Approved for Release: 2024/11/05 C06628007 UNCLASSIFIED//<del>FOUO</del>

16 August 2011

# DISPOSITION MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: (U) Unaccredited Degree: Global Response Staff Officer

**CASE:** 2011-10162-IG

(b)(6)

(b)(7)(c)

#### **ISSUES UNDER INVESTIGATION:**

1. (U//EOUO) Based on a 2008 United States Secret Service investigation that identified an Agency contractor as possessing a degree from a known diploma mill, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) initiated a proactive investigation on 5 August 2008 into Agency staff claiming degrees from non-accredited institutions. OIG matched a list of (b)(3) CIAAct unaccredited institutions against Agency BIO information to identify any (b)(6)(b)(7)(c)individuals who had provided degree evidence to Human Resources. 1,2 One of the individuals identified, presented a bachelor of (b)(6)science "degree" from received in on (b)(7)(c)his Agency BIO. (b)(6) is an unaccredited institution. (b)(7)(c)2. (U//FOUO) OIG reviewed the claims made by (b)(3) CIAAct

(b)(6)

(b)(7)(c)

regarding his degree and the associated education to determine if there were false statements or improper use of an unaccredited degree, and if there was an improper reimbursement for the degree by the Agency.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> (U//EOUO) The term unaccredited refers to the recognition and acceptability of a degree for use in federal employment as recognized by the Office of Personnel Management. Unaccredited degrees cannot be used to meet the qualifications for federal positions that require a degree. The complete definitions of accreditation are included in the Appendix.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> (U//<del>EOUO)</del> The Agency biographical profile (Agency BIO) is the mechanism for tracking information on individuals who officially declare their education to the Agency by providing proof of attendance. The Agency BIO is made available to hiring managers and used directly in staffing decisions. Only staff employees and former employees were covered by this review because there is no central database on contractor educational records.

(b)(3) CIAAct (b)(6) (b)(7)(c)

### **INVESTIGATIVE EFFORTS:**

3. (U//EOUO) OIG reviewed security file for any degree claims.

 4. (U//FOUO) OIG reviewed
 Official Personnel Folder

 (OPF) and online Agency BIO.
 (b)(3) CIAAct

 (b)(6)
 (b)(6)

5. (U//EOUO) OIG interviewed on 5 September 2008, (b)(7)(c) regarding his unaccredited degree.

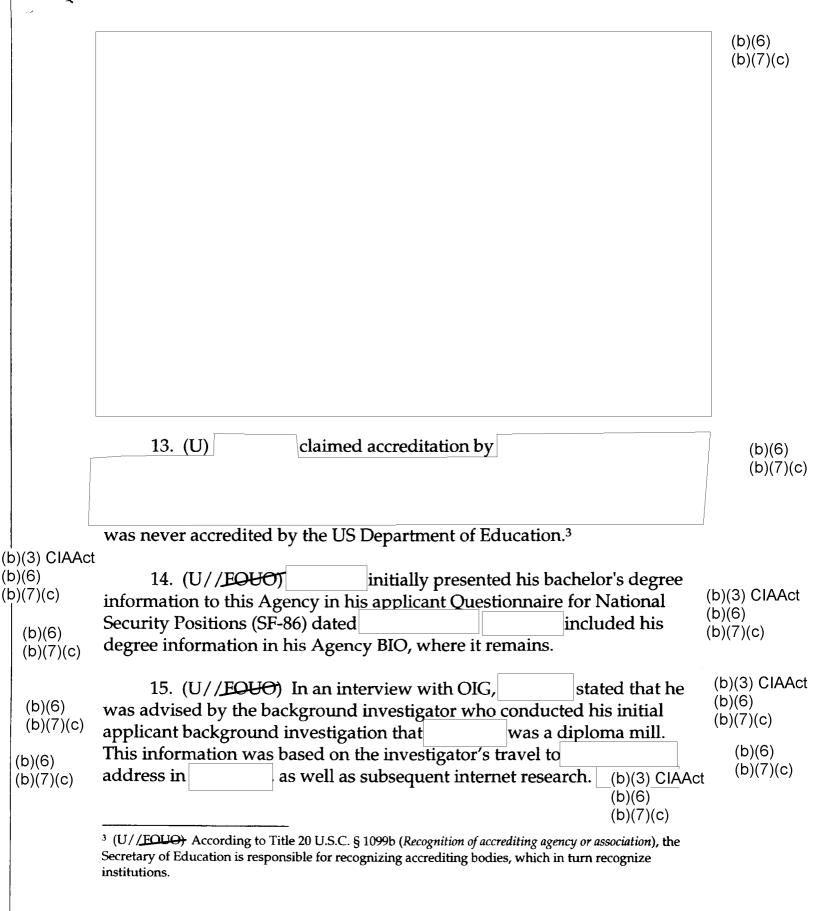
6.  $(U/\underline{FOUO})$  OIG obtained and reviewed \_\_\_\_\_\_ internal job applications and resumes for positions that he held at the Agency as well as his Performance Appraisal Reports.

7. (U//EQUO) OIG reviewed Agency regulations and relevant laws related to the allegations.

## **RESULTS:**

(b)(6) (b)(7)(c)						(b)(3) CIAAct (b)(6) (b)(7)(c) (b)(3) CIAAct
(b)(6) (b)(7)(c)	9. (U//.	from	holds a bache	_	had completed	(b)(6) (b)(7)(c) (b)(3) CIAAct (b)(6) (b)(7)(c)
(b)(6) (b)(7)(c) (b)(3) CIAAct	he started at estin	a 5 September : in	2008 interview w	ith OIG, vished in	stated that \$2,500 and (b)(6)	(b)(3) CIAAct (b)(6) (b)(7)(c)
(b)(3) CIAACI (b)(6) (b)(7)(c)		(b)(7)(c)	(b)(7)(c)		(b)(7)(c	·)
		IJ	2 NCLASSIFIED// <del>EQ</del>	<del>UO-</del>		(b)(6) (b)(7)(c)

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(b)(6) (b)(7)(c)	acknowledged that he considered the whole experience embarrassing and was not aware that was a fraudulent institution.	(b)(3) CIAAct (b)(6) (b)(7)(c)
b)(3) CIAAc	*	
b)(6)	· •	
b)(7)(c)	17. (U//EOUO) non-accredited degree does not meet	
(b)(3) CIAAc	that requirement; however, his resume indicates that he does possess the	
(b)(6)	requisite equivalent experience,	
(b)(7)(c)	to qualify for the position in lieu of an accredited bachelor's	(b)(3) CIAAct
	degree. It is unclear to what extent, if any, thatlisting the bachelor's degree may have influenced the Agency's decision to hire him at	
(b)(6)	the pay grade of No record was present in his personnel file	(b)(7)(c)
(b)(7)(c)	indicating he received a higher grade or step due to his degree.	
		(b)(3) CIAAct
(1.)(0)	18. (U//EOUO) During his OIG interview,acknowledged	(b)(6)
(b)(6) (b)(7)(c)	that his degree consisted of transfer and life experience credit granted by	(b)(7)(c)
	, and that he had not taken the courses listed on his transcripts	
	through	(b)(3) CIAAct
	stated that his	(b)(6)
	experience more than qualified him for his duties, and that	_(b)(7)(c)
	he had obtained his degree through because he believed he	(b)(6)
	needed a degree but wished to minimize the cost and time expenditure.	(b)(7)(c)
	DISPOSITION:	
(b)(3) CIAAc (b)(6)	requiring neither coursework nor testing, there is no evidence that	(b)(6) (b)(7)(c)
(b)(7)(c)	profited from the degree. provided information on his	(b)(3) CIAAct

(b)(6) (b)(7)(c)

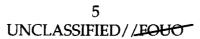
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> (U) The Human Resources/Recruitment and Retention Center (RRC) provided information that confirmed individuals who had degrees when applying for jobs that did not require them were given step and, in some cases, grade increases. According to RRC, degrees were only one of the factors considered in grade/step determination and this would only be documented in the hiring notes if they still existed.

degree to be included in his Agency BIO after being informed by(b)(6)background investigators that it was a diploma mill. OIG Deputy Counsel(b)(7)(c)determined there was no criminal or regulatory violation on the part of(b)(3) CIAActBased on the currently available information, no disciplinary(b)(3) CIAActaction or further investigation is recommended. OIG will notify HR and(b)(6)requestdegree information be removed from his(b)(7)(c)Agency BIO.(b)(7)(c)

(b)(3) CIAAct (b)(6) (b)(7)(c)

	(b)(3) CIAAct (b)(6) (b)(7)(c)
Special Agent	
	(b)(3) CIAAct (b)(6) (b)(7)(c)
Supervisory Special A cont	

Supervisory Special Agent



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