

SUMMARY

The Office of the Auditor General has conducted a post audit follow up review of the 1997 performance audit of the Navajo Board of Election Supervisors (NBOES) and Navajo Election Administration (NEA). The primary objective of this follow-up review was to determine whether the findings reported in our previous audit (report 97-21) have been resolved by implementing the recommendations presented in the report. A second objective was to determine if the NBOES and NEA have continued to maintain the integrity of Navajo Nation elections.

This follow up review shows that most of the previous findings have been resolved.

- The Navajo Nation Council enacted resolution CJA-06-01 establishing procedures to fill vacant elected offices by appointment. Since the new law took effect, the Navajo Nation has saved approximately \$86,000 in operating expenses and \$44,000 in personnel costs. The new law also eliminates the need for the Navajo Board of Election Supervisors to hold special meetings. As a result, the NBOES budget for fiscal year 2002 is \$16,840 less than in fiscal year 2001.
- The Navajo Election Administration has used a combination of competitive procurement and in-house printing to procure election ballots. In doing so, NEA has reduced the ballot costs from an average of \$1.13 per ballot in fiscal years 1994-1997 to \$0.36 for the June 19, 2001 special referendum on health care.
- NEA began including election fees in its budget requests in fiscal year 2001, thereby eliminating the potential that these fees are being used to fund expenditures in excess of amounts appropriated by the Navajo Nation Council.
- The finding that the Board could be reduced in size to save funds has not been resolved. Although the NBOES held a workshop to address this issue, it took no action on the matter.

In addition to following up on previous findings, we also reviewed election procedures and observed the June 18, 2001 special referendum election to verify the integrity of the elections process. Although some exceptions were noted, the overall integrity of the elections process remains high.

Finally, we found that NBOES members were improperly paid stipends for activities performed outside of duly called meetings. Under the law, members may only be reimbursed actual expenses for these activities.