

Welcome to the AF Inspector General Training, Investigating Officer Overview Course.

This course will introduce you to Air Force investigations and inquiries, the Complaints Resolution Process (CRP), help you understand your assignment as an Investigating Officer, and examine the importance of working with your Investigative Team throughout the investigation.

At any time you may click the Help button at the top of your screen for a short tutorial on navigating this training.



CHAPTER 1: Air Force Investigations and Inquiries

“One unprofessional investigation can undo the credibility of nine professional efforts that preceded it. While this may be unfair, it is a reality, and we need to work towards making all our efforts as professional as possible.”

*Lt Gen Robert O. Springer
The Inspector General
26 March 1987*

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

“One unprofessional investigation can undo the credibility of nine professional efforts that preceded it. While this may be unfair, it is a reality, and we need to work towards making all our efforts as professional as possible.”

As an Investigating Officer you represent the Inspector General, or IG. How you conduct the investigation has direct bearing on the IG system’s credibility. Lieutenant General Springer’s quote sums up the vital importance of both the IG investigation and your role as the Investigating Officer.

In this chapter you’ll learn more about Air Force investigations, as well as your role, responsibilities, and authority as an Investigating Officer. We’ll start by discussing Air Force investigations and inquiries.

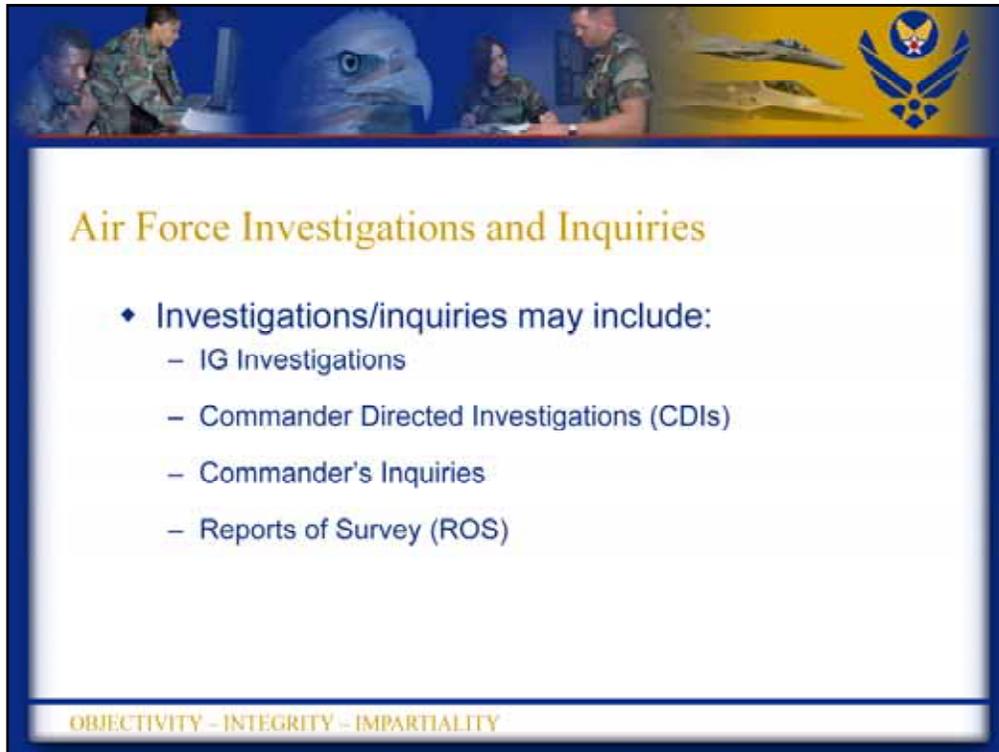
The slide features a blue header with a collage of images: a person at a computer, a bald eagle's head, a person in a military uniform, and the Air Force logo. The main content area is white with a blue border. It contains a title, a bulleted list, and a photograph of two Air Force personnel reviewing documents. At the bottom, a blue bar contains the text 'OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY' in gold.

Air Force Investigations and Inquiries

- ♦ Examine allegations and issues deemed not appropriate for other resolution channels
- ♦ Provide findings to leadership
- ♦ Provide basis for deliberative decision and command action

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

Air Force investigations and inquiries are administrative in nature, not judicial. They uncover and explore the facts surrounding allegations and issues that are deemed not appropriate for other resolution channels. Your work as an IO is critical because commanders will use your investigation findings to make a deliberative decision or take command action.

The slide features a header banner with a blue background. On the left, two Air Force personnel are shown working at a computer. In the center is a close-up of a bald eagle's head. On the right, there are images of fighter jets and the Air Force logo. Below the banner, the title "Air Force Investigations and Inquiries" is displayed in gold text. A list of investigation types follows, and at the bottom, the core values "OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY" are listed in gold.

Air Force Investigations and Inquiries

- ◆ Investigations/inquiries may include:
 - IG Investigations
 - Commander Directed Investigations (CDIs)
 - Commander's Inquiries
 - Reports of Survey (ROS)

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

Air Force investigations and inquiries may include—but are not limited to—IG investigations, Commander Directed Investigations (CDIs), Commander's Inquiries, or Reports of Survey (ROS).

Next we'll take a closer look at the effects of an open investigation.

A presentation slide titled "Importance of AF Investigations". The slide features a blue border and a background image of an Air Force pilot in a cockpit. At the top, there are smaller images of Air Force personnel working at a computer, a bald eagle, and the Air Force logo. The text on the slide is as follows:

Importance of AF Investigations

- ♦ AF investigations seriously impact:
 - The lives of **at least two people**:
 - The complainant
 - The subject of the investigation
 - The unit and the Air Force mission

Rapidly resolving complaints allows people to refocus on the mission!

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

When a complaint leads to an investigation, there are at least two people whose lives are interrupted and placed on hold: the complainant and the subject of the investigation—both of whom can experience tremendous stress during the investigation.

An open investigation also impacts the unit and, ultimately, the Air Force mission. Resolving complaints promptly allows people to move forward with their lives and focus back on the mission.

Now that you have a clearer picture of AF investigations, we'll move on to what it means to be an IO.



IO Selection

You have been selected as an IO based on your:

- Rank/grade and experience
- Knowledge, maturity, and sound judgment
- Ability to be unbiased and objective

OBJECTIVITY – INTEGRITY – IMPARTIALITY

You have been selected as an Investigating Officer because you possess qualities and skills that are essential to an effective and fair investigation.

First there are the rank or grade and experience requirements.

To conduct an investigation, IOs must be of equal or greater rank than the subject and outside the subject's chain of command. Or, if the IO is a civil service employee, then he or she must be of a civilian-equivalent or senior in grade to the subject.

Next are the professional requirements.

To be effective and fair, IOs should have a substantial breadth of knowledge, exceptional maturity, and demonstrated sound judgment.

An IO's obligation is to the truth, so he or she must also be unbiased and objective.

Now that you know why you were chosen, let's look at what you will be doing.



Roles & IO Responsibilities

- ◆ Roles
 - Appointing Authorities:
 - Hold these positions:
 - SECAF; CSAF; SAF/IG; Chief, NGB; State Adjutant General; MAJCOM, NAF, FOA, DRU, Center, Installation, and Wing CCs
 - IGs in authorized positions if designated in writing by their respective commander
 - Have the authority to:
 - Direct investigations
 - Appoint IOs
 - Approve investigative reports

OBJECTIVITY – INTEGRITY – IMPARTIALITY

Appointing Authorities include individuals holding the following positions:

- Secretary of the Air Force (SECAF);
- Chief of Staff of the Air Force (CSAF);
- Inspector General of the Air Force (SAF/IG);
- Chief, National Guard Bureau (Chief, NGB);
- Adjutant General (TAG) of all states;
- Commanding General of the District of Columbia;
- MAJCOM, NAF, FOA, DRU, Center, Installation, and Wing commanders; and
- Inspectors General, **if designated in writing by their respective commander.**

Appointing Authorities have the singular authority to direct investigations, appoint IOs, and approve investigative reports.



Roles & IO Responsibilities

- ◆ Roles (continued)
 - Investigating Officer
 - Appointing Authority's personal representative
 - Your primary duty until relieved by the Appointing Authority
- ◆ IO Responsibilities
 - Investigate the complaint by:
 - Reviewing existing information, documentation, and guidelines
 - Gathering evidence
 - Interviewing witnesses

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

You are the personal representative of the Appointing Authority and you will conduct the investigation under his or her direction. This is your primary duty until you are relieved by the Appointing Authority.

As an IO, you are responsible for investigating the complaint by:

- reviewing existing information, documentation, and guidelines;
- gathering evidence; and
- interviewing witness.



Roles & IO Responsibilities

- ◆ IO Responsibilities (continued)
 - Document the investigation by:
 - Analyzing evidence for each allegation
 - Determining findings
 - Submitting a report for Appointing Authority's review and approval
 - Protect sensitive, personal information on a need-to-know basis

The investigation must take priority over your regular job duties

OBJECTIVITY – INTEGRITY – IMPARTIALITY

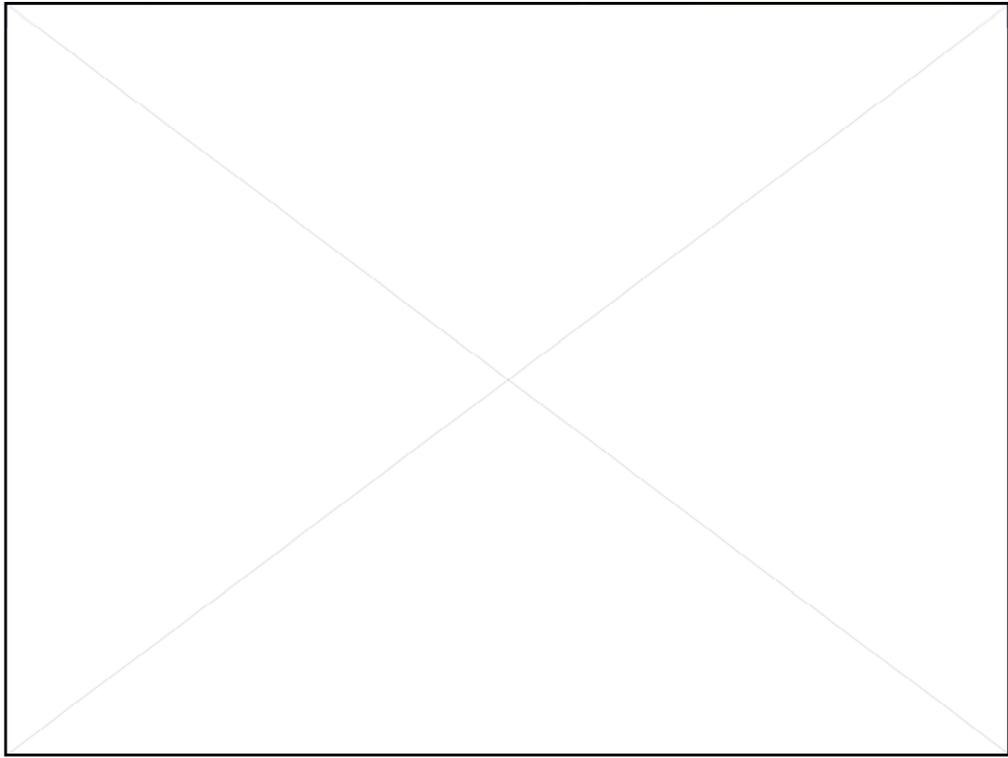
Once you complete the investigation, you are also responsible for documenting the investigation. This includes:

- analyzing your evidence;
- determining allegation findings; and
- submitting a report of your findings and conclusion to the Appointing Authority for review and approval.

All complaints are protected information. It is critical that you do not divulge details about the complaint to the subject, witnesses, or other parties beyond that which permits them to respond to questions or provide information relevant to the investigation. If you are unsure what details you can or should share, consult your local Inspector General (IG) or Judge Advocate (JA) offices.

Finally, the investigation must be your primary and sole duty until the Appointing Authority approves your final report. As difficult as it will be, you have to set aside the demands from your regular job and give priority to the investigation.

Time to check in on what you've learned with a brief activity.





Governing Doctrine

Three key principles guide every investigation:

1. **Independence**—IOs are not influenced by others; they *are* and *appear* independent
2. **Timeliness**—Prompt investigations ensure everyone gets back on track quickly and maintains the IG system's credibility
3. **Thoroughness**—A thorough investigation equals a *complete* investigation; always balance thoroughness with timeliness

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

At this point, you should have a good idea of what you need to do as an IO. Now we'll look at some tenets that will help you conduct a fair, prompt, and effective investigation.

The governing doctrine that must guide every investigation consists of three key principles.

The first principle is independence. An IO's goal in an investigation is to get to the truth of the complaint. To do this, you have to be truly independent, not allowing anyone in the investigation to influence you, including the complainant, the subject, or even the commander who appointed you.

Not only must the IO **be** independent, the IO must also be **perceived** as independent. Even the slightest suspicion that the IO just "rubber-stamps" the commander's agenda can seriously damage the IG system's credibility.

The next principle is timeliness. Your biggest challenge throughout the investigation will be balancing timeliness with a quality investigation. As you heard earlier, many people are counting on you to complete the investigation quickly so they can move forward with their lives **and** careers. Prompt investigations maintain the IG system's credibility by getting everyone back on track and focused on the mission as soon as possible.

The final principle is thoroughness. While a prompt investigation is important, it is just as critical that you conduct a **thorough** investigation. Rushing through an investigation can lead to missed evidence, unanswered questions, or other issues that ultimately result in an incomplete investigation. Covering all the bases the first time out eliminates any need to prolong the investigation **and** helps you meet your timeliness goal.

To wrap up this chapter, we'll come full circle and look at how all this starts: the appointment letter.

Appointment Letter

- ◆ Sets scope of the investigation
 - Details allegation/s
 - Outlines IO tasking
 - Defines timeline

- ◆ Authorizes IO to:
 - Conduct investigation
 - Interview witnesses
 - Examine relevant information

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

Your duty as an IO begins when you receive an appointment letter from the Appointing Authority. The appointment letter is like a map and passport to your investigation all rolled into one.

First, the letter tells you where you need to go—or sets the scope of the investigation—by:

- detailing the allegation or allegations;
- outlining your tasking; and
- defining the investigation timeline.

Second, the letter gets you where you need to go by extending the Appointing Authority’s power to conduct the investigation to the IO. The letter will serve as your “**credentials**” throughout your investigation, giving you the authority to interview witnesses, as well as examine and copy files or other documents that are relevant to the investigation.

If you experience pressure to continue your regular job duties during the investigation, you can also use the appointment letter to reinforce the fact that the investigation is to be **your primary duty** until it is complete.

Now that you have an understanding of AF investigations, your responsibilities as an IO, and the principles that guide every investigation, let’s see how you’re doing with a brief quiz.

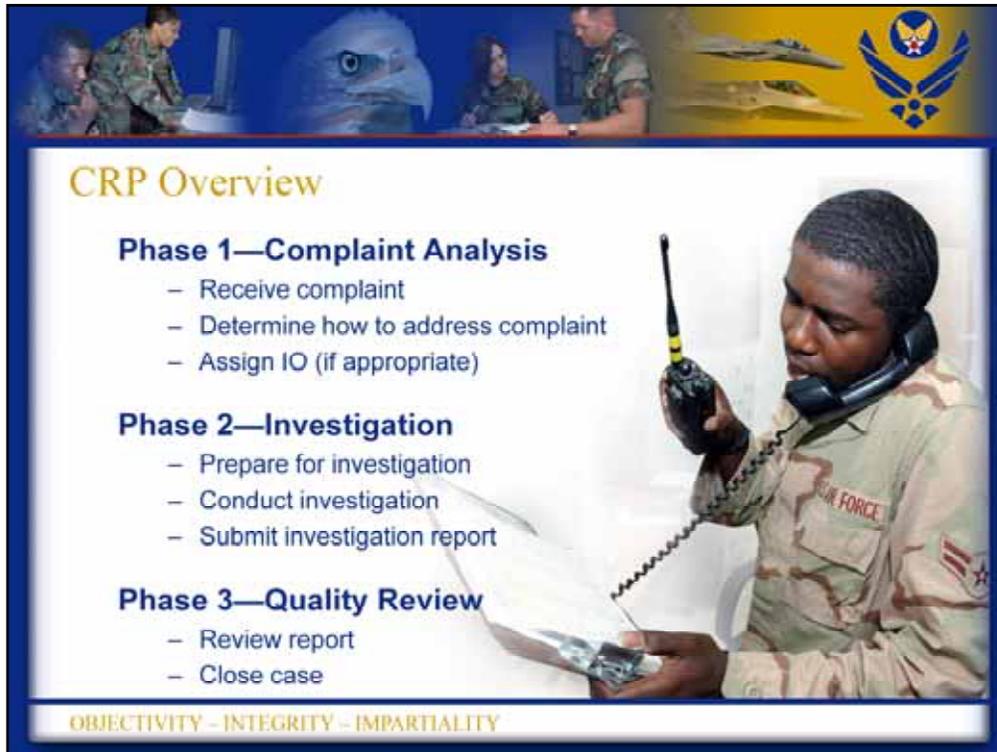
**Articulate Quizmaker Quiz
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CHAPTER 2: Complaints Resolution Process (CRP)

- ◆ CRP Overview and Timeline
- ◆ Phase 2: Investigation
- ◆ Resources and Support

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

In the first section, we introduced Air Force investigations and IO responsibilities. Next we'll cover the Complaints Resolution Process (CRP) and its timeline. You'll also learn about Phase 2 of the CRP, the Investigation, where you play a critical role. Finally we'll explore the excellent resources and support available to you throughout the investigation. We'll start with the CRP.



CRP Overview

Phase 1—Complaint Analysis

- Receive complaint
- Determine how to address complaint
- Assign IO (if appropriate)

Phase 2—Investigation

- Prepare for investigation
- Conduct investigation
- Submit investigation report

Phase 3—Quality Review

- Review report
- Close case

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

The Complaints Resolution Process, or CRP, is an IG-specific resolution process that analyzes complaint matters and, when necessary, investigates those matters appropriate for the IG.

The CRP has 3 phases: complaint analysis, investigation, and quality review.

Phase 1, the complaint analysis, covers the time from when the IG receives a complaint to when he or she decides how to address that complaint. If an investigation is warranted, then the Appointing Authority appoints an IO.

As the IO, you are the key player in phase 2, the investigation. During this time you will prepare for, conduct, and write a report on the investigation.

In the final phase, quality review, the Appointing Authority—and potentially others—will review your report for administrative and technical accuracy, overall completeness, impartiality, conclusions supported by evidence, and legal sufficiency. The report will then either be approved or sent back to be reworked. Of course, you want to get your report right the first time, and that's what this and other IO training provided by your local IG office is designed to help you do.

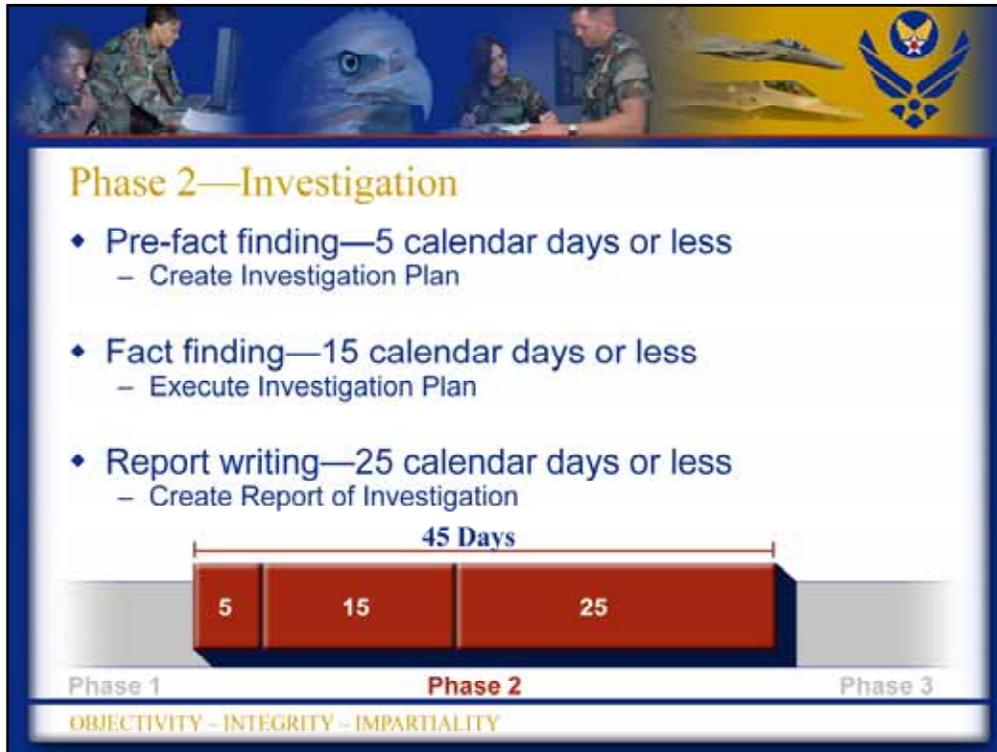
Each of these phases must be completed in a specific amount of time, which we'll review next.



Since complaints and the resulting investigations are disruptive and stressful for the individuals involved, the CRP has a finite timeline to ensure everyone gets back to normal as soon as possible.

The goal for the **entire** CRP—from the time the IG receives a complaint to Report of Investigation approval—is 120 **calendar** days or less. The IG has 30 days to complete phase 1 and determine the most appropriate action. If an investigation is warranted, then the IO has 45 days to complete phase 2. Finally, during phase 3, all quality, technical, legal, and other reviews must be completed in 45 days.

Since you're most heavily involved during phase 2, we'll examine that part of the investigation timeline next.



The investigation phase is broken into three steps: pre-fact finding, fact finding, and report writing.

The first step, pre-fact finding, should take you five calendar days or less. During this time you'll create an Investigation Plan that outlines what evidence to collect, who you should interview, and the questions to ask in those interviews.

It's important to create a solid plan because you'll execute it during the next step, fact finding. And once again, you don't have a lot of time. In this step, you have 15 calendar days or less to gather evidence and conduct witness interviews.

You will spend the most time during the final step, report writing. This is when you analyze the facts, draw conclusions, and write the Report of Investigation. This step should take you 25 calendar days or less.

We'll cover each of these steps in greater depth in the next few chapters. But we'll spend the rest of this chapter going over the resources and support you can expect as an IO.

Resources and Support

Investigative Triad = IO + IG + JA

- ◆ The IG provides:
 - Training
 - In-depth CRP/investigation instruction
 - Counsel
 - Shares experience/knowledge
 - Keeps IO on track
 - Support
 - Informs others of your tasking
 - Sets up a dedicated workspace
 - Runs interference

As you just saw, there's a lot to accomplish in a short time, but you aren't expected to do it alone. You're actually part of a team, known as the Investigative Triad. As the name implies, this team has three members: the IG, a JA assigned specifically to the case, and you, the IO. Working with your team members throughout the investigation will help you:

- set up a sound Investigation Plan,
- conduct a thorough investigation, and
- create a complete, legally sufficient Report of Investigation.

You know what your responsibilities are, now let's look at what you can expect from the IG and JA.

The IG is your mentor.

He or she will guide you through a successful investigation, as well as provide in-depth training on the investigative process and your responsibilities. The IG will also counsel you throughout the investigation by sharing his or her extensive knowledge and experience, and by keeping you on track staying within the established investigation timeline. Finally, your IG will support your efforts by informing your commander and other supervisors about your tasking; setting up a dedicated workspace for you; and running interference with demands from your regular job, uncooperative witnesses, or evidence roadblocks.

The header of the slide features a collage of images: on the left, two military personnel in camouflage uniforms are working at a computer; in the center, a close-up of a bald eagle's head; on the right, another military personnel is working at a computer, and below that, a fighter jet in flight. In the top right corner, there is a blue and white logo of a stylized eagle with wings spread.

Investigative Triad

- ♦ The JA advisor helps you:
 - Analyze evidence
 - Identify legal standards
 - Develop interview questions
 - Determine rights advisements
- ♦ The JA reviewer:
 - Verifies and documents legal sufficiency
 - Provides advice and recommendations to CC

OBJECTIVITY – INTEGRITY – IMPARTIALITY

The JA is your exclusive contact for legal advice and assistance.

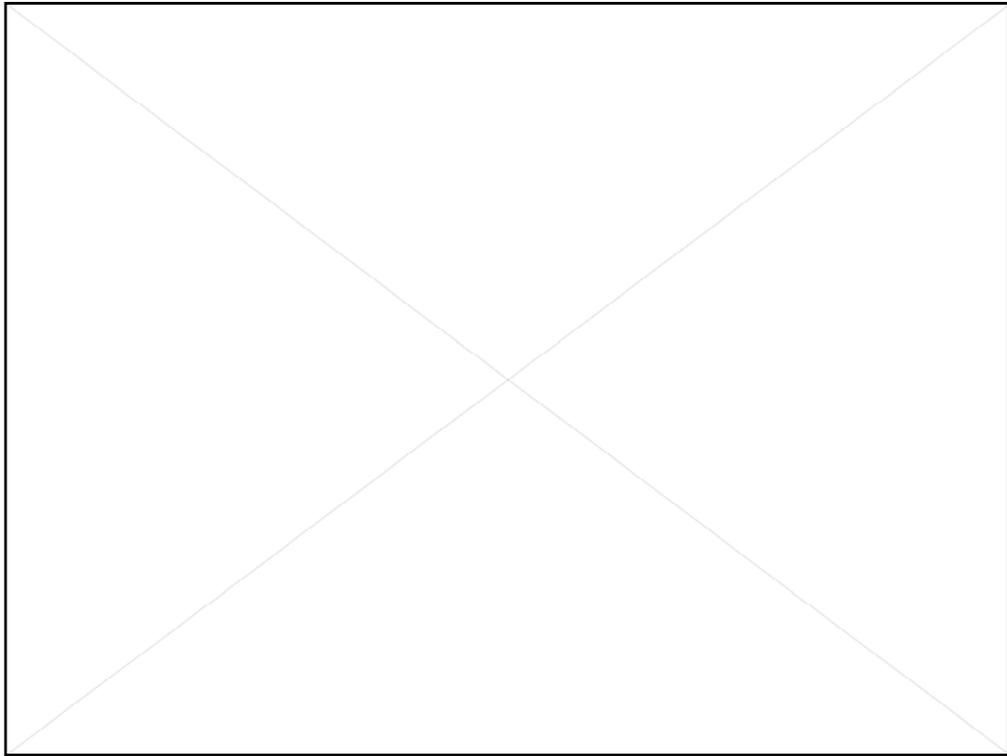
There are actually two JAs assigned to each case:

- a JA advisor who helps you throughout the investigation and
- a JA who reviews your final report for legal sufficiency.

Your JA advisor will help you analyze the evidence you collect, as well as identify the legal standards that apply to the allegation. JAs are highly skilled in developing interview questions, so you can draw on this experience as you prepare for witness interviews. You will also want to work closely with the JA to ensure you determine the correct rights advisements for various witnesses.

Once you have completed your Report of Investigation, the JA reviewer will verify and document that your report is legally sufficient. He or she may also use this review to advise the commander on any necessary and appropriate disciplinary action.

Time for another activity to see how you're doing with what you've learned so far.





Documentation/Resources

- ♦ Serve as both training **and** reference tools
 - AFI 90-301, Inspector General Complaints Resolution
 - Provides instruction for all stages of an IG investigation from presenting complaints to reviewing investigations
 - IO Guide
 - Provides guidance specific to an IO's tasks in the CRP
 - IO Toolkit
 - Walks through an investigation from start to finish
 - CDI Guide
 - Provides guidance unique to CDIs

All resources available for viewing and download at:
<https://www.ig.hq.af.mil/igq>

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In addition to your team, you have access to several valuable resources. For example, when the IG trains you to conduct an IG investigation, he or she will use three specific tools:

- Air Force Instruction 90-301, Inspector General Complaints Resolution;
- the Investigating Officer Guide; and
- the Investigating Officer Toolkit.

Each of these serves as both a training and a reference tool for IOs as they conduct IG investigations. And while they are specific to IG investigations, IOs can also use them as guidance for other administrative-type investigations such as CDIs or ROSSs.

AFI 90-301 is the Air Force's main instruction on the receipt, processing, conduct, and quality review of IG investigations. It also describes the process for filing IG complaints along with complainants' rights and responsibilities.

The IO Guide provides instruction and guidance specific to the IO's tasks within the CRP. It expands on the IO instructions presented in AFI 90-301.

The IO Toolkit is a web-based tool that walks you through the entire investigation process from start to finish.

When conducting a Commander Directed Investigation, IOs should first refer to the CDI Guide, a comprehensive tool created specifically for CDIs.

You can access all these resources online as well as download them to keep as an on-the-spot references.

In this section, we discussed the three CRP phases, along with the steps and timeline of your investigation. We also reviewed resources and the support you'll get from the Investigative Triad. Let's check in on what you've learned with another brief

**Articulate Quizmaker Quiz
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CHAPTER 3: Phase 2—Pre-Fact Finding

- ◆ Understand Allegation
- ◆ Develop Investigation Plan



OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

Now it's time to focus in on what being an IO is all about: the investigation, which is phase 2 of the CRP. In this section we'll explore the first five days of phase 2 when you will become familiar with the allegation and learn the basic steps for developing your Investigation Plan.



Understand the Allegation

- ◆ Essential elements of a properly framed allegation
 - When?
 - Identifies the *specific date* of the event
 - Who?
 - Clearly identifies a *single subject*
 - Did what?
 - Clearly states *single wrongdoing*
 - In violation of what?
 - States the *specific standard*

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

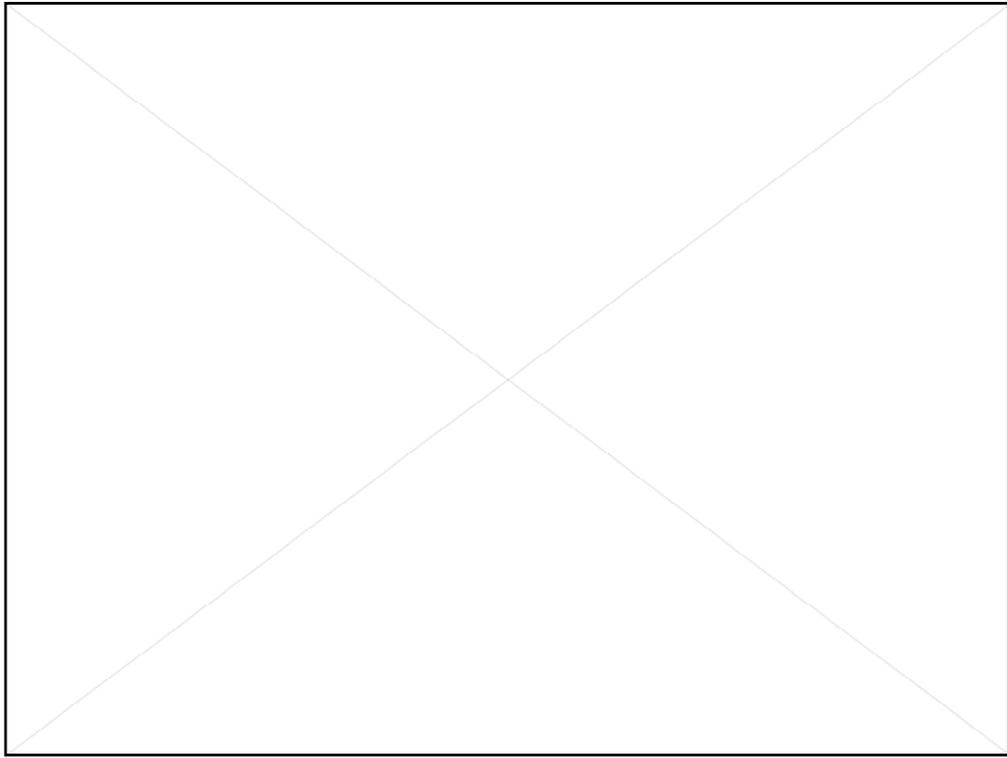
While it's the IG's job to properly frame the allegation, it's your job to determine if it is substantiated or not. So you need to be able to recognize a well-framed allegation to ensure you have what you need to effectively plan and execute your investigation.

A properly framed allegation should refer to a **specific date or period** (as appropriate) and contain **one subject** with **one wrongdoing** linked to a **specific standard**. Let's break the allegation down into its essential elements.

First, the allegation must identify the specific **date or period** on which the event occurred. Second, it must answer the question of "**who**" and clearly identify a single subject. Next the allegation must say **what** the subject did by clearly stating a single wrongdoing. Finally, it needs to state the specific **standard** that the subject's actions violated.

If an allegation correctly states all of these elements, then you will have everything you need to plan your investigative strategy.

The following activity will give you a chance to try your hand at identifying well-framed allegations.





Develop the Investigation Plan (IP)

- ◆ Compile/review existing information
- ◆ Plan for evidence collection/interviews
- ◆ Work with the investigation team



OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

Your Investigation Plan, or IP, is basically your road map for gathering the facts necessary to determine if a complaint is substantiated. When you develop your IP, you will need to compile and review any existing information, as well as plan ahead for evidence collection and witness interviews. To create an IP that gets you started on the path to a successful investigation, you should work closely with your team—the IG and JA.



Compile/Review Existing Information

- ◆ Allegation
 - Sets the scope
 - Helps determine necessary evidence
- ◆ Support documentation
 - Complaint and attachments
 - Existing evidence
 - Standard

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

Before you can put your plan together, you need to familiarize yourself with the case up to this point by compiling and reviewing critical information including:

- the allegation,
- support documentation, and
- a chronology.

As you just learned, the **allegation** sets the scope of the investigation, and its essential elements will help you determine what evidence you need to collect.

Reviewing the **support documentation**—in addition to the allegation—will give you strong background information and help establish the steps you should take during the investigation. This documentation includes the complaint and attachments, the existing evidence, and the standard cited in the allegation.



Compile/Review Existing Information

- ◆ Chronology
 - Sequential timeline of events relevant to the complaint
 - Valuable tool that:
 - Links events
 - Provides focus
 - Identifies gaps



OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

Finally, you will need to develop a **chronology**. This is the sequential timeline of all events relevant to the complaint. The chronology is particularly valuable because it can:

- link events that may not seem related,
- provide focus by targeting a finite period of time, and
- identify gaps in the timeline that you need to fill in during the investigation.

Once you're acquainted with all the existing information, you'll be ready to move forward with your IP and start planning for evidence collection and witness interviews.



Plan for Evidence Collection/Interviews

- ◆ Determine evidence to be gathered
 - Documents and/or other physical evidence
- ◆ Create witness list
 - Prepare interview questions
- ◆ Consider logistics/administrative needs
 - Witness interview schedules
 - Travel
 - Transcription

Your IP is a flexible, living document

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

A sound IP plots out three main elements: evidence, witnesses, and logistics.

The reviews and chronology you've completed so far will serve as an excellent foundation for determining the type of evidence you should gather such as documents or other physical evidence. They will also help you identify individuals for your witness list. Be sure to prepare interview questions for each of the witnesses and include the questions in your IP.

Finally, think about logistics as you plan for evidence collection and witness interviews. Little administrative details can interfere with your investigation if you don't consider them early in your plan. Make sure you consider how and when to schedule witness interviews, any travel requirements for out-of-town interviews, and the equipment or support you'll need to transcribe each interview.

Keep in mind, your IP is not set in stone; it should be a flexible, living document. As you work through the investigation, you may uncover additional evidence or witnesses, or decide that some evidence is not relevant to the case. Consequently, you will need to fine-tune your strategy and adjust your plan. The best way to make sure you create and maintain an effective IP is to work with your IG and JA.

Work with the Investigation Team to Build the IP

- ◆ IG provides guidance on:
 - Evidence
 - Witnesses
- ◆ JA provides guidance on:
 - Legal issues
 - Interview questions

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

Earlier in the course you learned about the Investigative Triad—your investigation team. Your team members are indispensable, and you should collaborate with the IG and JA throughout your tasking as an IO, starting with your IP.

Your IG can help you brainstorm about the evidence you need to gather and the witnesses you should interview. He or she can also help you with some of the logistics if you find yourself facing scheduling or other roadblocks.

You should go to your JA advisor any time you need guidance or clarification on legal issues such as legal standards or witness rights. He or she is also an excellent resource for developing interview questions. Each individual witness may require a unique set of questions, and your JA will help you navigate through those nuances.

Remember to consult your team early and often. Unanswered questions or misinformation early in the investigation can lead to big problems down the road. Drawing on your team's vast experience and knowledge will help you conduct an efficient investigation and produce a quality final report the first time out.

At this point in the course you should be able to recognize a properly framed allegation, along with the basic components of an Investigation Plan and how the IG and JA can help you create an effective IP. Time for your next quiz.

**Articulate Quizmaker Quiz
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CHAPTER 4: Phase 2—Fact Finding

- ◆ Identify and Gather Evidence
- ◆ Interview Witnesses



OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

In this chapter we'll cover your responsibilities during the next step of phase 2, fact finding. To help prove whether or not the allegation is factual, or substantiated, you will devote the next fifteen days of the investigation to identifying and gathering evidence as well as conducting witness interviews. Let's start with evidence.



Identifying Evidence

- ◆ Direct
 - Physical—documents, records, computer files
 - Testimonial—eyewitness statements
- ◆ Indirect
 - Hearsay—heard and repeated by a third party
 - Circumstantial evidence—considers observations or facts to draw a conclusion

Find additional evidence to corroborate indirect evidence

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

Evidence falls into two basic categories: direct and indirect.

Direct evidence includes **physical** and **testimonial** evidence. Physical evidence comprises documents, records, computer files, etc. In most investigations, the majority of evidence comes from witness testimony.

There's a good chance that you'll also come across indirect evidence during your investigation. This can include **hearsay** or **circumstantial** evidence. Hearsay is a statement heard by a third party and repeated as the truth. To back up hearsay evidence, you should talk to the actual person who made the statement whenever possible.

Circumstantial evidence is the result of considering several observations or facts and using them to draw a conclusion. An example might be concluding it has rained if you step outside and see that the sidewalk and road are wet, when in fact the sprinklers actually came on.

You may consider indirect evidence in your investigation, but since it's not as reliable as direct evidence, you should look for additional evidence to corroborate or support it.

Now let's examine how you gather evidence.



Gathering Evidence

- ◆ Physical
 - Go get it
- ◆ Testimonial
 - Conduct interviews

Your appointment letter is your authorization to collect evidence and conduct interviews

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

While gathering evidence in general is pretty straightforward, it does take time.

In the case of physical evidence, you just need to go out and get what you need—for example, copying personnel records, AFIs or other policies, computer files, etc.

To collect testimonial evidence, you need to identify witnesses, prepare your questions, and schedule and conduct interviews with the witnesses.

Remember to use your appointment letter to gain access to physical evidence and witnesses. And if you still have trouble, you should reach out to your team for help getting access.

Since the majority of your evidence is likely to come from testimonials, we'll look at witnesses and interviewing in more detail next.



Witnesses

- ◆ Types of witnesses
 - Complainant
 - Subject
 - Eyewitness
 - Character
 - Expert
- ◆ Witness rights
 - Consult AFI 90-301
 - Work with your JA

**Protect information!
Only the Appointing Authority
can approve disclosures.**

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

Your key witnesses are the complainant and the subject. You must interview the complainant first to clarify allegations and focus the investigation. You should interview the subject last to give him or her an opportunity to respond to allegations and other adverse information that comes out during your investigation.

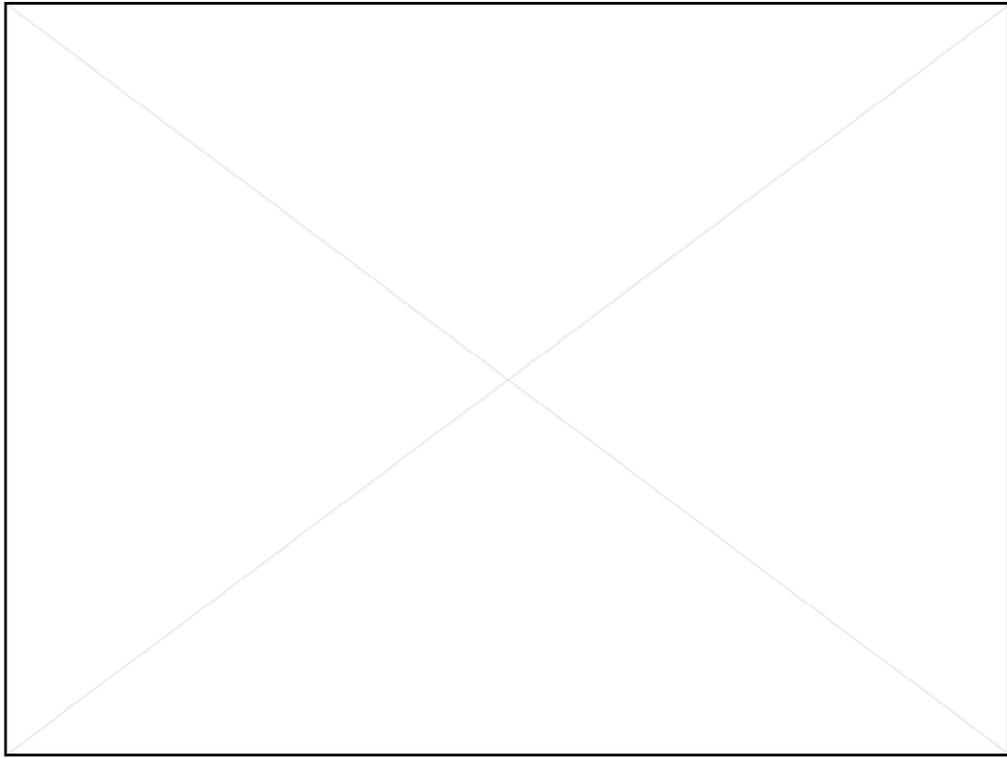
In addition to your key witnesses, you'll interview other witnesses who have first-hand knowledge of the event or facts related to the allegation. These are your eyewitnesses.

You may also interview character witnesses who can verify the reputation or personality traits of a particular person, or expert witnesses who have special knowledge about a particular topic and can provide background and technical information.

While all these witnesses have rights, their rights may vary depending on their affiliation or status. To make sure you extend the proper rights to each witness, you should consult AFI 90-301 and work closely with your JA for guidance.

Once again, it's important to stress that you protect all sensitive information and individual privacy. You may only disclose information about witnesses or allow witnesses to read the allegation upon written approval by the Appointing Authority.

Time for another activity.





Preparing for and Conducting Witness Interviews

- ◆ Summon witnesses
 - Access through:
 - Commanders
 - Contracting officers
 - Other supervisors
 - Schedule date and time with witness

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

Once you've identified your witnesses, you need to summon them and set up interviews. The first step is to contact the individual's commander, Contracting Officer, or appropriate supervisor who will make the witness available. Then you can contact the witness directly to schedule a specific date and time for the interview.

While you may have already prepared some preliminary interview questions in your IP, you will need to create additional questions based on the specific witnesses you identify. We'll talk about that next.



Preparing for and Conducting Witness Interviews

- ◆ Draft questions
 - Work closely with JA
 - Prepare questions
 - Tailored to the witness
 - General to specific
 - Open-ended
 - Follow-up



The questions you prepare can make or break your interview, so be sure to work closely with your JA. JAs are trained in developing questions, and you should take advantage of this expertise to get the best results from your interviews. Tailor questions to each individual witness, taking into consideration both the type of information you need as well as how you should word the questions. For example, questions you ask an airman first-class may be worded differently than those you ask a commander or First Sergeant.

Most witnesses will cooperate, but some may be reluctant, apprehensive, or even hostile. To put witnesses at ease, start with simple, general questions and build up to more specific, direct questions. Save the tough questions for the end of the interview.

To get the most from your witnesses, limit yes-or-no questions. Focus on open-ended questions to get more information on the events, timelines, or relationships related to your investigation. Ultimately, your goal is answer the who, what, where, when, and why questions surrounding the allegation.

Finally, don't forget to prepare follow-up questions. Although you will have to ask some impromptu questions, try to anticipate some of the answers and develop supplementary questions accordingly.

At this point you're set for the interviews, so let's look at some quick tips for conducting them.



Preparing for and Conducting Witness Interviews

- ◆ Conduct interview
 - Be professional and respectful
 - Listen
 - Remain in control, focused, and impartial
 - Record and transcribe all testimony for the complainant, subject, and key witnesses

Remember, it's an interview, NOT an interrogation!

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

You need to set the tone for the interview by being professional at all times. Witnesses are more likely to cooperate and be truthful if they feel you respect them, their time, and their knowledge.

When you conduct interviews, keep in mind that one of your best tools is silence. First of all, you need to be silent so you can listen carefully to your witnesses' answers. You can also use it to your advantage to get more information. Many people are uncomfortable with—and want to fill—silence. So if you wait before asking your next question, the witness may volunteer valuable information.

While letting a witness ramble a bit can get you excellent information, you must maintain control to keep the interview focused and on track. Some witnesses may even try to interview you or get information about the investigation. It's your job to be an impartial fact finder, so don't reveal any biases or let the witnesses control the interview.

To ensure that witness testimony is captured accurately, you must record and transcribe all interviews with the complainant, subject, and key witnesses. Your IG can help you arrange for the equipment and support you need to do this.

Above all, remember that **this is an interview, not an interrogation**. You want your witnesses to be cooperative, not hostile, so always maintain a tone of calm professionalism.

Let's move on to the final, but crucial, step of a witness interview: the hand-off.



Chief of Staff of the Air Force “Hand-off” Policy

- ◆ Handing off witnesses:
 - Is required for:
 - The subject
 - Distraught witnesses
 - Protects those who pose a danger to themselves or others
 - Should be arranged in advance

You must release the subject or witness directly to the commander or designee

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

When an interview concludes, you **must** hand off the **subject** or any **distraught witness** to a representative from his or her unit. Investigations can cause significant stress in an individual's life, so the Chief of Staff of the Air Force created this hand-off policy to protect those who might be so distressed that they pose a danger to themselves or others.

You need to arrange the hand-off for the subject in advance with his or her unit commander or designee. He or she must be physically present immediately following the interview to receive the subject. If you need to hand off a distraught witness, you must stay with the witness until you can release him or her directly to the commander or designee.

As you can see, fact finding is really the core of your investigation. Let's move on to the quiz and see what you've learned about collecting evidence and conducting witness interviews.

**Articulate Quizmaker Quiz
Placeholder - AF_IO_Q4**



CHAPTER 5: Phase 2—Report Writing

- ◆ Report of Investigation (ROI)
- ◆ ROI Guidelines
- ◆ Quality Review



OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

Now we've come to the last big step of your investigation: report writing. In this section you'll learn about the importance of a solid Report of Investigation; you'll get some guidelines for writing your report; and finally we'll look at why a quality review is critical for helping you create a complete and legally sufficient ROI.



Importance of the ROI

- ◆ The ROI is a stand-alone document that:
 - Includes facts, documents, testimony, etc.
 - Communicates investigation findings
 - **SUBSTANTIATED** or **NOT SUBSTANTIATED**
 - Standard based on preponderance of evidence (>50%) supporting one finding vs. the other
 - Is used by commanders to determine command actions that can impact careers

Work with your IG and JA to create a clear and complete ROI

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

After you have collected all the evidence, it's time to document the investigation and present your analysis. You will lay all this out in your final Report of Investigation.

The ROI is a stand-alone document that includes all the critical elements related to your investigation, including facts, documents, regulations, testimony, and more. You will communicate your investigation findings in the ROI along with your conclusion. In this final document you can only come to one of two conclusions about the allegation: substantiated or not substantiated. The standard for your conclusion is based on a preponderance of the evidence (at least 50%) supporting one finding versus the other.

It's vitally important that you create a clear and complete report because commanders may use it as grounds for personnel actions that significantly impact careers.

As with every other part of your investigation, you should work closely with your investigation team—the IG and JA—as you develop your ROI. In addition to leveraging their expertise, there are some basic guidelines you can follow to help create a high-quality report.



ROI Guidelines

- ◆ A well-written ROI:
 - Tells the whole story
 - All pertinent information and supporting documentation
 - Is fact-based
 - Cross-referenced to evidence/testimony
 - Is unbiased
 - Rule of thumb: no adverbs
 - Clearly states conclusion
 - Brief, simple language

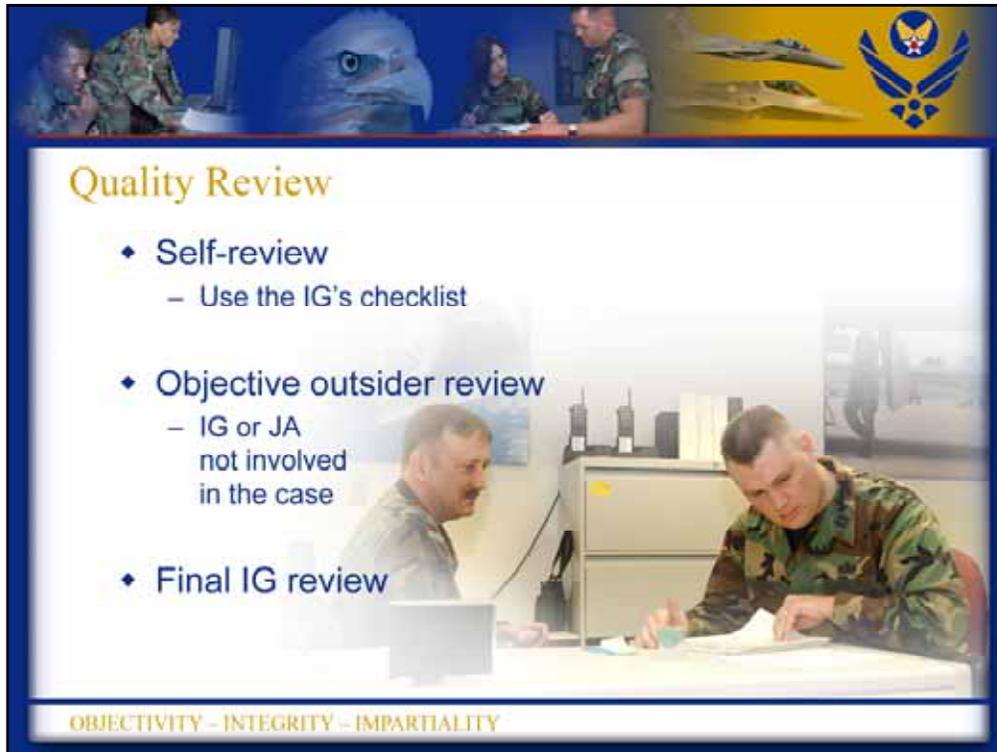
OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

As a stand-alone document, your ROI must tell the **whole** story. In other words, the ROI clearly lays out all the pertinent information and references to supporting documentation a commander needs to take any necessary command action.

The ROI is purely fact-based and cross-references all statements of fact to supporting evidence or witness testimony. The ROI is also objective. You must be careful not to include any bias or appearance of bias in your report. A simple rule of thumb to guide your language is to avoid adverbs, as they can make statements appear more like opinions rather than facts.

Finally, a well-written ROI clearly states your conclusion based on the unbiased story you laid out in your findings and analysis. This section should be brief—no more than two paragraphs—and the language should be simple and direct, without embellishment.

Once you've completed the ROI, you're ready for the next phase: quality review.



Quality Review

- ◆ Self-review
 - Use the IG's checklist
- ◆ Objective outsider review
 - IG or JA not involved in the case
- ◆ Final IG review

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

Before you submit your ROI to the Approving Authority, you need to conduct your own internal quality review. Your IG will provide you with a checklist to help make sure you've created a proper and complete report that is legally sufficient.

Getting an objective outsider to review your ROI can also help ensure that the case file is complete, complies with the AFI and other appropriate directives, and reflects objectivity. Good choices for this type of review include an IG or JA who have not been involved with the case.

If you take the time for these initial review steps, you can feel confident that your ROI will pass the IG's final quality review with flying colors.

Next we'll touch base on some common ROI problems so you know what to avoid when the time comes to create your report.

Common ROI Problems

- ♦ **Analysis**
 - Conclusions without documentation, evidence, or citations
- ♦ **Tone or comments**
 - Obvious opinions/biases
 - Overly complex language
- ♦ **Administrative errors**
 - Missing data or signatures
 - Poor spelling or grammar

Avoid rework—get it right the first time!

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

ROI problems tend to fall under one of three categories:

- analysis,
- tone or comments, or
- administrative errors.

Frequent ROI analysis issues include instances where an IO draws conclusions without:

- documenting the deliberative process,
- presenting the facts, or
- including citations directing the reader to supporting evidence.

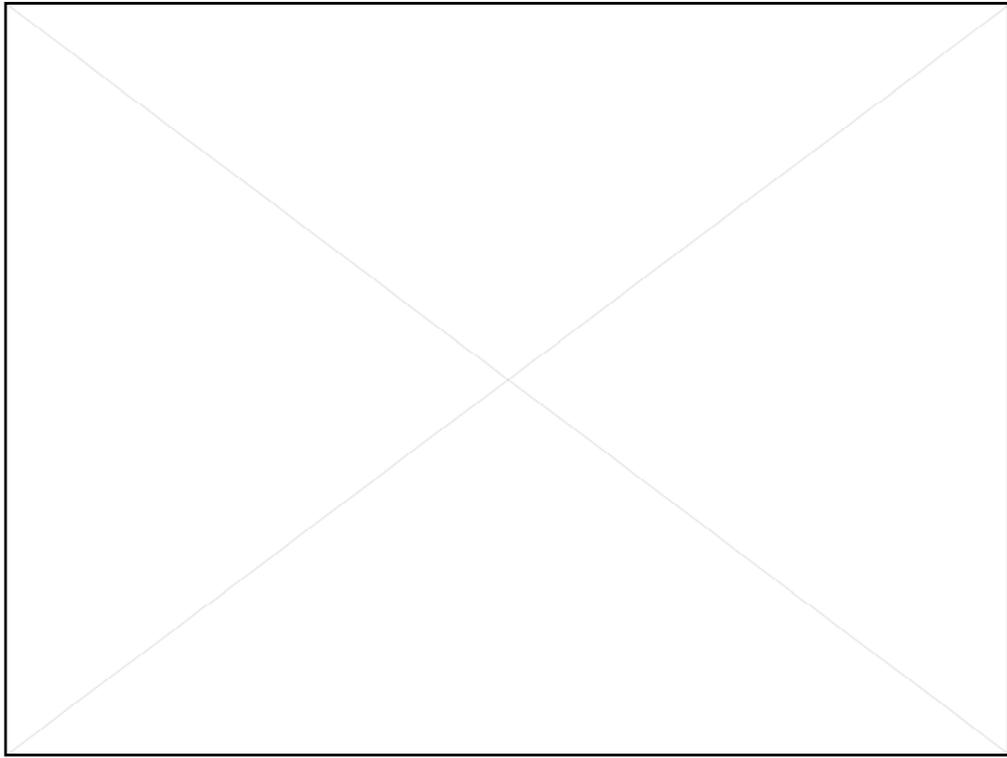
When this happens, the IO's conclusions appear to be baseless and they won't meet the standards for legal sufficiency. Make sure you document everything and make it easy for the reader to find the information that corroborates your conclusions.

You've heard over and over again that you must be objective throughout your investigation, but one of the biggest issues with the tone of an ROI occurs when an IO allows opinions to slip into the report. The investigation rests on facts, and your report should reflect this. The ROI should also be simple and straightforward. When an IO uses overly complex language, like legalese, the analysis and conclusions can get lost in the translation.

Finally, the best investigations and ROIs can be undone by simple administrative errors like missing data or signatures. And while poor spelling and grammar alone may not get the ROI sent back for rework, they may lead a reviewer to question your overall abilities.

The bottom line is you need to do all you can to avoid rework. Take the time to get your ROI right the first time!

In this section you learned how to create a well-written report and use quality reviews to avoid problems that may interfere with the Appointing Authority's acceptance of your ROI. Now let's take a few minutes for one last activity before moving on to your final quiz.

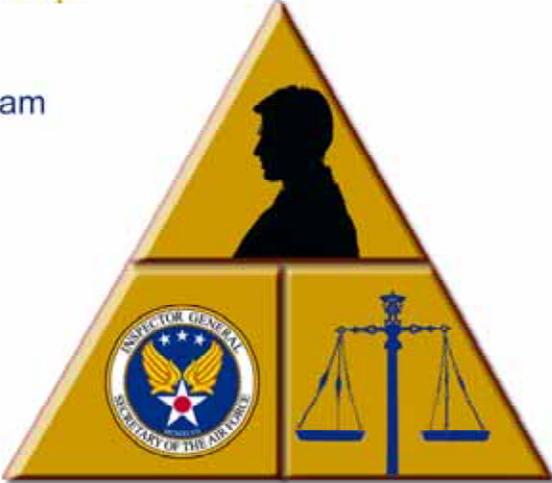


**Articulate Quizmaker Quiz
Placeholder - AF_IO_Q5**



CHAPTER 6: Next Steps

- ◆ Resources
- ◆ Investigation Team



OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

This training course is the first step toward a successful investigation. You will get more in-depth training from your IG, but in the meantime, you can prepare for your role as an IO by becoming familiar with existing resources. You can also enhance your chances for success by building a strong relationship with your investigative team.

Let's take one last look at those resources.



Become Familiar with Your Resources

- ◆ AFI 90-301—Inspector General Complaints Resolution
- ◆ IO Guide
- ◆ IO Toolkit
- ◆ CDI Guide

Get these resources at <https://www.ig.hq.af.mil/igq>

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

You've already learned about several resources—available via the SAF/IG website at <https://www.ig.hq.af.mil/igq>—that will help you in your investigation, including:

- AFI 90-301, Inspector General Complaints Resolution,
- the Investigating Officer Guide
- the Investigating Officer Toolkit , and
- the Commander Directed Investigation Guide.

You shouldn't wait until you're knee-deep in the investigation to review these resources. After all, the more familiar you are with the investigative process in advance, the better off you'll be in the long run. At a minimum, you'll feel more confident as you begin to work within the Investigative Triad, which brings us to another important next step: getting to know your team.



Build a Relationship with Your Team

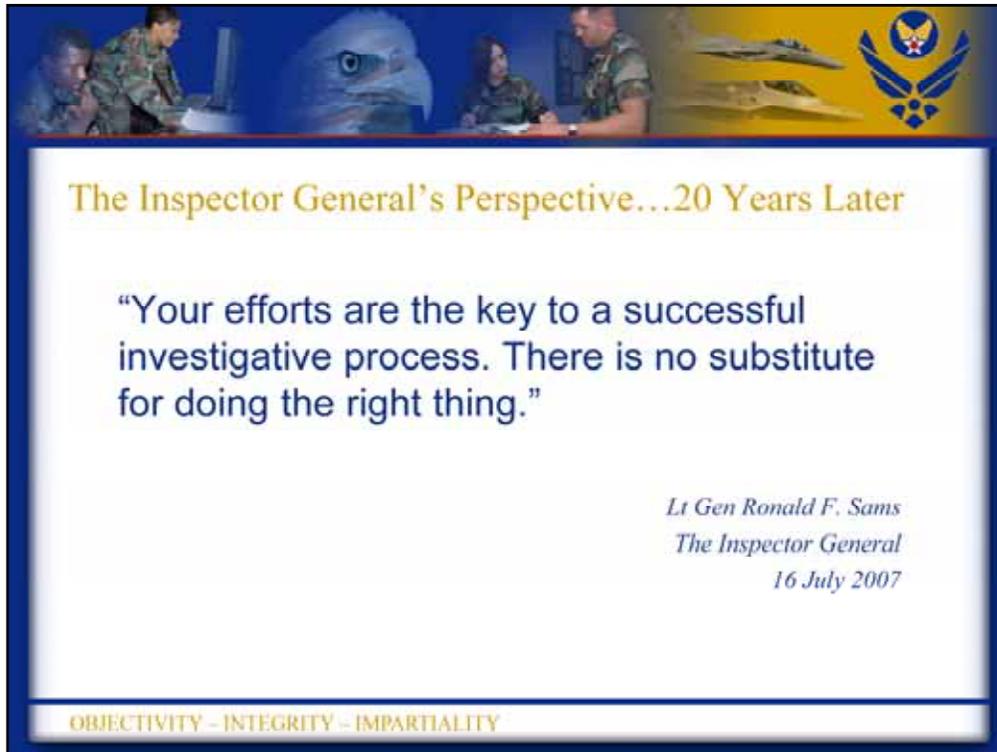
- ◆ IG
- ◆ JA

Training + Good Teamwork = Best Recipe for Success!

OBJECTIVITY - INTEGRITY - IMPARTIALITY

Teamwork is critical to your success as an IO. You should start building a relationship with your IG and JA as soon as you receive your tasking as an IO. They will be your most important allies throughout your investigation, so you need to be comfortable going to them with your questions and concerns. The sooner you get to know your team, the easier that will be.

Training plus good teamwork is your best recipe for success in any AF investigation.



As an IO, you are a key player in the Complaints Resolution Process. In fact, once a complaint is sent for investigation, you are **the most important player** in the process. By independently, timely, and thoroughly completing your investigation, you're helping everyone move forward with their lives and allowing them to refocus on the AF mission. And don't forget, your solid, complete, and legally sufficient ROI will help commanders make important deliberative decisions or take appropriate command action.

Lt Gen Springer's emphasis on credibility more than twenty years ago is just as relevant and important today as evidenced in the words of our current Inspector General, Lt Gen Sams:

“Your efforts are the key to a successful investigative process. There is no substitute for doing the right thing.”

So as you move forward in your tasking as an IO, remember that you have all the tools and resources you need for a credible and effective investigation; you just have to use them.

Congratulations on completing the Investigating Officer Overview Course. Good luck!



You have completed the training

- ◆ Thank you for completing this training
 - Notify your IG or CC of course completion
 - Click the link below to download a customizable certificate of completion

[Download certificate of completion](#)

YOU are the key to a quality investigation!

OBJECTIVITY – INTEGRITY – IMPARTIALITY