

APPENDIX B: AGENCY'S RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

U.S. Department of Labor

Office of the Assistant Secretary
for Administration and Management
Washington, DC 20210



MEMORANDUM FOR: CAROLYN T. HANTZ
Assistant Inspector General for Audit

FROM: GUNDEEP AHLUWALIA GUNDEEP
Chief Information Officer AHLUWALIA

SUBJECT: Without an IT Modernization Framework, DOL is Vulnerable to
Inadequate Resource Prioritization for Ensuring Security and
Availability of DOL Systems
Draft Report Number 23-24-002-07-725

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Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Report Number 23-24-002-07-725, *Without an IT Modernization Framework, DOL is Vulnerable to Inadequate Resource Prioritization for Ensuring Security and Availability of DOL Systems* (September 29, 2023). I am pleased that the OIG acknowledged the dynamic nature of DOL's modernization approach and confirmed OCIO has developed several elements of the IT Modernization Framework. OIG's fact finding occurred between January and August of 2022. The draft report was initially scheduled to be released in November 2022, but was delayed through OIG's clearance process for nearly a year. Due to this delay, circumstances have changed since the time of initial fact finding, and DOL's approach to an IT Modernization Framework has evolved. Below is management's response to the OIG Draft Report noting how OCIO has already addressed or will work to address the recommendations.

Statement of Findings: *We found the Department has not developed a formal, documented IT modernization framework. While the CIO has developed several elements that could become part of an IT modernization framework, we found those elements are not linked to one another nor documented as part of a larger, formalized process. When we inquired as to the lack of a formal, documented IT modernization framework, the CIO stated that he wanted to keep the approach dynamic. However, a documented IT modernization framework would ensure consistency going forward rather than leaving DOL's IT modernization efforts open to interpretation and subject to changes in personnel.*

Also, we found that at least two of the elements could be improved. First, the agency update documents the CIO uses to monitor IT modernization projects—including 1-page documents known as "placemats"—are incomplete and also agency-curated, instead of being based on the full picture. Second, the inventory of IT systems used to prioritize IT modernization efforts is a spreadsheet that has to be manually updated and does not link to the other elements. A key element of IT modernization is planning for the future by identifying systems in need of IT modernization and monitoring the current progress of those being modernized.

These issues lead to gaps in the CIO's visibility of the current and future states of DOL's IT modernization. As a result, DOL is vulnerable to spending valuable time and resources on IT projects that are not the highest priorities for ensuring the security and availability of vital DOL systems. In addition, operating without a full picture of DOL's current IT modernization efforts means OCIO is proceeding while being limited in its ability to capture the full scope of DOL's IT modernization needs.

Recommendation 1: Document an IT modernization framework including the variety of connections between different elements and publish the information to ensure all Department personnel are aware of how it works.

Management's Response: Management accepts this recommendation. OCIO has formalized an IT modernization scoring mechanism which was not yet in place at the time of the audit and will take further measures to publish a model which demonstrates the key elements and relationships involved in the process.

Recommendation 2: Develop documents for IT modernization project discussions that ensure completeness of IT modernization efforts including new projects and enhancements to existing systems.

Management's Response: Management accepts this recommendation. However, OCIO would like to offer clarification that the placemats are used at Joint Business Planning (JBP) meetings to enable strategic discussions between OCIO and the agencies; they are not intended to be all-inclusive documents. OCIO will review and refine our documents to ensure completeness of IT modernization efforts including new projects and enhancements to existing systems.

Recommendation 3: Implement a system/program to maintain an automated, real-time inventory of all Department systems and applications that enables prioritization of IT modernization.

Management's Response: Management accepts this recommendation. OCIO will focus on maintaining an inventory of all programs and systems using IT discovery tools which are subject to a natural lag time between asset discovery and reporting. This inventory will be automated, although not necessarily "real-time", to the extent possible within budget constraints.

Should you have any questions regarding OCIO's response, please have your staff contact the OCIO IT Governance Division (ITG) Strategic Business Management (SBM) at sbm@dol.gov.