

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Memorandum of Interview

Case No: 07-63

On December 11, 2008, John SZABO, Ethics Attorney, Office of the General Counsel was interviewed by Special Agents (SAs) (b)(7)c [redacted] Office of the Inspector General (OIG), U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), regarding a potential conflict of interest by a former NRC Commissioner. SZABO provided essentially the following information.

SZABO explained that travel reimbursements for employment searches fall under the employee conduct regulation 5 CFR 2635.204, and the Office of General Counsel does not have any procedures in place to review travel reimbursements for job searches. SZABO stated that he may have discussed with Jeffrey MERRIFIELD, former NRC Commissioner, receiving travel reimbursements for job searches, but SZABO did not recall this discussion. SZABO said that John THOMA, former Chief of Staff to MERRIFIELD, and (b)(7)c [redacted] former (b)(7)c [redacted] to MERRIFIELD, had knowledge of MERRIFIELD's employment arrangements and contacted SZABO on various issues. However, SZABO did not recall THOMA or (b)(7)c [redacted] having discussions about travel reimbursements for employment searches for MERRIFIELD.

SZABO related that he is responsible for reviewing Financial Disclosures (SF-278). After SZABO reviews the SF-278, the form is forwarded to Trip ROTHCHILD for review and then to the General Counsel. Once the SF-278 has been reviewed and signed by all parties, a copy is sent to the Office of Government Ethics.

SZABO told SA's (b)(7)c [redacted] and (b)(7)c [redacted] that he had no knowledge that MERRIFIELD was traveling for employment searches or receiving travel reimbursements from employment searches. SZABO explained that if MERRIFIELD received travel reimbursements from his job searches, he was required to disclose this information on the SF-278. SZABO said that THOMA or (b)(7)c [redacted] never discussed the SF-278 with him. Furthermore, SZABO stated that he had no knowledge of any employment offers for MERRIFIELD. SZABO stated that he became aware of the employment offer from Shaw in early July after MERRIFIELD had departed the NRC.

See Attached: E-mail from SZABO

Interviewed by Special Agent (b)(7)c [redacted]

Interviewed by Special Agent (b)(7)c [redacted]

MOI Prepared on December 18, 2008

MOI Reviewed on/by (b)(7)c [redacted]

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