




UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Office of Inspector General  
Washington, D.C. 20230

April 11, 2014

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Michelle K. Lee  
Acting Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property  
and Acting Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

**FROM:** Ann C. Eilers   
Principal Assistant Inspector General for Audits and Evaluation

**SUBJECT:** Audit of USPTO's Quality Assurance Practices

As part of our fiscal year 2014 audit and evaluation plan, we will conduct an audit of the quality assurance practices of the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO).

Our objectives are to:

- Determine the sufficiency of USPTO's quality assurance program's processes to prevent the issuance of low-quality patents.
- Assess the additional quality reviews performed by USPTO to measure examiner performance and ensure that examiners are fully qualified to issue patent determinations without supervisory review.

We will contact the audit liaison to arrange an entrance conference. In the interim, we will send you a request for documents. Please provide us with the information requested within 2 weeks of receiving this request. In the meantime, if you have any questions about this audit, call Carol Rice, Division Director, at (202) 482-6020 or Melanie Caesar Danberg, Program Analyst, at (202) 482-2710. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

cc: Margaret A. Focarino, Commissioner for Patents, USPTO  
Anthony P. Scardino, Chief Financial Officer, USPTO  
Welton Lloyd, Audit Liaison, USPTO