

**Statement of Alan Thomas
Commissioner of the Federal Acquisition Service
Before the Subcommittees on Government
Operations and Information Technology of the
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
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2154 Rayburn House Office Building**

**U.S. General Services Administration
Acquisition Oversight and Reform Hearing**

Introduction:

Good afternoon, Chairman Meadows and Chairman Hurd, ranking members Connolly and Kelly, and members of the Government Operations and Information Technology subcommittees. Thank you for the opportunity to come before you today to discuss the U.S. General Services Administration's (GSA) Federal Acquisition Service (FAS). I am honored to be here today for the first time as the Commissioner of the Federal Acquisition Service, as today marks my twelfth day on the job. Considering my new tenure at the helm of FAS, I will start by giving you a brief overview of who I am and the perspective I bring to the role of Commissioner.

I come to GSA as an outsider, but with a perspective informed through multiple interactions with the agency from different roles throughout my career. For example, I have led a technology startup in accessing the government marketplace for the first time through IT Schedule 70 and built a \$7 million business line using that access. Additionally, I have participated as a consultant in the merging of the Federal Supply Service and the Federal Technology Service. I have also served as a Federal employee and used a GSA-managed Multiple Award Schedule contract called Mission Oriented Business Integrated Services (MOBIS) to acquire professional services in support of an R&D program in my portfolio. Finally, I have managed a rapidly growing business unit for one of the most successful Government-Wide Acquisition Contract (GWAC) Alliant Small Business prime contract holders.

Leadership approach:

These roles have shown me GSA from the viewpoint of a startup company, an established small business, and that of a Federal employee. As Commissioner, I aim to keep all these perspectives in mind, as GSA's impact is wide and deep.

My philosophy and approach for combining the mission and resources of TTS and FAS is to first, listen intently, starting with the internal GSA team and our customers, then

widening to encompass our industry partners and external stakeholders. I want to ensure that we are providing the best possible products and services to our partners in government and delivering value for American taxpayers.

Observing our organization's ecosystem from my vantage point as an outsider will provide valuable insight into how we achieve our goals. When meeting with program offices, I'm going to be asking three questions: what is most important to keep, what do you most look forward to changing, and what will make that change difficult? The only expectation I bring is that our culture is compatible with my core values of honesty, courage, and graciousness.

Second, I'll utilize key members of our existing team, including Rob Cook, the Technology Transformation Services Deputy Commissioner—whom you will be hearing from shortly this afternoon—and the rest of the FAS team to better understand our organization's culture.

Third, I'm going to be a leader without presumption who is transparent in my interactions with staff, customers, industry, and stakeholders. I've played or coached team sports all my life. The only way we will accomplish ambitious goals is if we all understand and play our roles, trust each other to find common ground, and build an organization with shared purpose. President Truman said it best when he stated, "It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit."

So as I delve deeper into FAS over the next few months, my focus will be on execution and performance. I'm confident that we will build a high-performing team that executes our objectives and delivers results for the American people.

FAS Overview:

Just as the Public Buildings Service is the government's landlord, FAS is the government's premier provider of acquisition and technology transformation solutions. FAS provides these solutions to partner agencies throughout the entire acquisition cycle and reflects a commitment to delivering service, innovation, and value through efficient operations, market expertise, and proactive partnerships with both customer agencies and private sector vendors. FAS provides Federal agencies over 11 million different products and services, and delivers over \$55 billion worth annually.

FAS' portfolios have a shared mission of promoting smarter buying, the efficient use of technology, and reduced administrative costs across the Government. With that goal in mind, FAS has introduced category management principles and has also launched the Common Acquisition Platform (CAP) to improve its level of service through innovative

tools that enhance agency acquisitions. FAS is also investing in the development of the Acquisition Gateway, a platform and set of digital services to bring information, data, and category management knowledge to the Government acquisition workforce. These initiatives are aligned with the FAS and the Government-wide implementation of category management principles and are designed to save the Government money through reduced contract duplication, improved engagement with industry, and the incorporation of strategic sourcing principles into the category acquisitions.

FAS Programs:

Overall, FAS programs are focused on four key areas:

1) Establish acquisition vehicles for goods and services

The Office of General Supplies and Services (GSS) provides agencies with general products such as furniture, office supplies, and hardware products. GSS centralizes acquisitions on behalf of the Government to strategically procure goods and services at reduced costs, while ensuring regulatory compliance for partner agency procurements. The Office of Information Technology Category (ITC) provides agencies with information technology (IT) and telecommunications products and services. ITC provides access to IT services, hardware, software, telecommunications, and IT security services through multiple channels, including the Network Services Program, IT Schedule 70, and Government-wide Acquisition Contracts (GWACs). Establishing and maintaining these acquisition vehicles is aligned with the FAS and the Government-wide implementation of category management principles and is designed to save the Government money through reduced contract duplication, improved engagement with industry, and the incorporation of strategic sourcing principles into the category acquisitions.

2) Provide support for agency operations

FAS's Professional Services & Human Capital Categories provides Federal agencies with professional and human capital services contract solutions, including payment solutions through the GSA SmartPay® program. Our Travel, Transportation, and Logistics Categories provides partner agencies with a broad scope of services, which includes travel, transportation, and relocation services; motor vehicle acquisition; and motor vehicle fleet leasing services.

3) Assist in agency procurements

The Office of Assisted Acquisition Services (AAS) helps agencies in making informed procurement decisions and serves as a center of acquisition excellence for the Federal community. The Office of Systems Management standardizes, integrates, and streamlines the Federal awarding process through electronic

means, while increasing transparency and ensuring compliance with all applicable Federal acquisition regulations. The portfolio also repurposes existing FAS IT systems and develops new systems in support of Government-wide acquisition shared services. The newly developed systems provide Federal agencies with access to acquisition support data (e.g., prices paid) that allows for informed purchases.

4) Transform Government Efficiency and Service Delivery Through Better Use of Technology

The Technology Transformation Services (TTS) team helps agencies build, buy, and share technology through Government-wide platforms, promotes the use of modern development practices that are agile and user-centered, and assists government buyers in the acquisition of technology.

Finally, providing acquisition tools to help agencies buy smarter and establishing procurement vehicles to leverage the government's buying power are not enough. To truly minimize the administrative costs associated with acquisitions, we need to examine the procurement process and how we can improve that structure. GSA has a number of projects underway, such as the Making It Easier Initiative, to reduce the complexity of doing business with the government and we look forward to working with the committee on proposed solutions, such as the e-commerce platform aimed at streamlining the procurement processes to speed delivery of products and services to agencies.

Conclusion:

You will hear shortly from Rob Cook, who will talk about the newest member of the FAS family, the Technology Transformation Services team, but before I close, I want to tell you that in my short time at FAS, I am excited at what I am seeing and optimistic about what FAS can accomplish. I look forward to building upon the existing foundation and working in partnership with this committee to execute an ambitious government reform agenda laid out by the administration. There is still a lot more work that needs to be done, but I'm confident that together, we are going to make a lasting impact by delivering value for American taxpayers.

Thank you for the opportunity to come here today and I look forward to answering your questions.