



Office of Inspector General U.S. Government Accountability Office Report Highlights

January 26, 2021

NEW BLUE

Additional Efforts Could Improve Project Management Efficiency

Objective

The audit objectives were to evaluate the extent to which GAO has (1) followed leading practices for managing the New Blue project; and (2) tracked the cost and schedule performance of the project.

What OIG Found

GAO established the New Blue project as an effort to publish web-based products in a way that increases automation in report development. The New Blue project integrates three components; Software, Publishing, and Change Management. We assessed GAO's project management of New Blue against leading practices in the Capability Maturity Model Integration for Development (CMMI-DEV) and GAO guidance on project scheduling and cost estimating. While generally consistent with guidance, opportunities for improvement exist. We found that GAO's New Blue project management fully addressed four of seven CMMI-DEV process areas and partially addressed the remaining three process areas. Areas fully addressed were, configuration management, measurement and analysis, process and product quality assurance, and supplier agreement management process areas. However, GAO did not fully implement practices in the project monitoring and control, project planning, and requirements management process areas.

In looking at project monitoring and control, the New Blue Project did not completely align with GAO guidance for all ten scheduling practices. We found that GAO had implemented two scheduling practices; partially implemented six; and did not implement two practices. In terms of project planning, GAO's cost estimates for the New Blue project generally aligned with GAO guidance on cost estimating; however, we identified practices needing improvement to ensure comprehensive, accurate, and credible cost estimates. Finally, requirements management was not consistently implemented across all New Blue Project components. GAO routinely tracked and managed requirements for contractor tasks, but did not use the same approach for in-house activities. Following all recommended practices across all project components would have provided management with key information for decision making.

What OIG Recommends

We recommend that the Comptroller General direct the Chief Administrative Officer to review and update procedures to ensure that a) schedule practices address all key project components; project schedules are baselined and appropriate risk analyses are performed; b) cost estimates fully meet best practices for comprehensiveness, accuracy, and credibility; and c) all project requirements are tracked and managed. In its written comments, GAO agreed with this recommendation and stated that it would be taking steps to address the recommendation.