Background
The U.S. Department of Commerce International Trade Administration's (ITA's) mission is to create prosperity by strengthening the international competitiveness of U.S. industry, promoting trade and investment, and ensuring fair trade and compliance with trade laws and agreements. In 2018, in addition to creating and safeguarding jobs, ITA assisted more than 33,000 exporters and increased revenue of clients by an average of $2 million. Global Markets—a business unit of ITA—assists and advocates for U.S. businesses in the international markets to foster U.S. economic prosperity.

The United States & Foreign Commercial Service (US&FCS) is a primary component of Global Markets. US&FCS's 229 foreign service officers are typically assigned to international posts to promote the export of U.S. goods and services, increase high-impact foreign direct investment into the U.S., and strengthen fair competition in international trade for U.S. firms and workers—all while facing demanding careers which require one to carry "the privileges and responsibilities associated with that representation at all times," frequent relocation, and cultural sensitivity, among other challenges.

Why We Did This Review
The objective of our evaluation was to determine whether US&FCS adhered to applicable laws, regulations, and policies when conducting the 2018 officer promotion process.