

Statement of William Zielinski
Deputy Assistant Commissioner of the IT Category, U.S. General Services Administration
Before the Subcommittees on Information Technology
and Government Operations of the
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
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State of Play: Federal IT in 2018

Chairmen Hurd and Meadows, Ranking Members Kelly and Connolly, and members of the subcommittees, my name is Bill Zielinski, and I am the Deputy Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Information Technology Category (ITC) in the General Services Administration's (GSA) Federal Acquisition Service (FAS). In addition, I also serve as the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) appointed, governmentwide Information Technology (IT) Category Manager. I am pleased to be here today to discuss the important role GSA plays in federal information technology efforts governmentwide.

The modernization of the federal government's IT infrastructure and applications is an important priority for GSA. We are supporting governmentwide modernization in four ways that I will introduce here and discuss further in my testimony.

1. First, in partnership with the President's Office of American Innovation, GSA's Technology Transformation Services (TTS) team is standing up IT Modernization Centers of Excellence.
2. Second, we are leading a number of key initiatives identified in the recently issued Report to the President on Federal IT Modernization.
3. Third, we are well positioned to support the operation and administration of the recently established Technology Modernization Fund.
4. Fourth and finally, GSA is modernizing and simplifying the systems we use to serve our agency customers in the acquisition of \$50 billion in goods and services annually from more than 20,000 industry partners.

For those unfamiliar with GSA's Office of Information Technology Category, we deliver flexible IT solutions and services that support agency missions, and drive innovative and agile improvements through Category Management. ITC's top priority is to maximize customer value and mission productivity by:

Providing all agencies a suite of solutions at any maturity level using our technological and acquisition expertise — our office facilitates \$23 billion in annual government spend and 98 percent of federal agencies utilized our contract vehicles last year.

Working with agencies and suppliers to make emerging, transformative technology, and innovations available governmentwide, while fostering small business participation. Small businesses have won nearly \$8 billion of spend (38 percent of total dollars won) through ITC.

And, reducing the number of duplicative contracts through focused vendor management efforts — such as GSA's successful effort to consolidate the Professional Services

Schedule, reducing the number of individual services contracts our industry partners have to maintain.

Under the IT Category, ITC is focused on five IT Subcategories:

1. The **IT Hardware** Subcategory works to stay on the forefront of technology information, innovative products, and emerging trends, and is comprised of purchase, lease, and maintenance options for communications and computing equipment, other electronics and fiber optics, as well as hardware services.
2. The **IT Security** Subcategory serves as a resource to protect information and information systems from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, disruption, modification, or destruction in order to provide confidentiality, integrity, and availability.
3. The **IT Services** Subcategory is comprised of IT Outsourcing and IT Consulting and plays a significant role in achieving the federal government's category management goals: to improve the acquisition and management of common IT goods and services to drive mission delivery, greater performance and efficiencies, and cost savings.
4. The **IT Software** Subcategory is comprised of Infrastructure Software, Enterprise Application Software, as well as Licensing and Maintenance.
5. The **Telecommunications** Subcategory includes networks, mobile and wireless, and satellites. Government services built upon the government telecom infrastructure include humanitarian relief, disaster-response, counter-terrorism efforts, healthcare IT, and more.

As a brief, real world example of our work: last year, one of our customers needed computers for Hurricanes Harvey and Irma relief efforts - and they needed them quickly. We facilitated the procurement of 1,000 laptops to assist with the recovery efforts. The order resulted in a reduced delivery time and \$75,000 in savings when compared to the awarded Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) price, and was awarded to a women-owned, 8(a) small business under IT Schedule 70 (a Best-In-Class vehicle).

Governmentwide Coordination Efforts

While GSA brings significant capabilities to the table in facilitating the modernization of the federal government's IT infrastructure and applications, it is through the strategic partnerships with other agencies where we will be able to make the greatest progress. I will highlight a few of those partnerships:

I work in close coordination with OMB's Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) and the Office of Electronic Government (eGov) to review Federal IT spend, determine where opportunities exist to collaborate on the acquisition of IT products and services and implement IT Category strategies to improve outcomes and get more value from IT dollars.

For example, in developing the Enterprise Infrastructure Solutions (EIS) contract to provide vital network capabilities for agencies to accomplish their missions, we partnered closely with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to ensure that solutions provided by vendors will meet the rigorous security requirements needed to protect vital IT assets.

The Mobile Services Category Team (MSCT) involves a healthy and thriving governmentwide community, led by OMB, GSA, DHS, the Department of State, and the Department of Defense (DOD). MSCT provides guidance, strategies, and practical solutions to grow and evolve mobility capabilities to meet the growing demands in this marketplace.

Additionally, GSA partnered closely with DHS and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) at the Department of Commerce in the development of the Highly Adaptive Cybersecurity Services (HACS) acquisition solution. This procurement vehicle provides agencies with access to qualified providers of IT security capabilities to improve agency security posture on High Value Assets (HVAs).

These are just a few examples and, moving forward, we are aligning our efforts to the Administration's IT Modernization Report and the intent of the Modernizing Government Technology (MGT) Act to provide a more modern and secure Federal IT enterprise.

Key Recent Developments

Several recent examples of the Administration's commitment to upgrading federal IT are worth expounding upon:

First, on December 13, 2017, the American Technology Council (ATC) issued a final "Report to the President on Federal IT Modernization" from the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Director of OMB, and the Administrator of GSA in response to Executive Order 13800. The report is the culmination of a months-long process coordinated by the ATC to develop a strategic plan that improves the security posture of Federal IT, and incorporates feedback from dozens of comments received from industry and members of the public. The report recognizes that Federal IT practices must undergo fundamental, non-incremental change to successfully modernize something as large and complex as Federal government IT. The report contains three key objectives that will inform future federal efforts on Federal IT modernization:

- Reduce the Federal attack surface through enhanced application and data-level protections;
- Improve visibility beyond the network level; and
- Ensure that policy, resource allocation, acquisition, and operational approaches to security enable use of new technology without sacrificing reliability or performance.

In order to achieve these efforts, 50 action items are delineated; GSA is directly tasked, in whole or in part, with 25 of the 50 action items recommended by the report. GSA is actively working on these deliverables in accordance with the timelines in the report.

Another critical tool for modernizing Federal IT was provided by Congress recently when it passed the MGT Act as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 (P.L. 115-91), which the President signed into law on December 12, 2017. GSA thanks the members of these subcommittees for their dedication to getting this legislation across the finish line.

The MGT Act contains two major provisions - the first allows agencies to establish working capital funds for the purposes of undertaking critical IT modernization projects such as transitioning from legacy systems to the cloud or improving an agency's cybersecurity posture;

and the second creates a Technology Modernization Fund (TMF), administered by GSA in accordance with OMB guidance and with input from a Technology Modernization Board, to fund “technology-related activities, to improve information technology, [and] to enhance cybersecurity across the Federal Government.”

GSA is tasked with several key actions related to the TMF, chief among them is providing broad support for the Board’s activities, including technical support and monitoring agencies that receive funds from the TMF. Subject to FY 18 appropriations, GSA is prepared to help administer this critically important fund.

Third, GSA’s Federal Acquisition Service (FAS), in partnership with the White House Office of American Innovation, is working to establish five new Centers of Excellence (COE). The COEs will house centralized, function specific talent, products and acquisition vehicles. Agencies have unique missions but the systems they build to deliver those missions rely on foundational capabilities that are not unique. The COE teams will provide expert advice, consulting, development and support solution implementation in the following areas:

- **Cloud Adoption** - Perform application/system portfolio analysis, develop cloud migration recommendations, plan and manage the migration execution, as well as capture specific capabilities (e.g. strategies, roadmaps, playbooks) to document good practices across government. The goal is to assist agencies accelerate cloud adoption.
- **IT Infrastructure Optimization** - Assist agencies with the assessment, development and implementation of computing infrastructure (i.e. network, storage, data center) optimization plans.
- **Customer Experience** - Assist agencies with the development and implementation of an optimal client experience strategy. Implementation will include utilization of the latest technology (artificial intelligence, learning systems, and robotic process automation) as well as a cohesive client experience across all channels including contact centers, online platforms, informational materials, and in-person interactions.
- **Service Delivery Analytics** - Provide the expertise and tools to define, instrument and analyze ultimate program outcomes, customer experiences and operational effectiveness. Aim to ensure programs and services are designed and delivered in a way that optimizes impact while building trust and confidence in the public. Implementation includes a continuous improvement feedback cycle built into services delivered.
- **Contact Center** - Provide a suite of offerings to help agencies manage and enhance their customer contacts where they need assistance the most, be it with managing their contact center operations; building self-service tools; leveraging robotic process automation and emerging technologies; building internal business processes and systems to manage day-to-day performance; navigating available acquisition solutions; and learning contact center best practices.

The first client agency for the COEs is the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). After a successful Industry Day at the White House in December, GSA has been assembling the teams that will comprise the five COEs.

Expectations for 2018

Technology is critical to how every agency accomplishes its mission and serves the public. It is at the core of running mission-support operations, safeguarding critical information, and analyzing program data for agency decision making.

The challenge of supporting, managing, and securing legacy systems significantly affects the ability of Federal agencies to meet current and evolving mission requirements. GSA is leading a modernization that rethinks business problems and uses new, innovative technologies and IT practices to help Government IT work better. GSA and its agency partners have the capabilities to shift more Federal IT spending from maintenance to modernization.

GSA is helping agencies adopt new approaches for buying commercial-off-the shelf and as-a-service solutions. We are leading the development of modular contracting approaches to enable agile and efficient development of complex new requirements. GSA's goal is to assist agencies through the entire life cycle of procurement and system development.

Keeping up with the public's expectations for services, and digital services in particular, is one of GSA's key focuses. The latest American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), shows the Federal Government making progress. After several years of declining satisfaction, 2016 saw a six-point jump. ACSI stated that "while several factors combine to explain the rise in satisfaction over the last 12 months, the improvement for Government websites stands out." GSA is a leader in improving Government websites and making customer experiences simple, fast, and secure.

The technology challenges facing Federal agencies and the direct impact on the public are well-known by leaders across Government and the private sector. In partnership with the Office of American Innovation and the American Technology Council in the White House, GSA will be an essential partner in providing solutions through the Centers of Excellence, the IT Category, and the Office of Governmentwide Policy. Our unique mix of talent and expertise in acquisition, technology, and service delivery - combined with our governmentwide scope and scale - make GSA an agent of transformation in how Federal agencies buy, build, and use technology.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss GSA's role in federal IT modernization efforts. I look forward to answering any questions you have.



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Bill Zielinski is the Deputy Assistant Commissioner, for the Office of Information Technology Category (ITC) in GSA's Federal Acquisition Service (FAS). The Federal Acquisition Service provides buying platforms and acquisition services to Federal, State and Local governments for a broad range of items from office supplies to motor vehicles to information technology and telecommunications products and services. As an organization within FAS, ITC provides access to a wide range of commercial and custom IT products, services and solutions.



In addition, Mr. Zielinski has also been selected by the Program Management Office for Government-wide Category Management Intelligence, in consultation with Office of Management and Budget, to serve as the Government-wide Information Technology (IT) Category Manager.

Mr. Zielinski formerly served as the Acting Unit Chief for Agency Oversight in the Office of the Federal Chief Information Officer (OFCIO) in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). In this role, he provided oversight of the Federal Government's Information Technology Capital Planning and Investment Control (CPIC) process on behalf of the Federal CIO. The Federal CIO is responsible for providing guidance on the formulation and oversight of an annual IT investment portfolio in excess of \$85 billion.

Additionally, he has served as the Chief Information Officer for the Social Security Administration, where he led a staff of approximately 3,400 Information Technology (IT) Specialists and managed an annual total budget of more than \$1.5 billion. In this role, he was responsible for the delivery of IT solutions that allow the Agency to effectively manage more than \$800 billion in annual benefits to more than 60 million people around the world. Prior to being the CIO, Mr. Zielinski served as the Regional Commissioner for SSA's San Francisco Region. As the principal Social Security official for the states of California, Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii and the Pacific Area, he provided leadership for the effective and efficient operation of all Social Security programs within the region. Mr. Zielinski directed approximately 6,500 employees in the regional and field facilities and managed an annual budget of \$725 million.

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