

USAID IG fired day after report critical of impacts of Trump administration's dismantling of the agency

By [Jennifer Hansler](#), CNN

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Paul Martin was informed via an email from the deputy director of the Office of Presidential Personnel Tuesday evening that his position as inspector general of USAID was “terminated, effective immediately.”
USAID

(CNN) — The inspector general of the US Agency for International Development was fired on Tuesday, a day after his office released a report critical of the Trump administration’s efforts to dismantle the agency, a source familiar with the matter told CNN.

Paul Martin was informed by an email from the deputy director of the Office of Presidential Personnel on Tuesday evening that his position as inspector general of USAID was “terminated, effective immediately.”

A spokesperson for the USAID Office of Inspector General confirmed Martin’s termination and

The administration is required under the law to provide 30 days’ notice to Congress before firing an inspector general and provide case-specific reasons for getting rid of watchdogs.

Martin had served as inspector general since December 2023. While President Donald Trump fired inspectors general from more than a dozen federal agencies during his first week in office, the USAID watchdog had remained in place. An IG conducts investigations and audits into any potential malfeasance, fraud, waste or abuse by a government agency or its personnel, and issues reports and recommendations on its findings. An inspector general’s office is intended to operate independently.

Staff from the USAID Office of the Inspector General have also been informed they no longer have access to their physical office space, two sources familiar with the matter told CNN. Although the Trump administration closed the headquarters building of USAID in Washington last week, personnel at the watchdog’s office had still been permitted to work in person in that same building until Tuesday.

In a report Monday, the USAID OIG said that the Trump administration’s reduction of USAID personnel and its sweeping freeze on foreign assistance had made it more difficult to track and respond to potential misuse of \$8.2 billion in US taxpayer-funded humanitarian assistance.



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contractors who work for the agency. Last Friday, a federal judge temporarily blocked those plans and halted the accelerated removal of staffers from countries around the world.

Although Monday's IG report notes that the office has long "identified significant challenges and offered recommendations to improve Agency programming to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse," it makes clear that the slashing of USAID personnel and the foreign assistance freeze have negatively impacted efforts at oversight.

"Recent widespread staffing reductions across the Agency ... coupled with uncertainty about the scope of foreign assistance waivers and permissible communications with implementers, has degraded USAID's ability to distribute and safeguard taxpayer-funded humanitarian assistance," the report said.

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USAID requires that programs in Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, Syria, the West Bank and Gaza, and Yemen receive "partner vetting," in order to ensure that taxpayer funds do not end up supporting groups like Hamas, Hezbollah, ISIS, or the Houthis. According to the report, these vetting efforts have ground to a halt because of the reduction in staff at USAID.

The vast majority of the more than 1,000-person workforce in USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) has already been impacted by furloughs or stand to be put on leave, the report said.

"Collectively, executed and planned personnel actions would remove, temporarily or permanently, approximately 90 percent of BHA's worldwide workforce," it said.

This staffing reduction has also had a negative impact on the agency's ability to respond to reports of potential misuse of humanitarian funding.

This story has been updated with additional information.

CNN's Piper Hudspeth Blackburn and Kit Maher contributed to this report.

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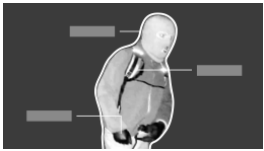
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