

REVIEW OF THE ACQUISITION CAREER MANAGEMENT
INFORMATION SYSTEM (ACMIS)
REPORT NUMBER A090023/O/A/F11006

July 20, 2011



U.S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
Office of Inspector General

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Reply to
Attn of: Audit Manager, Acquisition Programs Audit Office (JA-A)

Subject: Review of the Federal Acquisition Career Management Information
System (ACMIS)
Report Number A090023/O/A/F11006

To: Kathleen M. Turco
Associate Administrator, Office of Governmentwide Policy (M)

This report presents the results of the Review of the Federal Acquisition Career Management Information System (ACMIS). ACMIS does not provide useful management information. Despite a substantial investment of time, effort, and taxpayer money, ACMIS exhibits poor data reliability and system functionality. These deficiencies can be traced to poor program management and a lack of accountability on the part of GSA's Office of Acquisition Policy and the Federal Acquisition Institute. During our review, GSA decided to replace ACMIS. To develop a replacement system, the Office of Governmentwide Policy must address the deficiencies inherent with ACMIS. Attention to system development lifecycle principles, improved contract management, and accountability for development, implementation, and maintenance of the new system are essential to ensure future success.

We included your written comments to this report in Appendix C. I would like to thank your staff for their assistance during this review. If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact me at (816) 926-8610.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Erin P. Priddy".

Erin P. Priddy
Audit Manager
Acquisition Programs Audit Office

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

This review assessed the reliability of the data contained in the Acquisition Career Management Information System (ACMIS). Specifically, we evaluated how useful the data is in making management decisions regarding budgeting, staffing, training, and employee development related to the General Services Administration's (GSA's) acquisition workforce. The original objective¹ of this review was to assess GSA's implementation of the acquisition workforce qualification provisions of the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996. However, after completing the survey phase of the review, we concluded that the ACMIS represented a high-risk area and focused our review on system performance.

Results in Brief

ACMIS does not provide useful management information. Despite a substantial investment of time, effort and taxpayer money, ACMIS exhibits poor data reliability and system functionality. These deficiencies can be traced to poor program management and a lack of accountability on the part of GSA's Office of Acquisition Policy and the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI). During our review, GSA decided to replace ACMIS. To develop a replacement system, the Office of Governmentwide Policy (OGP) must address the deficiencies inherent with ACMIS. Attention to system development lifecycle principles, improved contract management, and accountability for development, implementation and maintenance of the new system are essential to ensure future success.

Recommendations

For the system that will replace ACMIS, we recommend that the Associate Administrator, Office of Governmentwide Policy:

1. Implement controls during system planning and development that will help ensure data reliability.
2. Work with the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) to establish controls regarding agency accountability to ensure system use and government-wide data accuracy. Such controls may include centralized data entry.

¹ See the Office of Inspector General's Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 Audit Plan.

3. Ensure development of appropriate functionality, including system navigation, reporting and tracking features, system interfaces, and an automatic password reset function.
4. Ensure contracts awarded for the development, implementation, and maintenance of the system contain proper requirements related to user support, including development of specific help desk deliverables.
5. Ensure controls are in place for proper oversight of help desk performance.
6. Establish controls to ensure proper oversight and accountability for the development, implementation, and maintenance of the system that will replace ACMIS, including contract management.
7. Ensure that the development, implementation, and maintenance of the system that will replace ACMIS adhere to system development life cycle guidelines, including applicable GSA Orders and the GSA System Development Life Cycle (SDLC) Guidance Handbook.

Management Comments

The Associate Administrator, Office of Governmentwide Policy, concurred with the audit findings and recommendations. Management's written comments to the draft report are included in their entirety as Appendix C in this report.

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INTRODUCTION

Background

In accordance with section 37(d) of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) Act,² each executive agency must collect, maintain, and utilize information to ensure effective management of the acquisition workforce. In addition, the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996³ requires that civilian agencies, including GSA, establish policies and procedures related to management of their particular acquisition workforce.

ACMIS is one of the tools currently in place to assist agencies in complying with these laws. ACMIS is a government-wide web-based system designed to record and track data associated with the federal acquisition workforce. ACMIS was conceived to help agencies make informed decisions related to budgeting, staffing, training, and employee development. In addition, the system is intended to help members of the acquisition workforce manage information regarding their education, training and experience.

The OFPP Act also established the FAI to foster and promote development of the acquisition workforce. The Director of FAI reports to the Administrator of OFPP and is responsible for operating, maintaining, and enhancing ACMIS. As shown in Figure 1 below, three different contractors have worked with ACMIS since its inception in 2002. System costs from inception to May 2011 total over \$5.3 million.

Figure 1: ACMIS Timeline

Contractor	Period of Performance	System Costs
A	January 2002 – April 2003	\$576,103
B	April 2003 – April 2008	\$1,276,907 ⁴
C (Current)	February 2008 – Present	\$3,532,049 ⁵
	Total	\$5,385, 059

Nonetheless, ACMIS has not provided the functionality agencies need. Poor system performance has resulted in user dissatisfaction and limited usefulness of system data. Currently, FAI is working to modify an existing system to function with the capabilities necessary to replace ACMIS. FAI officials advised that this system has no development

² Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act (Federal Acquisition Reform Act of 1995 amendments), 41 USC 433(d).

³ Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996, P.L 104-106, Section 4307. Acquisition Workforce.

⁴ This value was obtained from the GSA contracting officer. We were unable to verify this amount.

⁵ This value was obtained from an FAI official. We did not verify this amount.

cost to GSA, and FAI will be responsible for the yearly Operations and Maintenance (O&M) of the system. Estimated O&M costs for this system are \$75,000 for January through September 2011, and \$150,000 for FY2012.

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RESULTS OF REVIEW

Brief

ACMIS does not provide management with the type of information it needs to make informed budgeting, staffing, training, and employee development decisions. The system's data is unreliable and the system lacks functionality. These deficiencies are the result of inadequate system planning, design, and testing.

Also, management does not require that the system be used, and the ACMIS help desk has not been fully functional for an extended time period. These problems can be traced to poor program management and a lack of accountability on the part of GSA's Office of Acquisition Policy and FAI.

Further, GSA did not provide adequate contract administration and oversight, two recurring themes associated with other recent system failures at the agency.

As a result of these deficiencies, GSA has spent in excess of \$5.3 million in taxpayer funds for a system that is so ineffective that it must be replaced. In order to successfully develop a replacement system, the Office of Governmentwide Policy must take steps to address the deficiencies associated with ACMIS.

ACMIS Usefulness is Limited by Unreliable Data

ACMIS data is of limited value in helping manage GSA's acquisition workforce. The system frequently produces unreliable data because it contains duplicate, inaccurate, incomplete, missing and/or invalid records. For that reason, GSA maintains training and certification information in systems outside of ACMIS. ACMIS data is unreliable primarily because the system was poorly designed, not properly tested, and lacks adequate controls. Barriers to system access and a lax attitude toward the use of ACMIS have also contributed to data deficiencies. Careful attention to proper system planning, testing, management, and oversight is essential to avoid similar problems in the development of the replacement system.

Duplicate Records Exist. ACMIS maintains a record for each acquisition professional. This record contains basic personnel data, such as service computation date, name, job series number, etc. GSA downloads this information into ACMIS on a quarterly basis from data received from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). ACMIS also contains self-populated information including data related to an employee's education and experience. ACMIS links the OPM record to the individual's ACMIS profile via the employee's social security number. Accordingly, each person in the

acquisition workforce should have only one ACMIS account. Nevertheless, we found evidence of extensive duplication in the system.

FAI and the current contractor informed us that at one time over 14,000 duplicates existed in the system. To test the extent of this problem, we requested a listing of ACMIS users that are members of GSA's acquisition workforce.

The contractor provided a November 2009 report entitled "ACMIS GSA Users." The report listed 1,003 individual line items. After analyzing the listing and comparing personal identifiers, we concluded that the report contained 596 duplicate records.

Our testing indicated that poor data entry controls contributed to the duplication. For example, in some cases there were two records for the same individual because they were entered under different versions of the person's first name (i.e. "Jerome" versus "Jerry"). Proper system design and testing should prevent duplicate records; however, while the original ACMIS development contract contained requirements for proper system development protocol, we found no evidence that GSA ensured the contractor met those requirements.

Inaccurate and Incomplete Records Exist. ACMIS has a low rate of data accuracy and completeness. For example, the overall accuracy of the report generated for our duplicate testing was questionable. At the time we conducted the tests, there were at least 1,500 GSA employees classified in the Contracting Series (GS-1102) and this series is just one subset of all the job series that define the acquisition workforce. Since the first report generated by the system was incorrect, we had the contractor run additional reports. A second report, produced in December 2009, listed 3,639 GSA acquisition workforce personnel. A third report, also produced in December 2009, registered just over 5,000 GSA acquisition workforce personnel. Because none of the reports were in the same format or had comparable results, we were unable to determine which, if any, were accurate.

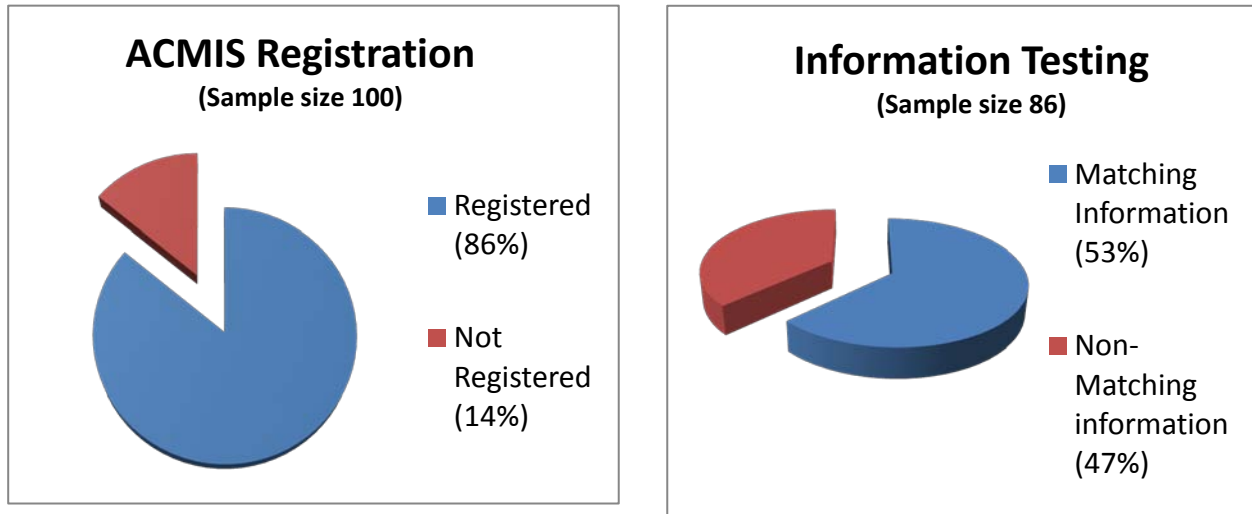
To further evaluate the accuracy of ACMIS data and its ability to help management, we compared information in the system to analogous information maintained outside the system. We selected records from five GSA regions (Northeast and Caribbean Region, Mid-Atlantic Region, Heartland Region, Greater Southwest Region and the Central Office in the Washington DC area) based on the number of series 1102s employees⁶ in those regions (the sample accounted for 58 percent of all series 1102s in GSA).

We selected a random sample of 100 records (20 from each region), which represented five percent of the total acquisition workforce in our universe. The testing included a comparison of the sampled individuals' ACMIS records to documentation maintained by regional officials. The OCAO advised us that due to lack of confidence in ACMIS data, the regions maintain training and certification records outside of ACMIS.

⁶ Per data obtained from the OCAO.

ACMIS indicated that 86 of the 100 individuals in our sample were registered in the system. Of those registered, we noted 32 (37 percent) had inconsistencies between their ACMIS and regional data.

Figure 2: ACMIS Registration and Matching Information Based on Audit Sample



We interviewed 22 of the individuals in the sample. Those not registered in ACMIS advised us that they were unaware of the system’s existence and the requirement to use the system. Registered individuals with incomplete ACMIS data attributed the discrepancies to problems encountered in using the system such as difficulties with passwords and frequent system log outs.

In addition, information regarding the qualifications of one individual not in the 1102 series could not be entered without first entering information that was irrelevant to their particular job. Specifically, the system required an “eligibility reason” when entering a contracting warrant. In this case, none of the eligibility options applied, yet the user had to select one in order to enter the warrant information into their ACMIS record. In our opinion, the underlying cause for this problem is that the system was originally designed to accept only the 1102 job series. It cannot accommodate other contracting job series unless the user enters required data which may not be applicable to that user.

Standard system development criteria calls for testing to ensure the design of the system allows for the efficient data entry. A system designed for the government-wide acquisition workforce should be flexible enough to accommodate the varying job series that fall under the definition of the acquisition workforce.

Also, some registered personnel advised us that they were unaware of the requirement to maintain data in ACMIS subsequent to registration. Further, some individuals knew about ACMIS and its purpose; however, because regional management did not emphasize using ACMIS, they did not view keeping their system information current to be a priority.

Further, there are no controls to ensure that data related to individuals who are no longer part of the acquisition workforce is removed from ACMIS. For example, we noted individuals in the system that had either left the agency or retired. The current contractor advised us that there is no procedure in place for removing such records from ACMIS. Other examples of data inaccuracies included individuals who registered in ACMIS but did not appear in the system and the presence of one individual in ACMIS who was not part of the acquisition work force and had never registered in the system.

Centralized Data Entry is Likely to Produce Better Accuracy. GSA does not require centralized ACMIS data entry, which may contribute to the inaccuracy of the system's data. Most of the GSA regions we reviewed require individuals to enter their own training and qualification updates into ACMIS. With individual entry, each member of the acquisition workforce is responsible for entering their own training, certification, and warrant information into ACMIS. Their incentive is that ACMIS data can be used to support their resumes when applying for a new position or a promotion. However, our testing and interviews indicated that because of heavy workloads, system access issues, and a lax attitude on the part of management, data entry was a low priority for most individuals. As a result, the error rate tended to be higher than when centralized data entry was used. In a region operating under the individual data entry method, the average ACMIS error rate was in excess of 68 percent, as compared to 29 percent in a region using centralized data entry.

Enforcement of System Usage is Needed. In part, ACMIS is ineffective because GSA has not emphasized its use. As indicated earlier in this report, while we found a high rate of registration, the extent of system use within GSA is less than desirable. Additionally, GSA has granted one agency a temporary exemption from the requirement to use ACMIS, and another agency has advised GSA that it will not enforce ACMIS use for its employees. Without enforcement of system use, management decisions will be based upon incomplete data, and the system will not meet its purpose.

In an email dated July 1, 2008, an FAI management official granted the United States Department of the Treasury a temporary exemption from using ACMIS. In addition, in October 2008, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) wrote a memorandum addressed to OFPP stating that it was ceasing use of ACMIS. DHS officials stated that they had experienced significant difficulties with the implementation and use of the system. Specifically, DHS indicated major systematic issues for DHS Headquarters and major functional issues for users (See Appendix B for a copy of the DHS memorandum). We found no evidence that FAI challenged this exemption. While we understand the reasons behind the exemptions, in the future consistent enforcement is needed for the system to serve its purpose.

In 2004, we recommended that the Senior Procurement Executive for GSA, in conjunction with the other GSA Services, Staff Offices and Regional Offices should create and implement quality control procedures for inputting and maintaining high

quality data within ACMIS⁷. Management's response to this recommendation indicated that the Office of Acquisition Policy would issue policy requiring the use of ACMIS; however, that office never issued the policy.

OPM Downloads May Contribute to Data Inaccuracies. There is some concern among the acquisition workforce that quarterly OPM downloads are causing data inaccuracies by overwriting information in ACMIS that has already been corrected in the system. In one example, an individual advised us that she had edited her ACMIS profile information to accurately reflect her personnel data, but after each OPM data download, she had to go back into ACMIS to correct the same information. We were unable to identify the extent of this problem; however, if GSA intends to continue to import data from OPM into the new system, GSA should ensure that controls exist to prevent overwriting of correct information.

In summary, despite the investment of time and money in ACMIS, GSA and at least two other government agencies rely on alternative methods to track training and education for the acquisition workforce because they cannot rely upon the system to maintain reliable data. Duplicate entries, data overwriting, and invalid records combine to cause major data inaccuracies.

We attribute the data reliability problems to

- (1) poor planning and system design;
- (2) inadequate system testing; and
- (3) poor contract administration.

Those responsible for implementing a replacement system should develop proper system controls to ensure data reliability so that the system serves its intended purpose. Planning should include processes to ensure that duplicate entries cannot occur, that OPM overwrites do not occur, and that invalid records are not a part of the system. In addition, in order for the system that replaces ACMIS to function to capacity, system use must be enforced. GSA should work with the OFPP to enforce system use government-wide. Further, GSA should mandate centralized data entry and advocate centralized data entry government-wide.

Recommendations

For the system that will replace ACMIS, we recommend that the Associate Administrator, Office of Governmentwide Policy:

1. Implement controls during system planning and development that will help ensure data reliability.

⁷ Audit of FSS's Acquisition Workforce Qualifications. Report Number A030147/F/A/VO4004, dated March 25, 2004.

2. Work with the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) to establish controls regarding agency accountability to ensure system use and government-wide accuracy. Such controls may include centralized data entry.

ACMIS Usefulness is Also Limited by Poor Functionality

Deficiencies in the functionality of ACMIS such as a low functioning reporting tool, system access barriers, and counterintuitive navigation of the system frustrate users and contribute to underutilization of the system. ACMIS also lacks features to provide system users with important tracking information about training and certifications. Finally, a lack of functional system interfaces results in further system inefficiencies. Again, the primary causes of these deficiencies are poor system design and inadequate testing.

System Reporting Function is Ineffective. The ACMIS reporting tool is difficult to use and does not produce reliable data. Without an operable reporting feature, it is virtually impossible to extract the summary data management needs from the system.

The ACMIS reporting tool, called Informatica, is a stand-alone application developed by the Defense Acquisition University. Informatica interfaces with ACMIS to run reports, and while we recognize that a summary report is only as good as the data in the system, we found Informatica very difficult to use. For this type of system to be of optimum benefit, its reporting tool should be self-guided and should cater to the specific needs of individual users. This is not the case with Informatica. Its user instructions consist of PowerPoint visuals with no accompanying written instructions. Additionally, Informatica's working terminology is geared to those with a technical background and an advanced knowledge of how to sort data. Users we interviewed advised us that they either don't know how to use the tool or have tried to use it only to obtain reports that were invalid.

Earlier in this report, we discussed the difficulty the current contractor had in producing a reliable report for our duplicate record tests. Interestingly, the contractor did not use Informatica to generate the reports because they consider it to be unreliable. Instead, the contractor compiled the information by directly accessing the database and manipulating the data to attempt to produce the requested information.

To test some of the assertions made by acquisition workforce personnel regarding the usefulness of Informatica, we attempted to run a report on GSA's acquisition workforce. The instructions were difficult to follow and often left us guessing as to what to do next. In addition, we experienced several system log outs and repeatedly had to restart our queries. After several attempts, we were unable to obtain the desired information.

According to the OCAO, there are approximately 1,500 series 1102s in the GSA acquisition workforce. However, the Informatica report we generated indicated more than 14,000 series 1102s in GSA. This report was grossly inaccurate, as there are only approximately 12,000 total employees at GSA. We also attempted to develop the

report in Informatica using several different filters to sort by region and by employee name. Neither of these filters resulted in a satisfactory report, and neither management nor the contractor was able to explain the reason for the obvious discrepancy.

Figure 3: Informatica Report Results

Agency	Total # of 1102 Employees
Department of Agriculture	64
Department of Commerce	42
Department of Education	14
Department of Energy	23
Department of Health and Human Services	12
Department of Housing and Urban Development	25
Department of Interior	177
Department of Labor	33
Department of Transportation	112
Department of Treasury	47
Department of Veterans Affairs	136
Environmental Protection Agency	77
General Services Administration	14,850
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	12

Another problem we noted is that Informatica contains a list of frequently generated or “canned” reports for users to access. However, we found these canned reports to be out of date and could find no information on how to run current reports.

Management has not widely used the reporting features for ACMIS, and in instances where they have used the reports, they risk making poor decisions based on bad information. Ideally, ACMIS would operate with a fully functional reporting system; however, the original contract did not include appropriate requirements for performance regarding the reporting feature. A proper pilot test prior to full implementation would have revealed problems with the tool. We found no evidence of system testing, including a pilot test, prior to system implementation, even though the original system development contract required the contractor to perform this testing.

System is Difficult to Navigate and Access Barriers Exist. ACMIS is not designed for ease of navigation. As a result, maintaining updated information in the system is unnecessarily cumbersome for users. Consequently, many simply stopped using it.

There is no consistent main menu to provide users the ability to move about the system as needed. In addition, users cannot back-track in the system in a logical manner, which causes frustration. Users wanted to see an easily navigable menu with clear options for a home page, a “back/return” function, and other commonly used features.

System users also had difficulty accessing the system due to unwieldy requirements regarding system passwords. The system requires frequent password resets relative to how often users access it. For example, every time a user completes a training course they access the system to update their information. Accordingly, if the system requires a password change every 90 days, the user may have to reset their password several times in any given year. In addition, ACMIS does not allow users to reset their own password; they must contact the help desk. Further, ACMIS and Informatica require separate passwords. We noted that the majority of the calls to the ACMIS help desk were related to problems encountered in resetting system passwords.

Password requirements for the system that will replace ACMIS should balance the need for security with concern for ease of use. Requiring an automatic password reset function in the system that will replace ACMIS would prevent these problems.

Useful Information Tracking is Needed. ACMIS lacks an efficient tracking system that would allow employees to monitor their progression towards certain certifications and warrants. In addition, tracking assists with managing training requirements, a function in calculating Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credits accumulated by individual. The system that will replace ACMIS should have the functionality to provide this basic tracking information.

Lack of Interface Capabilities Results in System Inefficiencies. Insufficient planning during the initial system rollout may have caused the development team to overlook elements of the system that are beneficial to all users. ACMIS lacks two key interfaces that would promote efficiency and accuracy: (1) links between ACMIS and acquisition training sites, and (2) an email interchange notifying users of data updates. In addition, OGP should consider the potential for additional interfaces that transfer information between agency specific systems and the ACMIS replacement system. Such interfaces were not considered in developing ACMIS.

An interface is a recurring, structured exchange of data between computer systems/applications. Since ACMIS compiles information about the training and education of the government-wide acquisition workforce, it would be useful for the system to interface with government-wide and agency-specific training sites. For example, ACMIS should interface with FAI's training website and GSA's Online University. These and other sites allow acquisition workforce personnel to take classes that count toward certifications and/or warrants. Such interfaces would allow this training information to automatically propagate into ACMIS. In addition, an email notification interface would help employees verify the accuracy of education, training, and warrant information in ACMIS, and alert supervisors of updates or changes requiring their approval.

A major benefit of such interfaces is that they help minimize redundancies and duplications in other agency systems. For instance, personnel systems, including GSA's Comprehensive Human Resources Integrated System (CHRIS), contain employee data, including job series and training certifications, which are also data

elements of ACMIS. Accordingly, GSA should ensure, to the maximum extent possible, that the system that will replace ACMIS can interface with existing systems.

As discussed above, poor system functionality has discouraged users and has limited the usefulness of ACMIS. An ineffective reporting function conveys unreliable data and frustrates users. In addition, ACMIS has system navigation deficiencies and access barriers that should be corrected with the new system. ACMIS also lacks useful information that would be beneficial to users monitoring progress towards completion of training and education. Further, there is need for interface capabilities. These deficiencies are the result of insufficient system planning, design, and testing. For the reporting tool in particular, the original contract did not include the appropriate requirements for performance. Planning for the new system should include controls to ensure proper functionality, including thorough testing.

Recommendation

For the system that will replace ACMIS, we recommend that the Associate Administrator, Office of Governmentwide Policy:

3. Ensure development of appropriate functionality, including system navigation, reporting and tracking features, system interfaces, and an automatic password reset function.

Poor Availability and Responsiveness of Help Desk Increases User Frustration

ACMIS users have experienced poor access to and responsiveness from the ACMIS help desk. The primary cause was a faulty phone system which program managers allowed to continue for an extended time period. Poor planning of help desk objectives and insufficient performance measures for help desk deliverables contributed to these problems. In the future, the contracting team for the system that will replace ACMIS must ensure help desk functionality and performance by developing meaningful measures for contract deliverables that hold all parties accountable for performance.

The current contract requires the contractor to furnish help desk support and allows the contractor to use government facilities, including the phone system, to provide this service. As early as July 2008, the contractor reported that the help desk was not fully functional due to problems with the phone system. The contractor asserted that the government furnished equipment was faulty. However, neither the COTR nor FAI took action to address this issue.

We tested the responsiveness of the help desk in June and September 2009. We made three call attempts, one of which was answered quickly by a contract employee; the other two were directed to the help desk voicemail system after multiple rings. The contractor advised us that this happens because the phone system does not “roll over” to a different line if the main line is busy. Therefore, users do not always receive timely assistance.

In addition to the phone system issue, we found that the current contract indicated no specific performance measures related to the help desk.

Figure 4: Current Contract Requirements for ACMIS Help Desk Support

REQUIRED SERVICE (Performance Requirements)	STANDARD (Performance Standards)	METHOD OF SURVEILLANCE (Quality Assurance)
Contractor to provide Help desk Support, ACMIS Super Administrator and Project Manager to include conducting agency outreach, agency visits, meetings, and updates to FAI manager in a timely manner with qualified staff.	The Contractor-managed ACMIS shall be available 80% of the time during non-peak hours, and shall be available for use at least 99.9% of the time for peak hours from 6:00 a.m. Eastern time to 7:00 p.m. Pacific time business days.	Customer satisfaction (COTR, ACM [Acquisition Career Manager]).

In contrast, more useful standards might state that:

- All calls to the help desk are answered within three rings.
- 90 percent of customer feedback forms indicate that the help desk staff was helpful, responsive, and courteous.

To assure the quality of help desk support for the ACMIS replacement system, contract deliverables should include metrics like response time and customer satisfaction. Performance measures related to these deliverables need to be specific, measurable, and hold all parties involved accountable for their related performance.

Recommendations

For the system that will replace ACMIS, we recommend that the Associate Administrator, Office of Governmentwide Policy:

4. Ensure contracts awarded for the development, implementation, and maintenance of the system contain proper requirements related to user support, including development of specific help desk deliverables.
5. Ensure controls are in place for proper oversight of help desk performance.

Underlying Causes of System Failure

Mismanagement of the ACMIS system has resulted in significant expenditure of taxpayers' dollars. To date, GSA has spent in excess of \$5.3 million on a system that cannot be used for its intended purpose. The ACMIS failed due to: (1) poor program management and oversight and (2) a lack of adherence to system development and

maintenance guidelines. Unfortunately, these are recurring themes common to other GSA system development failures in recent years. Proper oversight and contract management, as well as strict adherence to system development protocol, is essential for GSA to avoid another failure.

GSA Failed to Ensure the Original Contractor Delivered a Fully Functional System. GSA awarded a task order for the development of ACMIS on December 21, 2001, using a Department of Commerce contract vehicle.⁸ The task order contained a base performance period of approximately nine months to develop, test, implement, and provide ad-hoc support for ACMIS, with four one-year option periods for operation and maintenance of the system. The task order performance work statement called for the development of a fully functional system within the base period; however, there is no evidence that GSA ensured that the contractor delivered the system and met the specific contract deliverables. For example, the task order required the contractor to submit a detailed program management plan for ACMIS with milestones for:

- Design and development of each major system component;
- Pilot testing;
- Formal submission of the completed system to GSA for evaluation and acceptance; and
- Detailed procedures for quality control, security, configuration management, and pilot testing and demonstration.

However, we found no evidence that the contractor delivered the program management plan as required.

The development and testing requirements also stated that the contractor was to develop the system components, demonstrate functionality, and complete pilot testing according to the scheduled dates in the program management plan. In addition, system delivery requirements stated that the contractor was to deliver the system to GSA for evaluation and acceptance no later than February 28, 2002.⁹ In conjunction with system delivery, the contractor was also to provide certification by a third party that the system met all applicable security requirements, and upon notification of GSA acceptance of the system, install ACMIS to full operating capacity. Finally, the task order called for the contractor to deliver system documentation such as a data dictionary; all system plans and designs; server requirements and configuration; specifications for all programs, web pages, reports, and procedures; installation and configuration instructions; and user manuals and instructional materials.

The monitoring method for all of these requirements was inspection by the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR). However, neither former contracting officials nor the system owner (FAI) could produce the contract file and were unable to produce any documentation indicating that the contractor fulfilled the task order

⁸ Commerce Information Technology Solutions (COMMITTS).

⁹ On 1/17/2002, GSA issued a modification to the contract extending the delivery date to June 10, 2002.

requirements. Despite the absence of evidence to show the contractor delivered a fully functional system as required, payment records indicated that GSA paid the contractor \$576,103 over approximately a two-year period.

GSA's mismanagement of the initial ACMIS system development contract was a critical error. Available documentation suggests that aggressive time schedules imposed by GSA at the time contributed to the outcome of a poorly designed and tested system. The "ACMIS Technical Questions and Clarifications" document, which provides a record of the exchange between GSA and the contractor, revealed that the contractor expressed concerns about time constraints GSA placed on the project; specifically, to have a system delivered within 5 months of award. The contractor indicated that it could be necessary to bypass some quality assurance steps to meet the deadline.

GSA Did Not Properly Manage the Follow-on Contract. In 2003, GSA awarded a contract to operate and manage FAI. Included in the contract was a line item for operation and maintenance of ACMIS. The Statement of Objectives for the contract indicated that the deliverables for the ACMIS line item were "As defined in current task order" and included the current task order information as an attachment. Because the previous task order included system development as a major aspect, establishing the identical deliverables for the follow-on contract that was supposed to be for hosting, and operation and maintenance only, was not appropriate and represents further evidence that GSA never obtained the fully developed system as required by the first contract. In any case, no evidence exists that GSA ever obtained the deliverables from the follow-on contractor either. Under this contract, GSA paid the contractor nearly \$1.3 million for ACMIS operation and maintenance through April 2008.

In 2008, GSA awarded a new contract for ACMIS operation and maintenance to a different contractor (the current contractor). Both the current contractor and the COTR advised us that the previous contractor did not turn over the required system documentation, and that the absence of this critical documentation has negatively impacted the current contractor's ability to operate and maintain the system. Based on the contract requirements, GSA should have ensured the previous contractor delivered all system documentation before remitting payment. GSA officials could not provide evidence of steps taken to ensure that the Government received the contract deliverables from the previous contractor.

Inadequate Attention to System Development Life Cycle Principles is a Recurring Theme at GSA. In addition to contract administration deficiencies, the ongoing data reliability problems with ACMIS suggest inadequate attention to proper system development, implementation, and maintenance protocol. GSA Order CIO [Chief Information Officer] 2140.3 - Systems Development Life Cycle (SDLC) Policy, issued September 29, 2006, requires all GSA Service and Staff Offices to adhere to a structured methodology for systems development, implementation, and operation. SDLC is a disciplined approach to systems development, implementation, and maintenance that places responsibilities on the system owner for continuing development decisions. The GSA Order also requires, among other items, the

maintenance of system development documentation and appropriate quality control and assurance mechanisms throughout the system lifecycle.

GSA's SDLC Guidance Handbook outlines the SDLC phases, activities, and roles and responsibilities throughout the lifecycle of a system. The objective of the guidance is to provide standardized, proven practices to system owners, program managers, project managers, integrated project team members, system analysts, designers and developers, and system customers to use when developing, modernizing, or enhancing needed systems. The GSA handbook cites the following specific objectives of SDLC protocol:

- To reduce the risk of project failure;
- To consider business, functional, data, and technical requirements throughout the system life cycle;
- To identify management and technical issues as early as possible;
- To foster realistic expectations of what a system will and will not provide;
- To balance programmatic, technical, management, and cost aspects of the proposed system development, modernization or enhancement;
- To encourage periodic assessment of existing systems to determine if they still are effective;
- To measure progress and status for effective and timely corrective actions;
- To support effective resource management and budget planning;
- To better position the agency to meet current and future business requirements.

The conditions we found related to ACMIS are particularly troubling in light of previous GSA system failures in recent years where auditors have identified similar causes. In August 2002, GSA's Federal Technology Service (FTS) contracted with a firm to develop GSA Preferred (also known as 3GS) to replace existing major systems and databases used to support the FTS IT Solutions business processes. In 2004, our report on GSA Preferred¹⁰ identified areas of project and technical risk with GSA Preferred requiring prompt management attention. Among the problems identified and/or the root causes were an aggressive development and implementation timeline and the need for completion of comprehensive system testing, which we've also identified as ACMIS deficiencies. In addition, we performed a review as a result of a 2006 hotline complaint involving GSA Preferred¹¹ that identified evidence of project mismanagement, among other problems. In addition to confirming the findings of the earlier OIG report, the hotline review also found that management could not verify the total dollars spent on GSA Preferred, which we also found with ACMIS. In January 2006, GSA decided to discontinue the use of GSA Preferred and transfer data back to the previous systems.

¹⁰ Review of the Federal Technology Service's Third Generation System (3GS), Report Number A030002/T/T/Z04003, dated February 11, 2004.

¹¹ Hotline Complaint – GSA Preferred, Report Number A050163T/A/Z06002, dated March 1, 2006.

Another GSA system failure with similarities to ACMIS is the GSA OCAO's Applied Learning Center (ALC). In September 2004, the OCAO launched a competency assessment tool for acquisition professionals developed to measure skill-gaps and assist GSA in meeting the requirements of the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996.¹² Development and support of the ALC cost the Government approximately \$6.6 million until the OCAO shut down the system in May 2006. In 2008, we performed a review of acquisitions within the OCAO in response to an OIG Hotline complaint.¹³ This report cited issues regarding the validity and integrity as reasons for cancellation of the ALC.

Additional problems and associated causes identified in the audit report from 2008 that may also exist with the ACMIS system failure are

- poor contract management and oversight,
- lack of adequate documentation retention,
- incomplete information obtained on deliverables prior to payment to the contractor for services, and
- policies and procedures not always adhered to during key phases in the award and administration of the contract.

Poor program management and oversight and a lack of adherence to system development and maintenance guidelines are two major underlying causes of the failure of ACMIS. Evidence of the mismanagement of ACMIS has resulted in GSA never obtaining the operable system outlined in the original contract, and ultimately a significant waste to the taxpayers. Unfortunately, system failures at GSA have been a recurrence resulting from contract mismanagement and inadequate adherence to system development life cycle requirements. Controls should be established to ensure proper oversight and accountability for the development, implementation and maintenance of a system to replace ACMIS. By ensuring proper contract and program management, including adherence to system development guidelines, GSA will be assured a system that more adequately aligns with its intended purpose.

Recommendations

For the system that will replace ACMIS, we recommend that the Associate Administrator, Office of Governmentwide Policy:

6. Establish controls to ensure proper oversight and accountability for the development, implementation, and maintenance of the system that will replace ACMIS, including contract management.

¹² The Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 requires that civilian agencies establish policies and procedures for the management of the acquisition workforce.

¹³ Hotline Complaint – Acquisitions with the Office of the Chief Acquisition Officer, Report Number A070046/O/A/F08011, dated July 30, 2008.

7. Ensure that the development, implementation, and maintenance of the system that will replace ACMIS adhere to system development life cycle guidelines, including applicable GSA Orders and the GSA System Development Life Cycle (SDLC) Guidance Handbook.

CONCLUSION

Despite a substantial investment of time, effort and taxpayer money in ACMIS, the system has failed to meet its intended purpose. It does not provide the reliable data that management needs to make informed decisions regarding budgeting, staffing, training, and employee development. The deficiencies with ACMIS are attributable primarily to poor program management and oversight by the GSA Office of Acquisition Policy and FAI. Additionally, GSA has not enforced the required use of the system.

Major systematic and functional issues with ACMIS have resulted in GSA and at least two other government agencies relying upon alternative methods for tracking the data related to the training and education of their acquisition workforces. In addition, system functionality deficiencies have caused inefficient data entry and an unusable reporting mechanism. Further, the lack of a fully operational help desk has increased user frustration.

As GSA moves forward in implementing a system to replace ACMIS, it is critical for the Office of Governmentwide Policy and FAI to ensure that the deficiencies with ACMIS and other recent system failures at GSA do not recur. Adequate planning, system design, and testing would have prevented these problems. Attention to system development lifecycle principles, improved contract management, and accountability for development, implementation and maintenance of the new system are essential to assure success of the new system. In implementing a new system, GSA should also ensure that system functionality includes useful tracking features and essential interface capabilities.

Management Comments

The Associate Administrator, Office of Governmentwide Policy, concurred with the audit findings and recommendations. Management's written comments to the draft report are included in their entirety as Appendix C in this report.

Internal Controls

We limited our assessment of internal controls to those related to the Acquisition Career Management Information System. Specifically, the audit team limited the review of internal controls to (1) the accuracy and usefulness of ACMIS, (2) the controls over contract development and management and administration of ACMIS, and (3) the ACMIS system controls. We provided recommendations to strengthen and improve the

current and future controls associated with the use of ACMIS, and its successor, as discussed in the Results of Review and Recommendations sections of this report.

APPENDIXES

REVIEW OF THE ACQUISITION CAREER MANAGEMENT
INFORMATION SYSTEM (ACMIS)
REPORT NUMBER A090023/O/A/F11006

Appendix A
Objective, Scope and Methodology

The objective of this review was to assess the reliability of the data contained in the ACMIS. Specifically, we evaluated the usefulness of the data in making management decisions regarding budgeting, staffing, training, and employee development.

We performed the following steps to answer our review objective:

- Reviewed relevant audit reports from GSA's Office of Inspector General (OIG) and the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO);
- Reviewed the *FY 2005 and FY 2007 Annual Report on the Federal Acquisition Workforce* by the Federal Acquisition Institute;
- Reviewed the results of the June 2005 – July 2006 workforce study performed by Beacon Associates, Inc.;
- Met with GSA management officials from the Federal Acquisition Service, the Public Building Service, other GSA Staff offices and the Office of the Chief Acquisition Officer;
- Reviewed a judgmental sample of acquisition workforce personnel training and education information in five GSA regions;
- Interviewed acquisition workforce personnel in three of the five sampled regions;
- Performed limited testing in ACMIS and Informatica¹⁴ to verify system accuracy;
- Reviewed GSA's policy and guidance related to the definition of acquisition workforce;
- Reviewed policy and guidance related to the use of ACMIS by GSA acquisition workforce personnel;
- Reviewed ACMIS contract and program documentation;
- Reviewed relevant policy and guidance, including OFPP Policy Letter 05-01, Office of Personnel Management (OPM) qualification standards for the contracting series 1102 (series 1102), the GSA Service Acquisition Reform Act of 2001, and the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996;
- Attended training sessions related to ACMIS and Informatica at the GSA Expo in 2009;
- Performed a limited review of the FTS Third Generation System (3GS)/GSA Preferred;
- Performed a limited review of the Applied Learning Center (ALC).

¹⁴ Informatica is the reporting tool for ACMIS.

This review was originally planned to assess the status of GSA's implementation of the acquisition workforce qualification provisions of the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996. However, after survey work, we determined that the risks associated with ACMIS warranted immediate review.

We conducted our review from February 2009 through April 2010 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the review to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our review objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our review objectives.

REVIEW OF THE ACQUISITION CAREER MANAGEMENT
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Appendix B

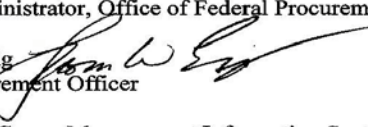
DHS memorandum re: ACMIS Performance Issues

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528



October 31, 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR: Lesley Field
Acting Administrator, Office of Federal Procurement Policy

FROM: Thomas Essig 
Chief Procurement Officer

Subject: Acquisition Career Management Information System (ACMIS)

DHS remains cognizant that OFPP designed ACMIS as the system of record to assist civilian agencies in managing their acquisition workforce and to help individuals manage their education, training and experience information. However, DHS has experienced significant difficulties in implementing the system. Both users and administrators have been unable to utilize the system as envisioned. As a result, DHS will cease requiring its 1102s to register in the system.

ACMIS is an older system developed more than 20 years ago. Despite all of the upgrades and effort, it is still an older IT architecture attempting to integrate with newer IT registration and Learning Management Systems. As a result, we have experienced great difficulty entering and extracting information. Individual workforce members also have challenges working in and with the ACMIS system. Unfortunately, in its current state, it causes more frustration than assistance in our efforts to better manage our acquisition workforce. Although we have communicated these problems to GSA / FAI over the last several months, resolution has not been reached.

Attached is a document with a sampling of the many problems we are experiencing. The most significant issue is the lack of help desk support and assistance from the GSA program manager to resolve systematic and reporting issues. This problem makes it virtually impossible for us to ensure that our workforce will be able to access, register and populate the ACMIS database as required.

These difficulties with ACMIS have discouraged willing compliance, caused unnecessary frustration, and burdened our already taxed workforce. Until these issues are substantially resolved, DHS does not plan to enforce the requirement to register with and use ACMIS. In the interim, I will continue to pursue alternatives enabling me to more effectively meet the reporting requirements of OPM and OFPP.

Current alternatives that I am pursuing to meet the needs of the DHS workforce include, but are not limited to:

- Centralizing acquisition training across the department. This includes centrally managing the courses offered through the Federal Acquisition Institute, the Defense Acquisition University, and DHS sponsored training classes, both commercial and developed.
- Leveraging an existing system utilized by the Navy, Army and Air Force to establish a DHS Enterprise-Wide Student Registration and Certification System.
- Partnering with the DHS Chief Human Capital Officer to code all DHS acquisition billets to allow visibility into the right training and certification levels of each position at the time of hiring.

I will keep you informed of the progress of these initiatives. My point of contact regarding this matter is Donna Jenkins, who can be reached at donna.jenkins@dhs.gov or 202-447-5257.

Attachment

**Acquisition Career Management Information System (ACMIS) Performance Issues
pertaining to Department of Homeland Security**

In the course of DHS' initiative to utilize ACMIS as the system of record to manage the acquisition workforce, a number of performance issues have arisen. Several of these issues are directly preventing the Department's effective use of the system, while others are simply widespread end-user concerns that have gone unaddressed. A detailed list follows below.

Major Systemic Issues for DHS Headquarters:

- No DHS headquarters personnel other than the ACM have been provided with access to the Informatica Poweranalyzer tool, nor has anyone received training for its use. This tool is what allows DHS managers to view reports on many users at a time, all employees within an agency, statistics regarding selected employees, and various other related abilities. Without access, only one user's record can be viewed at a time by DHS managers granted administrator rights in the system, and the comprehensive view of system records necessary for workforce management is not possible. FAI has repeatedly acknowledged that Informatica access and training requests are described to them as top customer concerns government-wide; assurances that access and training schedules are forthcoming "within a week," "within two weeks," and "soon" have gone on for more than ten months.
- The division of ACMIS records into "agencies" (intended to be top-level federal agencies, such as Cabinet-level agencies) and "bureaus" (subdivisions, such as DHS components) is improperly arranged, resulting in a series of problems that hinder workforce management.
 - Employees registering in the system for the first time must identify themselves by selecting their agency from a list of 814 top-level "agencies", several of which duplicate DHS components. The list also includes many ambiguous and some nonexistent agencies, including "Ohio Field Office," 6 entries for "Office of Inspector General," 7 entries for "Office of the Inspector General," and "Immigration and Naturalization Service."
 - System administrator rights in ACMIS are divided up by agency, leaving DHS administrators with no visibility into records for which an employee has selected the incorrect agency. Several DHS components are mistakenly listed among the 814 top-level agencies, including "Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement" and "Transportation Security Administration," making such user errors in selecting their agency understandably commonplace. Even if access was granted to the Informatica tool, this issue would prevent DHS from being able to generate a single comprehensive view of the acquisition workforce.
 - Because of the agency/administrator rights division, employees who registered while at previous jobs and now have username/password issues are left in limbo. Calling the helpdesk to request a password reset only results in emails being sent to the employee's now-defunct email address at the previous agency. Since accounts are tied to social security numbers, the system prevents individuals from creating duplicate accounts to bypass the problem, leaving system engineers

manually locating and correcting individual records as the only way for employees to regain access.

- Some components within DHS are not listed as available “bureaus” for employees to choose from, forcing managers to create workarounds in order to populate ACMIS with information that is as close to correct as the system allows. Unrelated offices are also listed as DHS components, such as “Ohio University Southern Management”.
- FAI has described these problems as repairable, delayed only by workload issues at FAI. From April 2008 onward, FAI has responded by saying that any potential agency/bureau reorganization is OPM’s responsibility. We have requested that FAI provide a POC at OPM to communicate with regarding this matter, but have received no response.
- In the October 2007 upgrade of ACMIS, the “Career Responsibility” section of the website was removed. This functionality allowed individuals to identify themselves as belonging to particular career fields (such as COTR and PM) independent of their series. Without this functionality, ACMIS has no way to track an important portion of the acquisition workforce, that portion being those individuals that do fall under the definition of acquisition workforce but are not certified. If DHS is left unable to track these individuals within ACMIS, they will have to be tracked in a separate system, undermining ACMIS’ stated purpose as the system of record.

Major Functional Issues for Users:

- DHS has received reports of large numbers of people who are simply unable to register, either due to glitches in the registration process on the website or because they never receive the system emails giving them their passwords. The helpdesk has been largely unresponsive.
- The ability of employees to correct their agency/bureau information is of vital importance as described above, but is very difficult for users to access and update. Users must currently go through the steps of updating their experience information for a FAC certification to reach the proper page. When users enter experience information, ACMIS automatically marks the last job entered as the user’s current job, regardless of the employment dates associated with that job, resulting in additional widespread errors that place records under the wrong agency.
- Usernames do not appear to be visible to administrators except under rare circumstances. When employees ask DHS administrators to confirm that they are using the correct username, administrators are unable to assist. The only known instance to date of usernames being visible to an administrator is in system emails notifying that accounts have been suspended due to five or more unsuccessful login attempts. Users have reported that the ACMIS helpdesk also cannot see usernames associated with accounts, creating a situation where forgetting a username is a difficult problem to solve.
- The ability to enter freeform training is difficult for users to access. Currently, users appear to be able to enter training not specifically named in FAC requirements only by going into the continuous learning function of a FAC career field and entering data there, whether or not it is actually related to continuous learning.

- Users are barred from using a predecessor course as equivalency to more than one currently required course. This is inconsistent with the actual equivalencies, as (for example), if an employee has completed CON 101, s/he is considered to have met the requirements for CON 110, 111, and 112, but users are prevented from entering this information into the system. Similarly, there is no way for users to enter groups of predecessor courses that count for a single current course, such as Price Analysis, Cost Analysis, and Negotiation Techniques allowing an employee to meet the requirement for CON 120. Without this functionality, many employees will simply be unable to have accurate training records within ACMIS.

Minor and Upcoming Issues:

- ACMIS' Continuous Learning tracking function informs the user that he or she must complete a certain number of CLPs within the "Current Two Year Window: 10/01/2007 to 09/30/2009." This is misleading to the user, as Continuous Learning requirements are dynamic, based on the individual's date of certification, rather than the entire workforce having to complete their continuous learning simultaneously. When asked about the problem, FAI responded that it was their understanding that this functions as intended.
- FAI has not provided clear responses to questions regarding the future expandability and possible customization of the system as DHS grows and evolves. Will additional career fields be able to be added as the Acquisition Workforce within DHS expands to include them, such as Test & Evaluation? Can sections be created for DHS-specific certifications that will list the certification requirements and guide users through entering that data, much as the existing FAC fields do? If either of these things cannot be done, DHS will be forced to maintain separate records, continuing the problem of parallel data systems.
- FAC-C and FAC-P/PM appear in the list of Agency Certifications for DHS. Because these already appear under Federal Certifications and Qualifications with the ability to add more complete records for them, they should be removed from this list of agency-specific certifications to avoid confusion.
- When employees enter warrant data, a required section is "I am eligible to hold this warrant because:" but the only options available are "My warrant was issued before January 1, 2007 by my current agency" and "I have a waiver." A field indicating "I am certified at the appropriate level to hold this warrant" is needed to enable people to enter correct information.

REVIEW OF THE ACQUISITION CAREER MANAGEMENT
INFORMATION SYSTEM (ACMIS)
REPORT NUMBER A090023/O/A/F11006

Appendix C
Management Comments



GSA Office of Governmentwide Policy

JUN 27 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR KENNETH L. CROMPTON
DEPUTY ASSISTANT INSPECTOR GENERAL
FOR ACQUISITION AUDITS (JA)

FROM: KATHLEEN M. TURCO *Kathleen M. Turco*
ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR (M)

SUBJECT: GSA - OIG Draft Report – “Review of the Acquisition Career
Management Information System (ACMIS)” (A090023)

Thank you for your willingness to work with the Office of Governmentwide Policy, Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) and for the opportunity to provide comments on the report. We have reviewed the draft audit report and concur with the seven recommendations in the report, as noted in the attached response. The FAI will begin creating actions plans to address the recommendations.

Please contact me at (202) 501-8880 if you have any questions. Your staff may contact Ms. Donna Jenkins, Director of the Federal Acquisition Institute at (202) 501-3775 or Ms. Jenny Deasy of my office at (202) 219-0420.

Enclosure

U.S. General Services Administration
1275 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20417
www.gsa.gov

**Office of Governmentwide Policy (OGP) Comments on the OIG Draft Report:
"Review of the Acquisition Career Management Information System (ACMIS)"
(A090023)**

General Comments

Thank you for meeting with the Office of Governmentwide Policy (OGP) on May 2, 2011. We appreciate your considering our comments on the draft report and incorporating our suggestions to help address these concerns.

As discussed at the meeting, several key changes have taken place since the inception of your investigation. In 2010, Ms. Martha Johnson, Administrator, General Services Administration, appointed new executive leadership, including the Associate Administrator for Governmentwide Policy and the Director of the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI). Last year, the newly appointed Associate Administrator and FAI Director promptly recognized the need to take steps to reduce the management risks in decision-making regarding budget, staffing, training and acquisition workforce employee development at GSA and other civilian agencies. Among these steps was undertaking the replacement of the ACMIS system, which leadership recognized was ineffective due to its systematic deficiencies and data inefficiencies.

In collaboration with its stakeholders, OGP/FAI planned to replace the ACMIS system by partnering with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and leveraging an existing DHS system. Through this partnership, OGP and DHS have launched a new, enhanced system, the Federal Acquisition Institute Application System (FAITAS 2.0). FAITAS 2.0 is robust and has been designed for ease of use to the acquisition workforce and management decision-makers. The Administration is supportive of the system migration from ACMIS and is coordinating with FAI to ensure that agencies use FAITAS 2.0.

The recommendations offered by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) will be addressed as categorized in the audit report.

ACMIS Usefulness is Limited by Unreliable Data:
Within this section, OIG made two recommendations:

1. **Implement controls during system planning and development that will help ensure data reliability.**
2. **Work with the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) to establish controls regarding agency accountability to ensure system use and government-wide data accuracy. Such controls may include centralized data entry.**

Concur. OGP/FAI will implement controls to ensure data reliability within the ACMIS replacement system. OGP/FAI continues to coordinate with the Administration (OFPP) in the development of government-wide policies, guidance and implementation, including steps to ensure government-wide use of the replacement system.

ACMIS Usefulness is Also Limited by Poor Functionality

Within this section, OIG made one recommendation:

- 3. Ensure development of appropriate functionality, including system navigation, reporting and tracking features, system interfaces, and an automatic password reset function.**

Concur. OGP/FAI is working with agencies to ensure the development of appropriate functionality, including system navigation and tracking features, and system interfaces. Also, OGP/FAI will ensure that an automatic password reset function is established.

Poor Availability and Responsiveness of Help Desk Increases User Frustration

Within this section, OIG made two recommendations:

- 4. Ensure contracts awarded for the development, implementation, and maintenance of the system contain proper requirements related to user support, including development of specific help desk deliverables.**
- 5. Ensure controls are in place for proper oversight of help desk performance.**

Concur. Utilizing the executive partnership between FAI and DHS, all contracts awarded for the development, implementation, and maintenance of the system will contain proper requirements related to user support. FAI will independently manage the helpdesk efforts and will establish controls to ensure proper oversight performance of the contractor, including the development of specific helpdesk deliverables.

Underlying Causes of System Failure

Within this section, OIG made two recommendations:

- 6. Establish controls to ensure proper oversight and accountability for the development, implementation, and maintenance of the system that will replace ACMIS, including contract management.**
- 7. Ensure that the development, implementation, and maintenance of the system that will replace ACMIS adhere to system development life cycle guidelines including applicable GSA Orders and the GSA System Development Life Cycle Guidance Handbook.**

Concur. OGP/FAI will coordinate the system replacement through its entire life cycle with the GSA Office of the Chief Information Officer and the GSA-OGP Office of Technology Strategy.

REVIEW OF THE ACQUISITION CAREER MANAGEMENT
INFORMATION SYSTEM (ACMIS)
REPORT NUMBER A090023/O/A/F11006

Appendix D
Report Distribution

Associate Administrator, Office of Governmentwide Policy (M)

Internal Control and Audit Division (BEI)

Assistant Inspector General for Auditing (JA)

Director, Audit Planning, Policy, and Operations (JAO)

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