

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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<http://oversight.house.gov>

August 5, 2015

The Honorable Gene Dodaro
Comptroller General of the United States
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

The General Service Administration (GSA) is planning to issue a request for proposal (RFP) by the end of fiscal year 2015 and may make contract awards in early 2016 for a new government-wide contract vehicle for the next generation of telecommunications and information technology (IT) infrastructure services. This government-wide contract vehicle, known as Network Services 2020 (NS2020), is expected to have an estimated value of up to \$50 billion and cover a 15 year period of performance.

The NS2020 strategy provides the roadmap for this critical government-wide effort to satisfy telecommunication and IT infrastructure services requirements government-wide, leverage the government's buying power, and reduce contract redundancy for these services.¹ This effort is also expected to support IT reform objectives, including a shift to a cloud-first policy, establishing contract vehicles for commodity services and secure Infrastructure as a Service solutions, support shared services, and reduce barriers to entry for small innovative technology companies.

It is critical GSA apply the lessons learned from the prior contracting vehicle for these services – Networx. The NS2020 effort is the successor to the Networx contracting vehicle. The transition from one broad telecommunications contract to another has proved challenging for agencies, with widespread delays and increased costs. The most recent transition, to Networx, was no different. Many agencies bought services under the previous contracts for years after Networx contracts became available, resulting in hundreds of millions of dollars in avoidable costs. Several factors contributed to the delays, including inadequate preparation by agencies. GAO estimated that as a result of delays in transitioning to the Networx contract vehicle, transition costs increased by \$66.4 million—44 percent over the baseline estimate.² Further, GAO found agencies could have saved 28.4 percent of their spending by using the Networx contracts if a timely transition from the previous contracting vehicle been executed.³ GAO estimated the failure to do so cost agencies approximately \$329 million.⁴

¹ Gen. Serv. Admin., Integrated Tech. Serv., White Paper, *The Network Services 2020 Strategy, NS2020: Defining the future of Federal telecommunications* (April 2014), available at http://www.gsa.gov/portal/mediaId/190207/fileName/Network_Services_2020_Strategy.action

² Gov't Accountability Office, *GSA Needs to Share and Prioritize Lessons Learned to Avoid Future Transition Delays* (Dec. 2013) (GAO-14-63).

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

Given the importance and scope of the NS2020 effort, it is critical for agencies to plan ahead to realize the benefits of NS2020 and avoid transition delays and related costs. To assist the Committee with its oversight of this significant government-wide acquisition vehicle, we request that GAO evaluate and report on:

1. The extent to which agencies are conducting appropriate planning and preparation activities for the transition from Networx to NS2020 contracts, including whether agencies have:
 - a. Identified a senior level transition sponsor, a lead transition manager, and a transition ordering contracting officer;
 - b. Established a strategy for transition and fair opportunity selection of contractors based on the agency's priorities and objectives;
 - c. Established a schedule;
 - d. Created an inventory of active services to transition; and
 - e. Identified funding to support transition activities; and
2. The extent to which GSA's plans for transitioning to NS2020 appropriately incorporate lessons learned from prior transitions, including the Networx transition.

Thank you for your attention to this request. If you have any additional questions, please contact Julie Dunne of the majority staff at (202) 225-5074 and Mark Stephenson of the minority staff at (202) 225-5051.

Sincerely,



Mark Meadows
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government
Operations



Will Hurd
Chairman
Subcommittee on Information
Technology



Gerald E. Connolly
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Government
Operations



Robin L. Kelly
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