




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

June 27, 2013

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Teresa Stanek Rea  
Acting Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property  
and Acting Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

**FROM:** Ron Prevost   
Assistant Inspector General for Economic  
and Statistical Program Assessment

**SUBJECT:** Audit of Request for Continued Examination (RCE) Growth

As part of our fiscal year 2013 audit and evaluation plan, we will conduct an audit of the growth of the RCE backlog and pendency.

Our objectives are to assess:

- Reasons for the increase in average RCE pendency and the RCE backlog
- USPTO's efforts to monitor and address the RCE backlog/pendency and review specific programs intended to resolve issues during the initial prosecution of the patent application

We will contact the audit liaison to arrange an entrance conference for the second week in July 2013. 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 review, call me at (202) 482-3052 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