



The City of New York  
Department of Investigation

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**SPOTLIGHT ON THE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR  
THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS (“DOB”)**

DOI’S Office of the Inspector General for the New York City Department of Buildings (“DOB”) has investigated a host of cases involving fraud, corruption and wrongdoing in the construction industry, attacking this illegal behavior from two fronts -- arresting DOB employees who engage in criminal misconduct and bringing cases against private individuals who seek to corrupt Buildings employees and evade the City’s rules and regulations. Joint efforts among DOI, DOB and the City’s prosecutors on various criminal investigations and administrative enforcement actions have enhanced these efforts. Working with these partners, DOI has built cases for criminal and administrative prosecution, sending an effective message that breaking the law will be met by a coordinated and swift response from the City.

From 2002 to the present, DOI has arrested 37 DOB employees on a variety of corruption charges, including bribe receiving, extortion, fraud, theft of government property, falsifying records and enterprise corruption.

During that same period, DOI also arrested 215 other individuals on an array of charges involving their dealings with DOB, including bribery, fraud, larceny, false filings, and manslaughter. Those arrested included tradespeople, business- and home-owners, and individuals who worked at job sites in various capacities. These cases usually implicated violations of DOB rules and regulations. Some examples of the cases in this category include the rigger arrested in connection with the 51st Street crane collapse, a contractor arrested in connection with an excavation fatality and a business owner who offered a bribe in an attempt to do work without the proper DOB permit. Between 2002 and 2009, DOI has arrested a total of 252 individuals.

Following are the arrest numbers by calendar year for the unit:

- 2002 – 23 arrests
- 2003 – 38 arrests
- 2004 – 14 arrests
- 2005 – 9 arrests
- 2006 – 40 arrests
- 2007 – 17 arrests
- 2008 – 56 arrests
- 2009 – 55 (as of October 9, 2009)

Of the total number of arrests made by DOI during this time period, 71 were the result of DOB employees coming forward and providing tips or information to DOI. This significant amount of cooperation grew over the time period we are discussing, 2002 to the present. Just such a case took place in October 2009, when a DOB

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inspector reported to DOI an offer of money not to issue a violation and Stop Work Order. The result was DOI arrested the business owner who is charged with bribery and related charges. The release for that arrest can be found at the following link: [http://www.nyc.gov/html/doi/pdf/pr105hedvat\\_1007009.pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/doi/pdf/pr105hedvat_1007009.pdf).

In addition, the Buildings Special Investigation Unit (“BSIU”), a unit newly formed in 2004 to address violations of the Building Code by DOB licensees, registrants and applicants, has investigated cases that resulted in 274 administrative actions ranging from revocation of plumbers’ licenses to suspension of filing privileges for architects. Among the subjects of those adjudications were licensed plumbers, riggers, electricians, hoist machine operators, engineers and architects. In addition, enforcement action in this unit since 2004 has resulted in \$1,097,250 in fines and the surrender or revocation of 146 individual licenses or registrations with the DOB.

BSIU is housed at and supervised by DOI and the staff includes DOB personnel whose buildings expertise is vital to the specialized investigation and adjudication of these matters. The unit was formed to provide an extra enforcement vehicle to penalize and suspend or revoke the City’s authorization of individuals or companies who do business using a DOB license or registration and engage in violations of the Building Code.

*DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country. The agency investigates and refers for prosecution City employees and contractors engaged in corrupt or fraudulent activities or unethical conduct. Investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City.*

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