



## BRIEFLY...

### DEPARTMENT OF LABOR NEEDS IMPROVEMENTS IN MANAGING ITS RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR CAPTURING ELECTRONIC MESSAGES TO PRESERVE FEDERAL RECORDS

September 20, 2019

#### WHY THE AUDIT WAS CONDUCTED

Federal electronic records pose a challenge to recordkeeping in the Federal Government. To maintain the public's trust and to ensure transparency in the preservation of Federal records, regarding electronic messaging, the Department of Labor (DOL) needs to stay vigilant and close the gap between outdated policies and evolving technologies. Furthermore, all DOL employees must be aware of their responsibility to capture Federal electronic records created or received in personal accounts to ensure the proper preservation of Federal records.

#### WHAT WAS DONE

Given our concerns, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) contracted with RMA Associates to conduct this audit to answer the following question:

Does DOL have sufficient controls in place to preserve electronic messages as Federal records of official activities?

To answer this question, RMA reviewed policies and procedures concerning electronic messages and documents, interviewed relevant personnel with knowledge of policies, and interviewed employees for awareness and compliance with policies. The review covered the period September 2017 to June 2019.

#### READ THE FULL REPORT:

<http://www.oig.dol.gov/public/reports/oa/2019/17-19-001-07-001>

#### WHAT WAS FOUND

DOL lacked procedures for identifying, managing, and preserving electronic messages as Federal records. Although not all electronic messages are Federal records, electronic messaging used for official business are Federal records that must be captured and preserved.

DOL did not provide guidance for employees to identify, manage, and maintain electronic messages, such as Twitter Direct Message, Slack, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Pigeon, Yammer, Jive, or other internal collaboration networks, as Federal records. DOL relied on employees to self-report when they conducted official business requiring preservation.

Electronic messages on government-owned devices were deleted and not preserved when the device owner's job responsibilities changed or when the device owner left DOL.

DOL employees surveyed were not aware of Departmental guidance regarding (1) the use of personal electronic messaging accounts to conduct official business, and (2) the authorized use of mobile applications and monitoring of mobile application downloads that encrypt and automatically delete messages.

Actions to address 3 of the 5 recommendations from NARA's assessment of DOL's record management program are in process, but not complete. DOL did not establish formal procedures to provide effective oversight of the Capstone Approach.

DOL established a plan to transfer Federal records in electronic format to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) by December 31, 2019.

#### WHAT WAS RECOMMENDED

RMA Associates made 10 recommendations to the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management to improve the DOL's electronic records management program.

In response to the draft report, the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management concurred with 9 of the 10 recommendations to improve DOL's electronic records management program.