

**U.S. Department of Labor
Office of Inspector General
Audit**



BRIEFLY...

WITHOUT AN IT MODERNIZATION FRAMEWORK, DOL IS VULNERABLE TO INADEQUATE RESOURCE PRIORITIZATION FOR ENSURING SECURITY AND AVAILABILITY OF DOL SYSTEMS

NOVEMBER 17, 2023

WHY OIG CONDUCTED THE AUDIT

Information technology (IT) modernization refers to an organization's efforts to prevent IT systems from becoming outdated, which can lead to poor performance and security concerns. DOL IT systems support DOL programs in ensuring the health and safety of American workers—including miners and unemployed workers—and provide timely economic indicators that are vital for the country.

DOL's Chief Information Officer (CIO) has responsibility and oversight for over 65 major information systems as well as enterprise IT initiatives across DOL. This responsibility includes overseeing the organization's efforts to upgrade IT systems and to ensure that existing IT systems do not become outdated due to lifecycle, technical, or business reasons. It is a tremendous responsibility to ensure the IT posture remains secure and technologically able to support DOL's mission.

WHAT OIG DID

Given these risks, the OIG conducted a performance audit to determine:

Has the Department developed an IT modernization framework and what is its current and future state?

To answer this question, we interviewed personnel and reviewed DOL's IT modernization activities from January 2022 through August 2022, including analysis of documentation and funding mechanisms.

WHAT OIG FOUND

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. The CIO's reason for lack of a documented framework was to keep the approach dynamic. However, a documented 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 that the CIO uses to monitor IT modernization projects 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.

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.

WHAT OIG RECOMMENDED

We made three recommendations to the CIO to improve IT modernization, including documenting a framework. The CIO agreed with the three recommendations.

READ THE FULL REPORT

<https://www.oig.dol.gov/public/reports/oa/2023/23-24-002-07-725.pdf>