

# *Summary of the Social Security Administration's Foreign Enforcement Questionnaires*

## A-13-10-11098



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Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General

### Objective

To determine whether the Social Security Administration (SSA) complied with its policies and procedures for foreign enforcement questionnaires (FEQ).

### Background

U.S. citizens and noncitizens who meet certain eligibility requirements can receive Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance (OASDI) while living abroad.

SSA uses FEQs to contact beneficiaries and representative payees annually or biennially to ensure beneficiaries are alive and to determine whether there have been any unreported events. Unreported events include change in citizenship or residence, marriage, divorce, death, or employment.

### Our Findings

SSA generally complied with its policies and procedures regarding FEQs. However, we identified weaknesses in SSA's use of FEQs for the oversight of OASDI beneficiaries living abroad. Our review found SSA (a) did not mail questionnaires to all beneficiaries, as required by its policy; (b) did not always have adequate documentation of case development and actions taken to resolve inadequate questionnaire responses; (c) did not take appropriate actions for some FEQ responses; and (d) had inaccurate and outdated policies and procedures for the handling of FEQs.

Prior to issuing our report, SSA reported that it had taken corrective action regarding the mailing of FEQs. According to Agency staff, all beneficiaries were included in the initial 2012 FEQ mailing, as required by policy.

### Our Recommendations

1. Take corrective actions to resolve the four cases we identified involving inappropriate Agency actions and complete the collection process for the remaining \$7,189 from an overpayment involving a deceased FEQ non-responder.
2. Revise its FEQ policies to provide guidance for documentation of case development and resolution of actionable FEQ responses and update policies to correct inaccuracies and reflect current processes.

SSA agreed with our recommendations.