

continuing.” The co-case agent also told OPR that, as of the time of his OPR interview in 2019, the “the case was open . . . it’s never been shut down.”

OPR found no evidence that the FBI’s victim letters were drafted with the intent to mislead the victims about the status of the federal investigation. The “ongoing investigation” language generated by the VNS was generic template language in use nationwide at the time and identical to that contained in standard form notification letters the FBI generated and distributed from August 2006 through the 2007 signing of the NPA.⁴¹⁴ Nevertheless, the FBI’s letters omitted important information about the status of the case because they failed to notify the victims that a federal prosecution would go forward *only if* Epstein failed to fulfill his obligations under an agreement he had reached with the USAO. Victims receiving the FBI’s letter would logically conclude that the federal government was continuing to gather evidence to support a federal prosecution. CVRA petitioner Wild stated during the CVRA litigation that her “understanding of this letter was that [her] case was still being investigated and the FBI and prosecutors were moving forward on the Federal prosecution of Epstein for his crimes against” her. Furthermore, when the fact that the USAO had agreed to end its federal investigation in September 2007 eventually came to light, the statement in the subsequent letters contributed to victims’ and the public’s conclusions that the government had purposefully kept victims in the dark.

In sum, OPR concludes that the statement in the FBI victim letters that the matter was “currently under investigation” was not false because the USAO and the FBI did continue to investigate and prepare for a prosecution of Epstein. The letters, however, risked misleading the victims, and contributed to victim frustration and confusion, because the letters did not provide important information that would have advised victims of the actual status of the investigation. Nonetheless, OPR found no evidence that Villafañá or her supervisors participated in drafting those letters or were aware of the content of the FBI’s letters until the Department gathered them for production in the CVRA litigation. The use of FBI form letters that gave incomplete information about the status of the investigation demonstrated a lack of coordination between the federal agencies responsible for communicating with Epstein’s victims and showed a lack of attention to and oversight regarding communication with victims. Despite the fact that the case was no longer on the typical path for resolving federal investigations, form letters continued to be sent without any review by prosecutors or the case agents to determine whether the information provided to the victims was appropriate under the circumstances.⁴¹⁵

⁴¹⁴ The Department of Justice Inspector General’s Audit Report of the Department’s Victim Notification System indicates that letters the FBI system generated in 2006 contained stock language for the notification events of “Initial (Investigative Agency)” and “Under Investigation” and letters generated in 2008 contained stock language for the notification events of “Advice of Victims Rights (Investigative)” and “Under Investigation.”

⁴¹⁵ After Epstein entered his guilty pleas, the FBI sent a similar form letter requesting “assistance and cooperation while we are investigating the case” to the two victims living outside the United States.