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EPA Compliance Monitoring Activities/Enforcement Actions/Enforcement Results Fiscal Years 2006-2018: U.S. EPA Office of Inspector General Report

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The United States Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”) Office of Inspector General (“OIG”) published a March 31st report titled:

EPA’s Compliance Monitoring Activities, Enforcement Actions, and Enforcement Results Generally Declined from Fiscal Years 2006 Through 2018 (“Report”)

See *Report* No. 20-P-0131.

OIG states that it conducted an audit of EPA to identify trends in EPA-led enforcement actions and results from fiscal years 2006-2018.

An additional objective was stated to be identification of key factors explaining the trends.

The *Report* focuses on national trends. However, OIG says that a forthcoming report will discuss regional and statute-specific trends and key factors.

OIG’s *Report* concludes that EPA’s annual level of compliance monitoring activities, enforcement actions and enforcement results generally declined from fiscal years 2006 through 2018. Specific results are summarized to include:

- The number of inspections that the EPA conducted decreased by 33 percent when comparing FYs 2007 and 2018.
- The numbers of enforcement actions initiated and concluded by the EPA decreased by 52 and 51 percent, respectively, when comparing FYs 2007 and 2018.
- The EPA concluded 58 percent fewer enforcement actions with injunctive relief in FY 2018 than in FY 2007. Over those 12 years, the EPA estimated the lowest value of injunctive relief in FY 2018 (\$3.9 billion) and estimated the highest injunctive relief value in FY 2011 (\$21 billion).
- The EPA concluded 53 percent fewer enforcement actions with penalties in FY 2018 than in FY 2007. Over those 12 years, the EPA assessed the lowest penalty total in FY 2018 (\$69 million) and assessed the highest penalty total in FY 2016 (\$6.1 billion).

- The total number of supplemental environmental projects decreased by 48 percent. FY 2017 had the lowest total estimated value of supplemental environmental projects (\$18 million), whereas FY 2009 had the highest (\$53 million).
- The value of environmental benefit commitments to reduce, treat, or eliminate pollutants varied from FYs 2012 through 2018 but decreased by 64 percent when comparing FYs 2012 and 2018. The number of commitments also decreased by 31 percent when comparing FYs 2012 and 2018.

A copy of the *Report* can be downloaded [here](#).