

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-16-240](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

NMB was established under the Railway Labor Act to facilitate labor relations for railroads and airlines by mediating and arbitrating labor disputes and overseeing union elections. The FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 included a provision for GAO to evaluate NMB programs and activities every 2 years. GAO's first report under this provision, issued in December 2013, included seven recommendations for NMB based on assessments of policies and processes in several management and program areas.

This second report examines the extent to which NMB has 1) implemented recommendations made by GAO in December 2013, and 2) incorporated key procurement practices. GAO reviewed relevant federal laws, regulations, and NMB documents, such as its strategic and workforce plans; and contracting data for fiscal years 2014-2015; and interviewed NMB officials.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that NMB develop and implement written policies and processes to reflect its current procurement environment. NMB agreed with the recommendation and indicated it would take steps to implement it.

View [GAO-16-240](#). For more information, contact Cindy Brown Barnes at 202-512-7215 or brownbarnesc@gao.gov

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NATIONAL MEDIATION BOARD

Progress Made on Some GAO Recommendations to Strengthen Operations, but Key Controls Continue to Be Needed

What GAO Found

The National Mediation Board (NMB) has made some progress in addressing the seven recommendations GAO made in December 2013; however, additional actions are needed to fully implement those recommendations and strengthen operations (see table). Without full implementation, NMB lacks reasonable assurance that its limited resources are effectively targeted and may be missing opportunities to improve performance and mitigate risks in program and management areas.

NMB's Actions in Response to GAO's December 2013 Recommendations

GAO's 2013 recommendations	NMB's actions	Additional actions needed to address recommendations
Develop a formal strategic planning process	Published a strategic plan in fiscal year 2014.	Develop formal written policies and procedures governing its planning process.
Develop performance goals and measures	Developed new performance goals.	Ensure performance goals meet all guidelines for federal performance management.
Develop and implement formal mechanism to resolve audit findings/recommendations	Developed a written process to resolve financial statement audit findings and recommendations.	Expand the written process to address all audits.
Develop and fully implement an information security program	Moved to a cloud computing environment and outsourced certain functions.	Develop and implement policies and procedures and assess third-party providers' implementation of security requirements.
Establish an information privacy program	Designated an official responsible for privacy.	Assess impact on privacy and issue notices about personally identifiable information NMB uses and shares.
Develop a strategic workforce plan	Completed a plan that addressed most required elements.	Formally include stakeholders in planning process and evaluate workforce planning and other human capital efforts.
Collect and analyze rail grievance arbitration data	Collected data for some cases on types of grievances.	Collect data on all cases and analyze.

Source: GAO analysis of NMB documents and interviews with officials. | GAO-16-240

NMB is following some key procurement practices that GAO has identified in prior work. However, NMB has not developed and implemented written policies and processes—consistent with internal control standards and best practice—that reflect its new interagency agreement with the Department of the Treasury for the performance of certain procurement functions. Without this documentation NMB cannot ensure the use of consistent processes in its new procurement environment.