

## **Griffin, Richard J. (OIG)**

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**From:** Griffin, Richard J. (SES) (OIG)  
**Sent:** Monday, August 04, 2014 6:45 AM  
**To:** Gibson, Sloan  
**Subject:** Re: Meeting Today and Phoenix

Hi Sloan. Thanks for your note. I look forward to the meeting. VBA is in denial. Can clarify Phoenix when we meet.

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**From:** Gibson, Sloan  
**Sent:** Monday, August 04, 2014 05:42 AM  
**To:** Griffin, Richard J. (SES) (OIG)  
**Subject:** Meeting Today and Phoenix

Griff,

Welcome back from your well deserved time off! Hope you had a good time and a good break.

We are getting together later today I believe. This is a meeting that I suggested and I wanted to be sure you knew what I had in mind.

Every week I get the summaries of IG reviews of regional offices where I see the same findings over and over. Every time I follow up with Allison, I get the same sense of fundamental disconnect between what they consider important and what your teams audit. I would like to have an unemotional, open, and candid discussion about these issues to see if we can't reconcile these different views. I do not believe that Veterans are best served by the continued disconnect between VBA and our IG.

Separately, I wanted to share a couple of thoughts/questions from the Phoenix report now that you are back in the office.

1. I was surprised to see no reference to the allegation of 40 deaths. Normally, your reports clearly address whether an allegation was substantiated or not. What was the conclusion and is there a reason this very serious allegation doesn't get directly addressed?
2. We had expected to get information on 20 additional sites along with this report. Is that information being conveyed separately and when can we expect to receive it?
3. When you released your interim report, it referred to the 1700 names which we have worked vigorously since. The new report refers to 3500. Is there a reason we didn't get these sooner? I'm not sure we have the list of names. The last I heard we were trying to piece together a list that totaled about 3500 from our own sources. Do we have the list now?
4. I believe I understood from the ICRT that Sharon Helman has never been interviewed. Can this be correct? Is there any conceivable way that a review could be considered complete without interviewing the MC director?

5. There are five recommendations that have to do with reinforcing the existing ethics program. I think we need a "from the ground up" review and potential overhaul of our entire activity. Rather than non-concurring with your recommendations, perhaps we could agree on an approach that gets to the essence of the concern.

Thanks for giving all this your consideration and look forward to seeing you later today.

Very best,

Sloan

Sloan Gibson  
Deputy Secretary  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs