figure 5).

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15 In its technical comments to this report, the Agency stated that there are a variety of reasons why States vary in their processing times relative to other States. For example, the California hearings workload was impacted by furloughs of the Disability Determination Services staff during the last recession. For more information, see SSA OIG, The Social Security Administration’s Response to State Furloughs Impacting its Disability Programs (A-01-11-11116), March 2011, and Quick Response Evaluation: Impact of State Employee Furloughs on the Social Security Administration’s Disability Programs (A-01-09-29137), March 2009.

16 See Appendix C for a complete list of APT by State and Appendix D for additional workload figures for hearing offices in the 10 most populous States.

Hearing Office Average Processing Times (A-05-15-50083) 6
We reviewed APT variances in May 2015 and found 15 of the 17 offices in California had an APT better than the national average, whereas all 8 offices in Florida had an APT worse than the national average.\textsuperscript{17} For example, the Orange Hearing Office had an APT of 354 days while the Miami Hearing Office had an APT of 654 days (see Table 2). As a result, someone living in Miami, Florida, would have to wait about 300 days longer—or about 10 additional months—for a hearing than someone living in Orange, California.\textsuperscript{18}

\begin{table}
\centering
\caption{FY 2015 as of May 2015 Workload Statistics for the Miami and Orange Hearing Offices}
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Hearing Office} & \textbf{APT} & \textbf{Receipts} & \textbf{Dispositions} & \textbf{Pending per ALJ} & \textbf{ALJ Productivity} \\
\hline
National & 463 & 504,246 & 439,462 & 720 & 2.10 \\
Miami & 654 & 1,904 & 2,208 & 1,040 & 1.56 \\
Orange & 354 & 2,838 & 2,817 & 687 & 2.34 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\textbf{Note:} ALJ productivity relates to the number of dispositions per day per ALJ.
\end{table}

While the Miami and Orange Hearing Offices had a similar volume of dispositions, the Orange Hearing Office had more receipts and fewer pending cases per ALJ. In addition, the ALJs in the Orange Hearing Office were 50 percent more productive than the ALJs in the Miami Hearing Office. Agency data for May 2015 also indicated cases in the Miami Hearing Office were not assigned to ALJs in the first 450 days after the hearing request was filed, which is longer than the

\textsuperscript{17} As a result, the office in California with the worse APT for the State was better than the office in Florida with the best APT for that State.

\textsuperscript{18} In FY 2007, the APT difference between both hearing offices was comparable at 303 days.
national average of 305 days (see Figure 6). In the Orange Hearing Office, cases were generally assigned to ALJs about 184 days after the hearing request, or 121 days faster than the national average and more than twice as fast as the Miami Hearing Office.

Figure 6: APT by Case Status for the Month Ending May 29, 2015

AGENCY ACTIONS TO REDUCE AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME

ODAR managers said they had a number of tools to address APT issues at hearing offices, including (1) case adjudication assistance, (2) case pulling and decision writing assistance, (3) other workload sharing resources, and (4) expanded hearing capacity.

Case Adjudication Assistance

SSA used video hearings to address the hearings backlog and reduce case processing time by increasing adjudicatory capacity. SSA developed the NHCs to assist targeted backlogged

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19 As noted in Table 2, the ALJs in the Miami Hearing Office had a higher number of pending cases per ALJ than the ALJs in the Orange Hearing Office.

20 SSA stated that video technology can “…increase efficiency and improve customer service…Specifically, it will enable us to balance workloads across the country, reduce the need for (and the costs for) our ALJs and other hearing office staff to travel between offices and to remote sites to hold hearings, and reduce the need for claimants to travel long distances to hearing offices.” See SSA, Agency Strategic Plan: Fiscal Years 2014-2018.
hearing offices using videoconferencing equipment. The Office of the Chief Administrative Law Judge (OCALJ) allocates NHC hearing assistance to heavily backlogged hearing offices on a rolling basis. At any one time, workload for each NHC location consists of cases from 3 to 10 targeted hearing offices. The NHCs issued approximately 29,000 dispositions in FY 2014 and have issued about 22,000 dispositions in FY 2015 through June 2015.

NHC managers stated they considered several workload indicators, including receipts, cases pending per ALJ, and average age, to determine what offices to assist. In addition to the available resources at NHCs, managers consider video capacity in the offices assisted.

As Figure 7 shows, the video-enabled hearing arrangements that the Agency has at its disposal provide flexibility in addressing APT and backlogged offices. As a result, in addition to the NHCs helping individual hearing offices, hearing offices can assist one another with adjudication duties. For example, a permanent remote site assigned to Hearing Office A can be shifted to ALJs in Hearing Office B while the ALJs in Hearing Office A catch up on the rest of the workload. Moreover, since video hearings require two hearing sites—one for the ALJ and one for the claimant—the expansion of claimant-only video sites, judge-only video (JOV) sites, and video sites at claimant representatives offices, called the Representative Video Project (RVP), alleviates some of these video capacity bottlenecks. We discuss ODAR’s plans to expand hearing capacity later in this report.

21 Start-up assistance to these hearing offices requires 3 months of preparation time for the transferring office cases to be prepared, scheduled, and held. At the conclusion of the assistance, the NHCs may take 3 to 6 months to close out the pending caseload.

22 The JOV sites are a relatively new initiative. During our audit, ODAR managers told us they had five JOV sites and were adding more.

We reviewed NHC assistance to hearing offices in California and Florida since FY 2012. As Table 3 reflects, the NHCs assisted only one hearing office in California\(^{24}\) but assisted six of the eight hearing offices in Florida\(^{25}\). ODAR management indicated that the San Francisco Region had capacity to assist its own offices as well as other offices nationwide during most of this period, while the Atlanta Region faced a large backlog and required assistance from outside the region for most of this same period.

### Table 3: NHC Assistance to Hearing Offices in California and Florida (FY 2012 Through May 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Offices Assisted</th>
<th>Number of Offices in State</th>
<th>Percent of Total Offices in State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As noted earlier, ALJs remotely assisted other regions with case adjudication as was the case of an ALJ in the Boston Region that assisted the Atlanta Region by holding video hearings to assist the Miami Hearing Office. By leveraging video-enabled hearing arrangements, ODAR has greater flexibility in balancing its workloads among offices.

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\(^{24}\) This California hearing office was assisted during part of FY 2015.

\(^{25}\) The NHCs assisted five of these six Florida hearing offices during all 4 FYs.
Case Pulling and Decision Writing Assistance

In addition to adjudication, ODAR offices assist one another with other duties, such as case preparation, also referred to as pulling cases, and writing decisions. For example, ODAR established NCACs in Baltimore, Maryland, and St. Louis, Missouri, as a support network to address various ODAR backlog initiatives. Both NCACs assist hearing offices and NHCs with case pulling and decision writing. The NCACs work with OCALJ’s Division of Workload Management, which determines which regions receive assistance. ODAR managers told us they reassess workloads monthly and adjust them as needed weekly. The NCAC goal is to pull cases and write decisions within 14 days. NCACs receive cases weekly and work on a first-in, first-out basis.

NCAC managers stated they assisted offices with about 41,000 cases in FY 2014 and about 58,000 through June 2015. ODAR plans to open two writing unit NCACs in Richmond, California, and Louisville, Kentucky, to support additional hearing capacity. With respect to NCAC assistance to hearing offices in California and Florida, we found the majority of hearing offices in both States received NCAC assistance for multiple years since FY 2012 (see Table 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Offices Assisted</th>
<th>Number of Offices in State</th>
<th>Percent of Total Offices in State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some regional offices have their own case pulling and/or decision-writing units to balance workloads at the regional level. For instance, the ODAR San Francisco Region has its management team assess capacity every day and transfer cases throughout the week to the offices that can assist other hearing offices in the region. In addition, OCALJ established regional pulling and writing units in San Bernardino and Stockton, California, and in Phoenix, Arizona, to assist the San Francisco Region.

Other Workload Sharing

OCALJ is responsible for monitoring and implementing Service Area Realignments (SAR) between regions. OCALJ uses SARs to redirect field office workloads from one hearing office to another to reduce receipts at a backlogged office.\(^{26}\) The hearing offices receiving the cases are

\(^{26}\) In our September 2009 report *Aged Claims at the Hearing Level* (A-12-08-18071), we reported that OCALJ implemented the SAR initiative in FY 2007 as a two-phased strategy. The first phase included permanent interregional transfer of claims, which ODAR stated was designed to decrease aged pending workloads of heavily impacted offices between regions. Once the flow of transfer claims began, phase two involved realigning specific SSA field offices in high workload regions to hearing offices in lower workload regions. This meant that new claims would be processed and heard in hearing offices in a different part of the country from where the claimant lived.
responsible for all hearing duties—case pulling, adjudication, and decision writing. ODAR management indicated that, although there were no recent SARs between regions, the Regional Chief Administrative Law Judges have implemented SARs within their regions, which they continually monitor and adjust. ODAR management stated that five regions had intra-regional SARs in place in FY 2015 to temporarily or permanently assist hearing offices. According to Agency data we obtained for this review, the San Francisco and Atlanta Regions did not use SARs in FY 2015. However, other regions were using intra-regional SARs to assist hearing offices, particularly the Dallas Region.

Another tool ODAR used in FY 2015 involves office realignments to help balance regional management workloads. For example, in early FY 2015, ODAR began realigning offices in West Virginia (then in the Philadelphia Region) and Kentucky (then in the Atlanta Region) to the Kansas City Region.

Expanding Hearing Capacity

SSA plans to create additional hearing capacity to address increasing workloads as well as to house more case pulling and writing resources needed to support the added hearing capacity. For example, ODAR managers stated they planned to expand video capacity in FY 2015 with 160 new video units and an additional 150 new video units in FY 2016.27 In Florida, ODAR is considering the addition of new hearing space, including hearing offices, permanent remote sites, claimant-only video sites, and JOVs. ODAR also planned to hire between 200 and 250 ALJs as well as related support staff in FY 2015 to process more hearing cases. These efforts will expand ODAR’s ability to use virtual ALJs in parts of the country with capacity to assist offices in areas with higher pending cases and APT.

SUMMARY

Hearing office APT has been worsening since FY 2012, with national APT increasing to 463 days in May 2015. APT ranged widely by region, State, and hearing office, with some hearing offices more than 300 days apart in their processing times. ODAR managers said they have a number of tools to address APT issues at hearing offices. The Agency is also in the process of expanding its hearing capacity through additional hiring and new offices.

Steven L Schaeffer, JD, CPA, CGFM, CGMA
Assistant Inspector General for Audit

In its technical comments to this report, the Agency stated that in addition to the new units, ODAR refreshed 262 video units in FY 2015 and plan to refresh 393 video units in FY 2016.
Appendix A – SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

To complete our review, we:

- Met with Agency managers in the Social Security Administration’s (SSA) Office of Disability Adjudication and Review to discuss hearing office workload trends and strategies for realigning resources, such as national and regional assistance.
- Obtained management information on hearing office average processing time (APT) for Fiscal Years (FY) 2007 through May 2015.
- Analyzed APT and other hearing workload data for FYs 2007 through May 2015.
- Obtained National Hearing Center and National Case Assistance Center workload data for FYs 2014 and 2015 through June 2015.
- Obtained U.S. Census Bureau data to identify the 10 most populous States in 2014. We then compared various workload statistics among the 10 States, including APT.
- Calculated the percentage change in APT from FYs 2012 to 2015 through May 29, 2015 at the national, regional, State, and hearing office levels.
- Compared various workload statistics at the Miami, Florida, and Orange, California, hearing offices.
- Shared a draft of our report with Agency managers for their comments.

We relied on management representations regarding workload volumes and assistance when we could not obtain data from existing management information systems. Based on our limited testing, we found the APT management information were sufficiently reliable for this review. The performance period for this review was from May to July 2015 in accordance with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency’s Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation.
### Appendix B – Fiscal Years 2012 Through 2015 Average Processing Time By Hearing Office or Satellite

Table B–1: Fiscal Years 2012-2015 Average Processing Time by Hearing Office or Satellite (Through May 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akron OH</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>37.6%</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albany NY</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albuquerque NM</td>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexandria LA</td>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anchorage AK</td>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta Downtown GA</td>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>44.5%</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta North GA</td>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augusta GA</td>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>N/A^2</td>
<td>N/A^2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore MD</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>553</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billings MT</td>
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**Note 1:** Data for Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 ran from September 27, 2014 through May 29, 2015.

**Note 2:** The Augusta office closed in FY 2015.

**Note 3:** The Agency did not include National Hearing Centers in its hearing office ranking report for this period.

**Note 4:** During FY 2015, the Office of Disability Adjudication and Review (ODAR) began realigning offices in West Virginia (from the Philadelphia Region) and Kentucky (from the Atlanta Region) to the Kansas City Region. However, in its technical comments for this report, the Agency stated that it has not yet finalized the formal realignment. We did not find these changes reflected in ODAR’s management information, so our data reflects the status of the hearing offices before the FY 2015 realignment.
### Table C–1: Fiscal Year 2015 Average Processing Times by State (Through May 2015)

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<th>State/District/Territory</th>
<th>Average Processing Time</th>
<th>Number of Hearing Offices</th>
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<td>Average Processing Time&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Wyoming</td>
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**Source:** The Office of Disability Adjudication and Review (ODAR) *Hearing Office Workloads by State*, as of May 29, 2015.

**Note 1:** We did not include American Samoa, Guam, Saipan, and the U.S. Virgin Islands in the table since these territories did not have a hearing office.

**Note 2:** These States did not have a hearing office.

**Note 3:** During FY 2015, ODAR began realigning offices in West Virginia (from the Philadelphia Region) and Kentucky (from the Atlanta Region) to the Kansas City Region. However, in its technical comments for this report, the Agency stated that it has not yet finalized the formal reorganization and delegations. We did not find these changes reflected in ODAR’s management information, so our data reflects the status of the hearing offices before the FY 2015 realignment.
# Appendix D – Workload Figures for Hearing Offices in the Ten Most Populous States

Table D–1: Workload Figures for Hearing Offices in the Ten Most Populous States (FY 2015 as of May 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Decisional Allowance Rate</th>
<th>Weighted Pending Cases per ALJ</th>
<th>Weighted Productivity per ALJ&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Average Processing Time (in days)</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>54.4%</td>
<td>923</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>550</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>57.9%</td>
<td>941</td>
<td>2.06</td>
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<td>Georgia</td>
<td>57.2%</td>
<td>817</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>541</td>
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<td>Ohio</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>497</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>53.4%</td>
<td>801</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>491</td>
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<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>59.7%</td>
<td>831</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>488</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>52.8%</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>1.88</td>
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<td>Michigan</td>
<td>57.2%</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>2.22</td>
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<td>Texas</td>
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<td>California</td>
<td>55.3%</td>
<td>747</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>417</td>
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<td>National</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>463</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<sup>1</sup> The Agency calculates administrative law judge (ALJ) productivity as the number of dispositions per day per available ALJ.
Appendix E – MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS

Walter Bayer, Director, Chicago Audit Division

Elizabeth Ochoa, Audit Data Specialist

Wai Ho Yung, Auditor-in-Charge
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