IBM Center for
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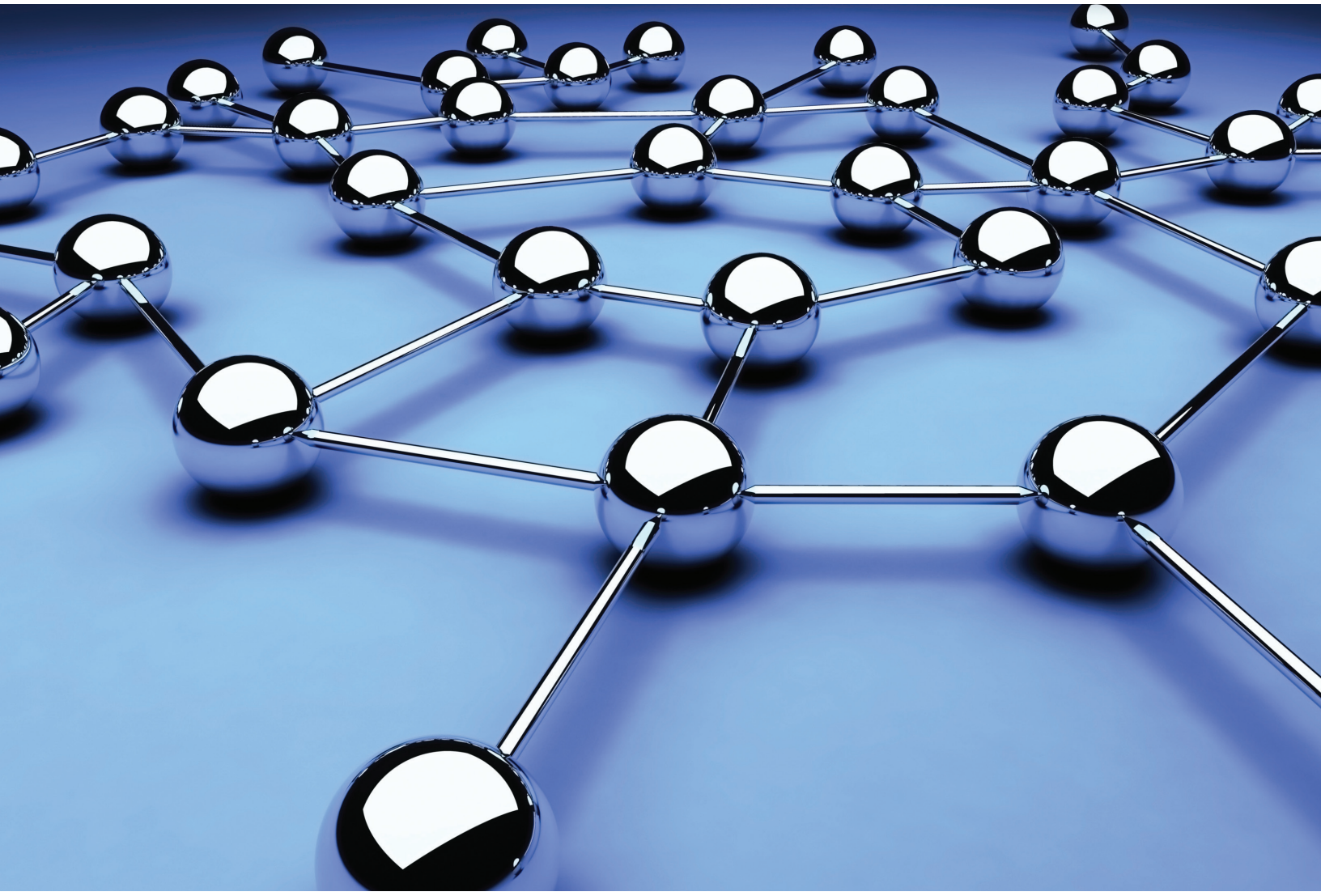
2017
Collaborating Across Boundaries Series

Cross-Agency Collaboration

A Case Study of Cross-Agency Priority Goals



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Collaborating Across Boundaries Series 2017

Cross-Agency Collaboration: A Case Study of Cross-Agency Priority Goals

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Foreword

On behalf of the IBM Center for The Business of Government, we are pleased to present this report, *Cross-Agency Collaboration: A Case Study of Cross-Agency Priority Goals,* by John M. Kamensky, a senior fellow at the IBM Center.

Daniel J. Chenok

This report is timely in that it provides both validation of the usefulness of Cross-Agency Priority Goals as well as guidance on ways that this approach to achieving results that require collaboration can be fine-tuned.

The federal government has faced increasingly complex challenges over the past two decades that require greater collaboration across traditional organizational and program boundaries. These challenges range from responses to hurricanes to proactive actions to stymie cyberthreats. For many years, the executive branch addressed these types of challenges in an ad hoc fashion. The U.S. Congress recognized in 2010 the need to institutionalize a statutory mechanism to both allow and encourage cross-agency collaboration.

Lisa M. Mascolo

This report examines the development of a new governmentwide authority to identify cross-agency priorities, create a governance framework and networks to pursue those priorities and to track their implementation. It is based on a series of case studies of each of the 15 Cross-Agency Priority Goals established for the four-year period, fiscal years 2014–2017. The author interviewed individuals working on these goals as well as senior leaders at the Office of Management and Budget and the Performance Improvement Council.

The report provides concrete evidence of the value of an institutional mechanism that supports working across agency boundaries. It also provides insights on ways federal leaders can improve this mechanism, both governmentwide and within individual cross-agency teams, in the future.

This report is undergirded by a series of studies sponsored by the IBM Center since 2001 on the use of collaborative networks and how they can be used to address pressing federal challenges. We hope that this report, and the larger body of IBM Center work on this topic, provides useful insights to federal leaders as they develop and implement cross-agency initiatives to meet national challenges in the years to come.

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Executive Summary

A decade ago, public management expert professor Donald Kettl observed a growing divide between how government is organized to deliver services versus how citizens wanted services to be more seamless across agencies and programs. He said there was a gap in both the authority and capacity of government to act nimbly across organizational boundaries.

In 2010, Congress granted the executive branch the authority to begin bridging this gap, via the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Modernization Act of 2010. That law, among other things, requires the Office of Management and Budget to designate "Cross-Agency Priority Goals" for a small handful of mission-support and mission-related areas, covering a four-year period, along with the designation of a goal leader and the requirement for quarterly progress reports.

The federal government this year reached the end of the first four-year period of cross-agency goals. What's been accomplished? Has the use of this new authority made a difference? Are there ways to improve its use as the Trump administration develops its own set of priority goals?

This report assessed the implementation of the 15 Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goals put in place for the period of fiscal years 2014–2017. It is based on case studies, interviews with participants and a review of reports and studies on the implementation of these goals.

Summary Results. Each of the 15 CAP Goals have yielded incremental, but tangible results. For example, the CAP Goal to increase the commercialization of federal patents and licenses has achieved an upward trend, as well as increased private sector use of specialized federal lab facilities across a range of federal agencies.

The actions taken within each of the CAP Goals have resulted in increased performance and results in several areas that, in a number of cases, had previously demonstrated little to no progress. For example, past efforts to coordinate permitting and review processes between agencies lagged until this initiative was designated as a CAP Goal.

In addition to demonstrated results in each of the 15 individual CAP Goals, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has created a foundation for managing cross-agency initiatives more broadly. It has institutionalized policies, processes, governance structures and capacities to manage cross-agency initiatives on a governmentwide basis.

Implementation of the CAP Goals. Fifteen CAP Goals were designated for the four-year period, fiscal years 2014–2017. Of these, eight focused on mission-support-related goals, such as improving IT delivery, and seven focused on mission-related goals, such as improving the mental health of veterans (see box).

Cross-Agency Priority Goals: FY 2014–2017

Mission-Support CAP Goals

1. Delivering World-Class Customer Service
2. Delivering Smarter IT
3. Buying as One through Category Management
4. Expanding Shared Services to Increase Quality and Savings
5. Benchmarking to Improve Mission-Support Operations
6. Opening Data to Spark Innovation
7. Bridging the Barriers from Lab-to-Market
8. People and Culture

Mission-Focused CAP Goals

9. Strengthening Federal Cybersecurity
10. Service Members and Veterans Mental Health
11. Job Creating Investment
12. Cutting Red Tape in the Infrastructure Permitting Process
13. STEM Education
14. Insider Threat & Security Clearance Reform
15. Climate Change (Federal Actions)

Source: www.performance.gov

The selection of these 15 goals, out of hundreds of potential initiatives, was based on several criteria, such as: whether there was existing authority to act; that the focus would be on implementation, not policy development; and that no significant new dollars would be needed. The hope was that the additional management attention and rigor provided by being designated a CAP Goal would catalyze greater action.

In each case, senior-level co-leaders—in the White House and by agency deputy secretaries—were designated. In addition, strategies and progress metrics were developed, quarterly progress assessments were conducted, capacity to manage across organizational boundaries was developed and a one-stop website provided their status publicly. The Government Accountability Office in 2016 observed that the statutory provisions to be implemented were on track. In addition, Congress provided OMB in March 2016 the authority to create a $15 million fund to support CAP Goal initiatives.

Have CAP Goals Made a Difference? The wide range of initiatives undertaken makes it difficult to offer a general characterization of the impact of the 15 CAP Goals. There is no single scorecard. However, in a review of the publicly-available status reports and in discussions with governmentwide and project-level CAP Goal staff, there has been demonstrable progress across the board. Assessing progress and outcomes differs between the mission-support versus mission-focused CAP Goals.

For mission-support CAP Goals, progress can typically be assessed in terms of achieving greater standardization, consolidation of services and cost savings. For example, the Shared Services CAP Goal has developed standardized transition guidance for agencies to move common administrative functions, such as human resources management, to a shared platform, and agencies are beginning to make the transition.

For mission-focused CAP Goals, progress and outcomes tend to be more diffuse, but measurable in some cases. For example, the Climate Change CAP Goal—which stimulates federal renewable electrical energy usage—was able to demonstrate measurable decreases in greenhouse gases as well as increases in cost savings by federal agencies.

How Can the CAP Goal Process Be Improved? The overall implementation approach to the CAP Goals has been effective. There is no evidence supporting the need to undertake a major rethink, but there are opportunities to fine-tune processes and build on the foundation put in place. Governmentwide, there are several areas for potential improvement, including:

- **Bolder Goal Setting.** Consider bigger, bolder goals that capture the imagination of leaders and the public. To date, one of the key criteria for selecting CAP goals has focused on those areas where progress has been slow or floundering and additional resources and attention would increase performance.
- **Designated Leadership of Mission-Focused CAP Goals.** Designate someone as an overall executive champion of mission-focused goals. Currently, OMB and the President's Management Council are closely involved in leading the mission-support CAP Goals, but there is no overall leadership for mission-focused CAP Goals.
- **Continue Building Capacity.** OMB and the President's Management Council should continue capacity-building at the governmentwide, cross-agency level—such as the Performance Improvement Council, the Office of Executive Councils and the White House Leadership Development Program.

At the CAP Goal operating level, there are also several opportunities for improvement, including:

- **Create Full-time Teams.** Some CAP Goals had no full-time staff. Several of these initiatives, such as Customer Service and STEM Education, were finally staffed with a full-time person from the White House Leadership Development Program in 2016 and they began to demonstrate greater progress. Having dedicated talent matters.
- **Use Interagency Agreements.** CAP Goal leaders and staff members are rarely in place for the full four-year period of the CAP Goal. Consistently ensuring a written understanding of agreement among stakeholders, early on, could help ensure some continuity.
- **Encourage Resource Sharing.** Agencies that share resources tend to be more committed to participation.

Conclusion: The governance system, resources and staff development capacities have taken years to put in place. The first cycle of CAP goals demonstrates that this approach does result in tangible outcomes. These processes and approaches should now be used to implement significantly larger initiatives, if there is senior leadership interest that is willing to provide a sustained commitment to act.

Introduction

A decade ago, University of Maryland professor Donald Kettl observed a growing divide between how government is organized to deliver services versus how citizens wanted services to be more seamless across agencies and programs. He said there was a gap in both the authority and capacity of government to act nimbly across organizational boundaries.

Efforts to improve public management in recent years have experienced a shift in emphasis from an internal focus on improving agencies and program operations to a greater external focus on improving service delivery and achieving results. This in turn has challenged government leaders to rethink their business models and strategies for how they get things done, especially in policy areas and service delivery that span organizational and programs boundaries.

Objective and Scope. This report examines the evolution of cross-agency collaboration around improving the delivery of services and achieving results in the U.S. federal government over the past decade. The report focuses on a case study that describes the development, governance and implementation of the first round of CAP Goals, a new governance approach established in law by the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Modernization Act of 2010. Based on the case study, recommendations are offered to help improve the effectiveness of the next round of CAP Goals which the Office of Management and Budget is in the process of developing to reflect the Trump administration's top priorities as part of the budget development process for fiscal year 2019.

Background. Until the GPRA Modernization Act was adopted, the U.S. federal government did not have a readily available, statutorily authorized set of organizational structures or administrative processes to facilitate action across agency and program boundaries. The traditional hierarchical system of distinct agencies and programs has been effective for ensuring accountability in a stable environment. But this hierarchical approach to governance stymies efforts to address increasingly complex challenges that are constantly evolving and that span the boundaries of individual agencies and programs.

In the past, there have been ad hoc efforts to work across agency boundaries that have been effective for targeted, short term initiatives, such as federal emergency responses to pandemics, hurricanes, floods and earthquakes. There have also been cross-agency coordinating and information-sharing committees and councils over the years that have had varying degrees of effectiveness. But, until 2011, there was no statutory foundation for convening and working across agency boundaries on a more systematic basis.

When updating the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993, Congress in 2010 concluded that "agencies were not coordinating their efforts in order to address common challenges and achieve common objectives." It directed the OMB to "work with agencies to develop federal government priority goals that aim to improve performance and management across the federal government." (U.S. Congress 2010). Congress also authorized the designa-

tion of cross-agency goal leaders and required quarterly tracking of progress of a limited number of long-term cross-agency priority goals that would be updated or revised every four years, because Congress recognized that such goals "will require sustained focus over a period of time."

Subsequently, the Obama administration developed a set of 15 cross-agency priority goals to comply with this new law and put a governance structure and interagency teams in place to implement them. This report assesses this new approach to cross-agency collaboration.

Methodology. This report is based on:

- Analyses of the evolution, governance and progress of each of the 15 CAP Goals, based on reviews of publicly-available status reports.
- Interviews with key staff from the Office of Management and Budget, the Performance Improvement Council and agency program staff involved in the implementation of the CAP Goals.
- Reviews of reports by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), academic literature and the IBM Center for The Business of Government.

The research for this report was conducted between September 2016 and August 2017.

Organization of This Report. The first section describes the evolution of cross-agency collaboration over the past two decades in the U.S. federal government and how the statutory requirement for CAP Goals came about in legislation in 2010.

The second section describes the first set of 15 CAP Goals, covering the four-year period of fiscal years 2014–2017, and how they have contributed to the growing use of cross-agency collaboration efforts in government.

The third section examines the implementation of the CAP Goals during this four-year period by OMB and the designated CAP Goal leaders. The fourth section describes the impact the CAP Goals have had, both on achievement of their objectives as well as on ways the federal government works across agency boundaries.

The final section offers recommendations for improving the designation and implementation processes for the next round of CAP Goals to be announced in early 2018.

There are two appendices. The first summarizes IBM Center reports on the use of networks and collaboration in government; the second is comprised of brief case studies of each of the 15 CAP Goals.

The Context for Cross-Agency Collaboration

The American system of government, notes Dr. Jane Fountain, is designed to "emphasize checks and balances, fragmented authority, competition of ideas and competition for resources. The organizational arrangements and culture stemming from these foundations are intensely vertical, rewarding agency-centric behavior." (Fountain 2013a)

Much of what the federal government does can be effectively managed through this vertical system—such as delivering Social Security checks, issuing patents and processing income taxes. However, the challenges facing society today are increasingly straining this model, with issues such as healthcare, environment, energy and cybersecurity that cut across agency boundaries.

The Growing Demand for Cross-Agency Collaboration to Address Public Challenges

An increasingly significant component of challenges and opportunities facing the federal government require joint action across programs, agencies, levels of government and sometimes non-governmental actors. These joint efforts fall along a spectrum of different options for working together, ranging from Coordination to Integration (see box on next page).

Cross-agency initiatives have existed for decades in the federal government, via interagency working groups and shared administrative services. But these were largely ad hoc or in response to specific needs. For example, the federal government has effectively come together and work across agency and program boundaries in a crisis, such as disaster response efforts around the response to Superstorm Sandy, but not on a regular ongoing basis. Several IBM Center reports describe the use of "incident command centers" as a tool for managing emergency responses requiring cross-boundary collaboration that have been effective in different policy domains, such as addressing pandemics and agricultural pest control (Ansell and Keller 2014, Moynihan and Kroll 2016).

Cross-agency initiatives were not seen as a strategic approach to how government would operate across programmatic boundaries that were sometimes artificial. Typically, policymakers call for the reorganization of federal agencies and programs to address fragmentation and overlap in targeted policy arenas. But governmental reorganization efforts require substantial political capital and oftentimes fail to result in more coordinated action. As a result, policymakers began to deemphasize the use of reorganization as a tool to improve coordination and began to rely more frequently on finding ways to improve working relationships across boundaries (Bardach 1998).

Definitions: A Spectrum of Options for Working Together

- **Coordination:** Agencies maintain their organizational autonomy and independence of action, but are directed or choose to align resources, capabilities, strategies and implementation in support of shared goals. For example, the Departments of Defense and State coordinated efforts to stabilize and reconstruct Afghanistan.
- **Cross-Agency Collaboration:** Agencies retain their independence but typically choose to voluntarily work side-by-side toward a shared goal, jointly sharing their resources and capabilities to pursue that goal. For example, the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development collaborated to reduce the number of homeless veterans.
- **Cross-Boundary Collaboration:** Similar to cross-agency collaboration, but where the collaboration occurs beyond the boundaries of the federal government to include state, local, non-profit, private sector or international partners. For example, the U.S. Census Bureau collaborates with other federal agencies, states, localities and nonprofit groups to conduct the decennial census.
- **Integration:** Agencies merge their efforts, resources, capabilities and organizational structures into a single, new organization or program to achieve a specific goal. For example, the 2009 Recovery Act created the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board brought together the inspectors general from a dozen agencies to work jointly to provide transparency to the $840 billion in spending that occurred under that Act and to identify and pursue cases of fraud and misuse of these funds via a Recovery Operations Center. The Board's work was completed and it closed at the end of fiscal year 2015.

Source: Derived from Yodsampa, Andrea Strimling. 2013. *Coordinating for Results: Lessons from a Case Study of Interagency Coordination in Afghanistan.* IBM Center for The Business of Government.

Cross-agency collaboration—sometimes dubbed "enterprise government"—became a favored method to alter relationships and improve coordination of efforts. This was rooted in policy problems that increasingly span traditional program and organizational boundaries, fueled by citizen and business demands for more coherent service delivery as well as the increase in the digital capacity to share platforms, systems and data.

This move to an enterprise approach has two interrelated components:

- The first focuses on tackling policy-related initiatives that inherently reach across agency and program boundaries—such as coordinating across the 35 different laws administered by 18 different agencies that review or issue permits for major infrastructure projects.
- The second focuses on mission-support functions—streamlining and integration of administrative services, processes and functions that share common or identical elements, such as travel management, hiring and purchasing mobile services. (Fountain 2016).

Institutional Constraints on Cross-Agency Collaboration

The trend towards increased cross-agency collaboration and networks to pursue long-term outcomes faces built-in institutional bureaucratic constraints—legal, budget and policy—that reinforce vertical rather than horizontal relationships. Nevertheless, many policy challenges cross agency boundaries—such as food safety, cybersecurity and infrastructure permitting. As a consequence, using a cross-agency approach is now seen as a more effective way to improve outcomes and decrease costs than the traditional approach of reorganizing.

In a report on cross-agency collaboration for the U.S. Administrative Conference, Dr. Fountain cites four institutional constraints to effective cross-agency collaboration:

- Vertical structures encoded into authorizing statutes (e.g., hierarchical agencies and programs)
- Agency-centric appropriations, with constraints regarding use of funds
- Contradictions between statutes, within and across agencies (e.g., different dollar thresholds for determining eligibility for different social service programs to the same person)
- Agency-centric accountability in shared jurisdictional space (e.g., food safety responsibilities are divided between agencies) (Fountain 2013b)

In addition, the IBM Center has chronicled the evolution of cross-agency and cross-boundary collaboration in a series of reports since 2001 and how they attempt to overcome these constraints. These reports examine different network types and functions, how collaborative networks are governed and evolve over time and how leadership capacity develops to operate effectively in collaborative networks (see Appendix 1).

Understanding Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goals

Historically, federal efforts to collaborate across agency boundaries were largely in response to specific events, such as hurricanes, fires or pandemics. In addition, historically there were many cross-agency committees that convened to share information or coordinate policy development on topics such as food safety, but they normally did not work together to develop or implement joint initiatives.

Several joint initiatives were piloted in the 1990s that were outside of the emergency response world, but it wasn't until the early 2000s that there were concerted efforts to undertake joint cross-agency or cross-boundary initiatives. These were labeled "national strategies" by the White House, to bring together resources from federal, state, local and other non-governmental actors.

Their use seemed to have started under President Clinton in the mid-1990s, such as the issuance of the International Crime Control Strategy [1] in 1998. Other agencies had developed cross-cutting national strategies. For example, the Office of National Drug Control Policy's national strategy and the attorney general's interagency counterterrorism and technology crime plan predated the Bush administration's expanded use of national strategies.

By the end of the Bush administration in 2009, there were about a dozen national strategy documents that addressed terrorism, cybersecurity, pandemic preparedness, among other issues. In an early assessment, GAO concluded that the use of national strategies "will not ensure a strategy-driven, integrated, and effective set of interagency, inter-organizational programs to implement these strategies." (U.S. GAO 2003). The use of national strategies as an approach to coordinate or implement cross-agency or cross-boundary initiatives faded by the end of the Bush administration.

The Bush administration also undertook a series of cross-agency "e-government" initiatives [2], beginning in 2001. A governmentwide "Quicksilver" task force identified 24 technology-based initiatives that focused on: integrating government services on the Internet related to citizens, businesses, states and localities, and providing internal efficiencies within the federal government. Examples include: benefits.gov, business.gov, grants.gov and e-travel for federal agencies. These initiatives each established implementation teams, were assigned an executive sponsor in OMB and had access to a small central fund to provide seed money for these initiatives.

In GAO's 2004 ten-year assessment of the implementation of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993, it observed: "Crosscutting issues continue to be a challenge to GPRA implementation. Mission fragmentation and program overlap are widespread across

1. https://clintonwhitehouse4.archives.gov/WH/EOP/NSC/html/documents/iccs-frm.html
2. https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/omb/budget/fy2002/mgmt.pdf

the federal government. Moreover, addressing this challenge is essential to the success of national strategies in areas such as homeland security, drug control and the environment." However, no legislative action was taken at that time.

The Creation of New Authority to Act Across Agency Boundaries

The early Obama administration undertook efforts to work more collectively across agency boundaries, starting with the implementation of the complex, $821 billion American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, which spanned more than 200 different federal programs and more than two dozen major agencies. But, like the federal cross-agency response to emergencies and disasters, this was a time-bound initiative and the administration wanted to create a longer-term institutional capacity to work across agency boundaries on specific priorities, much like the vaunted Prime Minister's Delivery Unit in the United Kingdom.

Congress updated GPRA in 2010, codifying key roles, such as chief operating officers and performance improvement officers in agencies, along with cross-agency capacity via the Performance Improvement Council (see box).

Highlights of Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Modernization Act of 2010

Performance Improvement Roles and Responsibilities Established

- Specified roles for President, Agency Head, newly-designated Chief Operating Officer (COO; usually a Deputy Secretary), Performance Improvement Officer (PIO), Goal Leaders, Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO).
- Established the Performance Improvement Council (PIC).

Goal-Setting

- President to set longer-term Federal Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goals (outcome and management) every 4 years, with annual and quarterly progress assessments; new CAP Goals were set in February 2014
- Agency Heads set strategic goals every 4 years; Agency Priority Goals (APGs) every 2 years and annual goals for key aspects of agency performance; new strategic goals will be set in February 2014
- Goal Leaders are clearly designated and contributors to major goals clarified

Frequent Data-Driven Management Reviews

- At least quarterly review of CAP Goals by Office of Management and Budget Director/PIC (including closing skills gaps)
- At least quarterly meetings to review APGs by agency COOs
- At least quarterly meetings to review Human Capital goals by CHCOs and PIOs (i.e., HRStat)
- Annual review of agency goal and objective achievement

Reporting Modernization to Improve Usefulness of Performance/Program Information

- Agency performance information on central website with quarterly updates on Priority Goals and annual updates on all goals
- Governmentwide list of programs; updated annually

Source: Office of Management and Budget. 2013. Presentation.

The GPRA Modernization Act also requires the designation of agency-level and cross-agency priority goals. Cross-agency priority goals (CAP Goals), according to OMB, are a tool to address the long-standing challenge of tackling horizontal problems across vertical organizational silos. CAP Goals complement existing processes to coordinate budget, legislation and policy decisions by providing, for the first time, mechanisms to coordinate implementation across multiple agencies. CAP Goals are to span a four-year presidential administration. Goal leaders are to be designated and quarterly progress reviews are to be conducted and reported publicly.

Since the GPRA Modernization Act was adopted in the middle of a presidential term, in 2011, 14 "interim" CAP Goals were set for fiscal years 2012 and 2013. Of these, five focused on mission-support related priorities and nine on mission-focused priorities (U.S. GAO 2012). See the accompanying box for a timeline describing the evolution of the CAP Goals since the new law was passed.

Timeline of the Evolution of CAP Goals Since New Law Was Passed

January 2011 – GPRA Modernization Act signed by President Obama. Section 5 directs the director of the Office of Management and Budget to coordinate with agencies to develop "federal government priority goals," commonly called "cross-agency priority goals," that cover a limited number of cross-cutting policy areas and goals for management improvements needed across the government. These goals are to be long-term in nature and updated or revised every 4 years, concurrent with presidential terms of office.

February 2012 – 14 Interim CAP Goals established for fiscal year 2013–2014 period. Nine were mission-focused and five were mission-support focused.

February 2014 – 15 CAP Goals announced for the period of fiscal years 2014–2017. Seven were mission-focused; eight were mission-support focused. Five of the 15 were continuations of CAP Goals from the interim period (Cybersecurity, Climate Change, STEM Education, Strategic Sourcing and Open Data).

February 2018 – Revised or new CAP Goals to be announced for fiscal years 2018–2021.

The process for setting and implementing the interim goals resulted in a number of "lessons learned" by OMB officials that were used to improve the process for the first full set of CAP Goals. For example, one lesson was that designating co-leads for CAP Goals—with one co-lead from the White House or OMB and one from an implementing agency—helped ensure better agency-level buy-in and continuity. GAO examined the interim goals in 2012 and concluded: "the establishment of these goals marks an important opportunity for addressing some of the key crosscutting program and management challenges facing the federal government." Its only recommendation to OMB was to add additional agencies into the scope of some of the goals.

What Were the CAP Goals for the Fiscal Year 2014–2017 Period?

The first full set of four-year CAP Goals was developed for the period covering fiscal years 2014–2017. Five of the 14 interim CAP Goals were carried over to the full set, announced in early 2013, when 15 CAP Goals were designated—eight mission-support and seven mission-focused (see table 1).

Table 1: Cross-Agency Priority Goals: FY 2014–2017

Mission-Support CAP Goals	
1. Delivering World-Class Customer Service	Increase public satisfaction and promote positive experiences with the federal government by making it faster and easier for individuals and businesses to complete transactions and receive quality services.
2. Delivering Smarter IT	Eliminate barriers and create new incentives to enable the Federal Government to procure, build and provide world-class, cost-effective information technology (IT) delivery for its citizens and hold agencies accountable to modern IT development and customer service standards.
3. Buying as One through Category Management *	Category management enables the government to eliminate redundancies, increase efficiency and deliver more value and savings from the government's acquisition programs.
4. Expanding Shared Services to Increase Quality and Savings	Strategically expand high-quality, high-value shared services to improve performance and efficiency throughout government.
5. Benchmarking to Improve Mission-Support Operations	Improve administrative efficiency and increase the adoption of effective management practices by establishing cost, quality and customer satisfaction benchmarks for mission-support operations, giving agency decision makers better data to set priorities, allocate resources and improve processes.
6. Opening Data to Spark Innovation *	Fuel entrepreneurship and innovation and improve government efficiency and effectiveness by unlocking the value of government data; adopt management approaches that promote interoperability and openness of these data.
7. Bridging the Barriers from Lab-to-Market	Increase the economic impact of federally-funded research and development by accelerating and improving the transfer of new technologies from the laboratory to the commercial marketplace.
8. People and Culture	Innovate by unlocking the full potential of the workforce we have today and building the workforce we need for tomorrow.
9. Strengthening Federal Cybersecurity *	Improve awareness of cybersecurity practices, vulnerabilities and threats to the operating environment by limiting access to authorized users and implementing technologies and processes that reduce risk from malicious activity.
10. Service Members and Veterans Mental Health	Improve mental health outcomes for Service members, Veterans and their Families.
11. Job-Creating Investment	Encourage foreign direct investment (FDI), spurring job growth by improving federal investment tools and resources while also increasing interagency coordination.
12. Cutting Red Tape in the Infrastructure Permitting Process	Modernize the Federal permitting and review process for major infrastructure projects to reduce uncertainty for project applicants, reduce the aggregate time it takes to conduct reviews and make permitting decisions and produce measurably better environmental and community outcomes.
13. STEM Education *	Improve science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education by implementing The Federal STEM Education 5-Year Strategic Plan announced in May 2013 and specifically seek to: • improve STEM instruction; • increase and sustain youth and public engagement in STEM; • enhance STEM experience of undergraduate students; • better serve groups historically under-represented in STEM fields; • design graduate education for tomorrow's STEM workforce; • build new models for leveraging assets and expertise and • build and use evidence-based approaches.

Table 1: Cross-Agency Priority Goals: FY 2014–2017 (continued)

14. Insider Threat & Security Clearance Reform	Promote and protect our nation's interests by ensuring aligned, effective, efficient, secure and reciprocal vetting processes to support a trusted Federal workforce.
15. Climate Change (Federal Actions) *	Increase Federal government consumption of electricity from renewable sources to 30% by 2025 and improve energy efficiency at Federal facilities including $4 billion in performance contracts by the end of 2016 as part of the wider strategy to reduce the Federal government's direct greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40 percent from a 2008 baseline.

Source: www.performance.gov (January, 2017)

* a continuation of an "interim" priority goal from 2011

Note: a 16th CAP Goal was added in the last quarter of fiscal year 2016 that dealt with the implementation of recently-adopted amendments to the Freedom of Information Act. This new goal was not included in this assessment because of its late introduction into the four-year cycle.

Characteristics of CAP Goals During the Fiscal Year 2014–2017 Period

In looking across the 15 CAP Goals, the following characteristics and observations surface. These are summarized in table 2.

- **Most Goals Involved Agencies at Two Levels.** Typically, a core of 4–6 core agencies or White House offices are engaged in managing a goal, with a wider circle of 12–24 agencies involved in implementation working groups. For example, the Job-Creating Investments CAP Goal worked with a core group of six agencies (Commerce, State, USDA, SBA, National Economic Council and Export-Import Bank) but was supplemented with a 24-member Interagency Investment Working Group.
- **Governance Structures Already in Place for Most Goals.** Most of the steering committees overseeing the CAP Goals pre-dated the creation of the goal. Eleven were already in place when their initiative was designated a CAP Goal; four were new. For example, the Federal Interagency Open Data Working Group, the Steering Committee on Federal Infrastructure Permitting and Review Process Improvement and the Suitability and Security Clearance Performance Accountability Council all preceded the designation of their issue as a CAP Goal. In some cases, the role of the interagency group changed, oftentimes becoming more focused and more prominent because of the visibility placed on their issue. The President's Management Council was also actively engaged in oversight, especially of the mission-support CAP Goals. Interestingly, most cross-agency councils, such as the Chief Human Capital Council and the Chief Information Officers Council, were not actively involved.
- **One-Third of Goals Were Revised During the Four Years.** Six of the 15 goals underwent revisions to their focus during the four-year period. The refocusing resulted from changing circumstances (e.g., the Navy Yard shooting shifted the emphasis of the Insider Threat CAP Goal to include physical in addition to cyber threats); changing laws (e.g., the Infrastructure Permitting CAP Goal received significant legislative authority, as did the VA Mental Health CAP Goal); or new presidential or OMB direction (e.g., the Climate Change CAP Goal's greenhouse gas reduction targets were raised via a presidential directive and the Category Management CAP Goal was originally focused on Strategic Sourcing but was refocused by OMB).

- **Measurability of Goals Varied.** GAO assessed a subset of the CAP Goals in a 2016 report and observed that "CAP Goal teams are meeting a number of GPRA Modernization Act requirements, including identifying contributors, reporting strategies for performance improvement, and quarterly results." It also noted that most of the CAP Goals it reviewed were reporting quarterly progress on qualitative, activity-based milestones and not on quantitative, performance-related targets.

  Only four of the 15 CAP Goals had clear outcome goals, but even these were obscured in their public progress reports. For example, the STEM Education and Lab-to-Market CAP Goals had clear outcome measures, but the time lag for assessing their impact fell outside the four-year frame of the goal. As a result, the impact of their efforts will remain unknown for several years. The Job-Creating Investments and the Climate Change CAP Goals had clear outcome goals and relatively timely measures. Some CAP Goals might have been able to develop outcome measures, but they were not reflected in any public reports. For example, the VA Mental Health CAP Goal had initiatives to reduce suicides, but only offered metrics on training of medical staff and response times to crisis calls—no metrics on trends in suicides among veterans.

  An explanation offered by one senior interviewee as to why the CAP Goals tended to not have quantitative targets is that, given the organizational and program structure of the federal government, focusing on coordination and collaboration on a broader set of issues is more important than striving to achieve discrete performance targets, such as was more common with the agency-level priority goals.

- **Funding and Resources Were Made Available to Goals Late in the Cycle.** Funding for most CAP Goals did not become available until Spring 2016, with the congressional authorization of a $15 million fund to support CAP Goal initiatives. This fund supported 9 of the 15 CAP Goals, with allocations ranging from $250,000 for Category Management to $3.5 million for Infrastructure Permitting. OMB detailed the use of these funds in its congressional budget justification for fiscal year 2016.

Table 2: Summary Chart of Some Key Characteristics of CAP Goals, FY 2014–2017

CAP GOALS	Co-Leads of Goal	Agencies/ Offices Involved	Governance Groups for CAP Goal	Pre-Existing Groups?
Customer Service	OMB, SSA	16	Core Federal Services Council	No
Smarter IT Delivery	WH, OMB, USDS, VA	4 Core	OMB/USDS	No
Category Management	OMB, DOD	7 Core	Category Mgmt Council; Category Mgmt. Community; 10 Centers of Excellence; PMO	Yes. But re-named, re-purposed
Shared Services	OMB, GSA	17	Shared Services Gov'ce Bd; USSM	6 Lines of Business
Benchmarking	OMB, GSA	3 Core	Office of Exec Councils; PMC	No
Open Data	WH, OMB	3 Core	Interagency Open Data Working Group; PMO; Chief Data Scientist	Yes, same
Lab-to-Market	WH, DOE	14	Lab-to-Market Working Group	Yes, but formalized
People and Culture	WH, OPM	Varied by initiative	3 Communities of Interest; PMC	No
Cybersecurity	WH, OMB, DHS, DOD	24	OMB; PMC	Yes, same
Veterans Mental Health	WH, VA, HHS, DOD	3	Interagency TF for Mil & Vet MH; PMO	Yes, same
Job Creating /Foreign Investment	WH, DOC, DOS	6	Interagency Investment Working Group; PMO	Yes, same
Infrastructure Permitting	WH, OMB, DOT	15	Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council; PMO	Yes, but re-named; re-purposed
STEM Education	WH, NSF	20	NSTC Committee of STEM Education	Yes, but formalized
Insider Threat	WH, OMB, OPM, ODNI	14	Performance Accountability Council; PMO	Yes, same
Climate Change	WH, GSA	varied by sub-goal	Interagency Steering Comte on Fed. Sustainability	Yes, same

Explanatory Notes:

Acronyms used in Co-Leads and Governance Groups Columns:

DHS Department of Homeland Security
DOC Department of Commerce
DOD Department of Defense
DOE Department of Energy
DOS Department of State
DOT Department of Transportation
GSA General Services Administration
HHS Department of Health and Human Services
NSF National Science Foundation
NSTC National Science Technology Council (within WH)

Table 2: Summary Chart of Some Key Characteristics of CAP Goals, FY 2014–2017 (continued)

CAP GOALS	Sub-Goals, Strategies	Measures results?	Revised Goals in Period?	Direct Funding?
Customer Service	4 strategies	No common for the key 30 svcs.	No	$2.500 M
Smarter IT Delivery	4 objectives	Set of key indicators; 2 "-stats;" dashboard	Yes, minor	None specific
Category Management	Created gov'ce, str. Plan, policy, implement. teams	Tracks agency adoption rates, savings	Yes, major	$0.250 M
Shared Services	4 pillars	KPIs on progress, maturity, use, satisfaction	No	None specific
Benchmarking	Focused on 5 functions	Cost, Qual., Cust. Svc.	No	None specific
Open Data	2 key goals	No. of data sets on data.gov; anecdotes	No	None specific
Lab-to-Market	5 priority areas	# iCorps # Lab Uses # Tech Transfers	No	$1.900 M
People and Culture	3 initiatives	Yes for 2; no for 1	No	$0.900 M
Cybersecurity	3 initiatives	Compliance Scorecards	No	None specific
Veterans Mental Health	4 broad themes	Tracks activities; training	Yes, moderate	$0.750 M
Job Creating /Foreign Investment	3 sub-goals	Dollars attracted; jobs created; # of transact.	No	$1.400 M
Infrastructure Permitting	96 milestones in action plan	Project timelines, barriers removed	Yes, new Law expanded scope	$3.500 M
STEM Education	7 sub-goals	Diffuse; time lag	No	$0.600 M
Insider Threat	5 sub-goals	6 process KPIs	Yes, several times	None specific
Climate Change	4 sub-goals	4 outcome KPIs	Yes, moderate	$0.750 M

Sources: Appendix 2; OMB's www.performance.gov website; and White House FY 2017 Budget Justification.

ODNI Office of the Director of National Intelligence
OMB Office of Management and Budget
OPM Office of Personnel Management
PMC President's Management Council
PMO Program Management Office
SSA Social Security Administration
STEM Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
USDS US Digital Service (within OMB)
USSM Unified Shared Services Management Office (within GSA)
VA Department of Veterans Affairs
WH White House

Observations on the Implementation of CAP Goals, FY 2014–2017

This section is based on a review of the publicly available materials on the 15 CAP Goals, along with interviews with federal agency staffs. See the Appendix 2 for case studies of each of the CAP Goals, which are based on a series of blog posts written between September 2016 and May 2017.

How Did the CAP Goals Operate?

The overall approach to, and governance framework for, the first round of CAP Goals, covering the four-year period of fiscal years 2014–2017, include: (1) an approach to selecting priorities to be designated as CAP Goals; (2) the governance of the overall goal system; (3) development of the capacity to implement individual goals and (4) a process to monitor, adjust and report on progress.

In summary, the assessment is positive. This is reinforced by GAO's separate statutorily-required reviews of the implementation of the provisions of the GPRA Modernization Act. It offers a positive assessment of steps taken by the executive branch to implement the requirements of the CAP Goal approach—which encompasses the system and framework. Nevertheless, it did identify some unevenness in implementation approaches between individual goals that it examined.

The Selection of CAP Goals. There are many cross-agency issues and task forces in the federal government. Which rise to the level of being designated a CAP Goal? The law requires two types of CAP Goals: "outcome-oriented goals that cover a limited number of crosscutting policy areas, and management improvements across the Federal Government in the areas of information technology, financial management, human resources, and real estate… Cross-Agency Priority Goals are identified in areas where increased cross-agency coordination on outcome-focused areas is likely to improve progress." (U.S. OMB 2016)

What is the scope and maturity of initiatives to be selected? The scope and relative maturity of the cross-agency networks of the policy areas selected to be among the 15 CAP Goals varied. For example, the Category Management CAP Goal incorporated an existing interagency network that had previously focused on strategically buying common goods within agencies. This network then pivoted to support a policy of buying common goods and services (e.g., travel, real estate, mobile phones) across agencies, for the government as a whole. In contrast, the Customer Service CAP Goal created a new network of designated customer service champions within 16 agencies, who represented 30 selected services to provide directly to citizens (such as issuing passports or applying for Social Security benefits on line). That initiative focused on improvements within this subset of services, not customer service initiatives across the entire government.

A number of the CAP Goals were broad, oftentimes with interrelated elements (e.g., the Cybersecurity and Insider Threat CAP Goals) with multiple sub-objectives and multiple strate-

gies. Several had multi-year performance targets that far exceeded the four-year lifespan of a CAP Goal. For example, the Climate Change CAP Goal had targets to be achieved by 2025 and the STEM education goal had a key metric to be achieved by 2020.

Are there pre-existing networks for the initiatives being considered for selection? Most of the initiatives designated as CAP Goals leveraged cross-agency networks of pre-existing initiatives. For example, the IT Delivery CAP Goal re-flagged a pre-existing subset of IT improvement initiatives, focusing on three specific objectives out of a broader set of IT initiatives. Likewise, the Veterans Mental Health CAP Goal focused on a subset of objectives already underway within a broader initiative.

In several of these efforts, the value of designating them as CAP Goals led to a strategic shift within existing teams, from ad hoc "heroic" attempts to coordinate efforts, to a more systemic and sustainable approach. This was the case for the Infrastructure Permitting, Job-Creating Investments and Shared Services CAP Goals.

As noted earlier, CAP Goal team members interviewed for this report remarked that, when their pre-existing initiative was publicly designated as a CAP Goal, they felt their initiative gained higher visibility among top government leaders, especially via the quarterly progress reviews, and that this led to greater cross-agency collaboration. For example, the Job Creating Investments team saw greater participation by the State Department after the CAP Goal designation, even though that initiative began several years earlier as a presidential initiative, with a wider range of agencies.

What was the process used to develop the FY 2014–2017 CAP Goals? When the goals were being developed during the summer of 2013, the director of OMB was new and the position of deputy director for management was vacant. Nevertheless, the President held a cabinet meeting to promote a new "management agenda." This sparked a scramble to speed up the development process! According to one participant, the Office of Science and Technology Policy organized the cross-agency brainstorming sessions and provided facilitators, largely under the aegis of Steve Van Roekel, the federal chief information officer who at the time was also the acting deputy director for management.

The core team of staff assembled to develop the CAP Goals started by setting some broad themes. They then invited agency representatives to brainstorm "what if…" statements. So, for example, when developing the Customer Service CAP Goal, the notion of "what if Yelp-like ratings were used for government services?" was discussed. The proposals for potential CAP Goals were then assessed via criteria such as "what makes a good CAP Goal?" such as their being measurable, having a political-level executive champion, etc. There was also a White House interest in ensuring that some of its major policy areas were reflected in the selection of mission-focused CAP Goals, such as goals related to veterans, the environment and job creation. In parallel, the central team engaged the President's Management Council and agencies more broadly in reviewing the final list of mission-support goals. In the end, the 15 CAP Goals were declared to be the core of a four-part President's Management Agenda, thematically organized around (1) Efficiency, (2) Effectiveness, (3) Economic Growth and (4) People and Culture. This was publicly released in early 2014 as part of the President's budget.

What selection criteria were used in 2013? There were about a half dozen implicit or explicit criteria used to select among many proposals for CAP Goals. These largely centered around a qualitative assessment as to the potential future success of an initiative and the potential value that the designation as a highly visible CAP Goal would provide to the implementation of a specific initiative. Some of the criteria included:

- There is existing authority to act (e.g., statute or executive order)
- The focus of a CAP Goal is on implementation
- It is not a policy issue that is in contention
- Ideally, there would be an existing governance structure and interagency network in place
- A judgement that additional attention by senior level leaders and energizing leadership at the working level will help take the initiative or issue to a new level
- Some level of political interest or value to the administration to be able to demonstrate its commitment to act on a specific issue
- No significant additional dollars would be needed to "move the needle"—that what was most needed was greater attention to governance, management and high-level attention.

What Happens When a CAP Goal "Matures?"

A senior OMB official observes that there are many ongoing or potential cross-agency initiatives, but not all merit designation as a CAP Goal. And, if one is so designated, when it reaches a certain level of maturity it should be "de-listed" and another goal should be designated in its place. The judgement for "maturity" would be based on when it has built capacity, has funding, has an operational governance structure, has attained a level of authority (e.g., statutory or an executive directive), has milestones, metrics, etc. A good example of a cross-agency initiative that has reached that state of maturity is the Interagency Homeless Council. The challenge is that sometimes, when visibility is lessened, implementation may begin to lag.

Governance of the CAP Goals. Creating an overall governance framework around an issue seems to be one of the greatest benefits of being designated a CAP Goal. For example, a cross-agency set of working groups existed on STEM Education programs. But, when that initiative was designated as a CAP Goal with a set of measurable outcome goals and a strategic plan of action, the STEM Education working groups shifted their roles from information sharing to policy development and the quarterly progress review meetings created both visibility for the issues involved as well as a spur to action.

There were also differences in how agencies responded to their roles in various CAP Goals, depending on whether the leaders of the CAP Goals and their deputies were from within the White House, a White House policy council or OMB. The White House and its councils were typically more involved with mission-focused CAP Goals, while OMB was more involved with mission-support CAP Goals.

There were also real differences in engagement and action on individual CAP Goals, depending on whether the goal leader was in the White House, in a White House policy council or in OMB. For example, when White House staff were designated as co-leaders, that got agencies' attention and there was action. This happened when Kristi Canegallo, deputy chief of staff in the White House, was designated co-lead of the Veterans Mental Health CAP Goal. Staff involved said she was highly engaged, and that led to top-level attention on these issues in VA and other agencies involved. In contrast, staff within White House policy councils that had a lead, such as the Office of Science and Technology Policy, commented that they felt they had less clout with agencies and the agencies were less responsive. The policy councils found they were taken more seriously when providing policy development rather than leading implementation. OMB staff involved in CAP Goals felt they were more effective in co-leading goals when both the management and budget components of the agency were aligned.

Interestingly, the scopes of several mission-support CAP Goals overlapped with several of the statutory cross-agency mission support councils, such as the Chief Human Capital Officers Council (CHCO) and the Chief Information Officers (CIO) Council. However, these councils were not always linked to the related CAP Goals. For example, the People and Culture CAP Goal was largely led by OMB, the White House Office of Presidential Personnel and the Office of Personnel Management (the CHCO Council was designated as a "strategic partner"). Likewise, the IT Delivery CAP Goal was largely led by the US Digital Service, without much involvement of the CIO Council. Also, agency-level performance improvement officers tended to not be involved in CAP Goals that touched their agencies, such as the Job Creating Investments CAP Goal in the Department of Commerce.

Capacity-Building and Shared Learning. Identifying the first round of CAP Goals, identifying the goal leaders and developing a regular review process on progress were relatively easy steps to put in place. The more difficult step was creating a constructive dynamic within each of the CAP Goal teams to ensure they were productive, which included access to some staffing and financial resources. For nine of the 15, staffing and resources were not available until early 2016. Fortunately, the staffing and funding mechanisms are in place so the next round of CAP Goals in 2018 should be able to get off to a much quicker start.

Fountain describes, in her report on the evolution of the interim CAP Goals, the importance of developing relationship skills related to the mindset of the managers involved, the importance of creating effective teams and the development of trust, norms and networks (Fountain 2013a). The next section of this report elaborates in more detail the steps OMB and the Performance Improvement Council took to develop these critical skills for the first round of CAP Goals.

The other critical element in building capacity was the availability of a strategic pool of CAP Goal funding. Congress granted OMB in early 2016 the authority to work with agencies to transfer up to $15 million to a fund supporting CAP Goal priorities (U.S. OMB 2016).

Monitoring and Reporting on Progress. GAO's review of the implementation of the CAP Goals found that, for the goals they reviewed, "OMB improved CAP Goal reporting and accountability" by updating guidance and developing a template for goal teams to use that resulted in more consistent reporting formats across teams. GAO found "the quarterly progress updates provide useful information for goal leaders to track progress over time and to make timely management decisions that affect goal implementation." (U.S. GAO 2016a).

For the eight mission-support CAP Goals, OMB held "deep dive" sessions about three times a year with the goal leaders. These included reviews of dashboards, such as the IT PortfolioStat dashboard and the Benchmarking data.

The President's Management Council, comprised of the deputy secretaries/chief operating officers, conducted "deep dive" sessions on two or three CAP Goals at their monthly meetings, according to meeting participants. Their focus was largely on the mission-support CAP Goals, mainly because those goals engaged the most members and because a number of the deputy secretaries were co-leads for these goals. Engaging the Council "brought broader ownership of the goals," according to one participant.

In addition to the regular review sessions, the law required a public-facing one-stop website to be updated quarterly with the progress of each of the CAP Goals, among other requirements. GAO reviewed the website www.performance.gov in several reports. GAO criticized the usability of the website as well as the lack of a long-term plan for improving its functionality (U.S. GAO 2013, 2016b). It offered OMB a series of recommendations for improvement, which

OMB agreed to consider, pending funding availability. As of mid-2017, all updates to the website were suspended, pending revisions to goals to align them with the Trump administration's priorities and to refresh the design of the website to reflect concerns raised by GAO and others (see box).

GAO Recommendations to Improve the Performance.gov Website

OMB should work with GSA and the Performance Improvement Council to:

- clarify specific ways that intended audiences could use www.performance.gov and specify changes to support these uses;
- systematically collect information on the needs of intended audiences;
- collect recommended performance metrics and, as appropriate, create goals for those metrics;
- ensure the information presented on www.performance.gov consistently complies with GPRA Modernization Act public reporting requirements for the website's content;
- analyze and, where appropriate, implement usability test results to improve www.performance.gov and
- develop a strategic plan for the future of www.performance.gov that includes goals, objectives and resources needed to meet website requirements; a customer outreach plan and a strategy to manage and archive data.

Sources: http://www.gao.gov/assets/660/655059.pdf and http://www.gao.gov/assets/680/679395.pdf.

Conclusions. Observations of the early operations of the CAP Goals leads to several conclusions:

- The selection process and criteria are key to ensuring a CAP Goal is a meaningful tool for action. As described further in the next section, the CAP Goal as a mechanism for getting action across agencies is an effective tool. There are scores of potential initiatives that could be designated. The challenge is selecting a handful that are meaningful to political leaders and that have an impact that matters more broadly. Selecting too many can result in the "overload" of top leaders and this could result in them delegating their roles to lower-level managers for action. Selecting initiatives that are technically important—such as the governmentwide implementation of new requirements under the Freedom of Information Act—but of little interest to political leaders or the general public could also lead to the diminution of attention by top leaders.
- The joint leadership of CAP Goals seems to be beneficial in engaging agencies and members of the President's Management Council (typically deputy secretaries) in the effective implementation of the goals. However, the selection process of who are the co-leads is important. Designating someone who is in a specific position, because that position "should" be in charge, probably should not be the top criterion. If that individual does not see the goal as a priority, then it will likely not receive the attention needed. One way this potential weakness can be averted is to engage potential CAP Goal leaders up front in the selection and development of the goal.
- There has been significant progress in developing capacity and resources to implement CAP Goals. It took several years for OMB and Congress to reach this point. Having these capabilities and resources in hand, at this point, offers the new administration the chance to move quickly and make greater progress than was possible during the first round of CAP Goals.

- A lack of clarity around the overall "ownership" of the mission-focused goals contributes to less-focused reviews and public reporting on the progress of these CAP Goals. In addition, the central website www.performance.gov is more challenging to implement than the resources devoted to it. GAO's recommendations may be useful guides as the new administration re-conceptualizes the structure and contents of the website. OMB can also leverage resources, such as the US Digital Service, that did not exist when the website was originally developed.

How Did Agencies Effectively Collaborate on the CAP Goals?

While OMB put the overarching governance framework and processes in place, the real action occurred at the CAP Goal level, within each of the goal teams. OMB and the Performance Improvement Council provided support to these teams and served as conveners for those teams that did not have any staff, at least initially. Several elements contributed to the effectiveness of these teams: (1) being given clear authority to act, (2) joint team leaders with career deputies, (3) a CAP Goal management structure and discipline, (4) resources and (5) the ability to re-configure priorities when circumstances changed.

Authority to Act. Having an issue designated as a CAP Goal was not sufficient; an issue needed formal authority—either statutory or executive directives—to deem it sufficiently legitimate for agencies to participate. Pre-existing authority was present for every CAP Goal and, in about half the cases, new authority was provided during the course of the following four years. For example, the Infrastructure Permitting Streamlining CAP Goal built its strategic objectives and priorities around a 2011 presidential memorandum, a 2012 executive order, a second presidential memo in 2013 and a 2015 statute. The People and Culture CAP Goal started with a 2010 presidential memo on hiring and expanded with an executive order on senior executives. And, the Open Data CAP Goal was rooted in a 2013 executive order followed by a series of OMB directives.

Leading a CAP Goal. Being a goal leader or deputy was always an "other duties as assigned" role. As a result, top leadership engagement and staffing varied significantly at the CAP Goal level. But, once the White House Leadership Development Program and funding became available in early 2016, there was much more focus and continuity in efforts at the goal level.

There were 26 named CAP Goal leaders across the 15 CAP Goals. A lesson from the interim round of CAP Goals was the value of designating joint goal leaders—one with a White House perspective and one with an agency perspective. Ideally, a career deputy would also be designated. Several goal leaders were designated as co-leads for more than one CAP Goal (e.g., Tony Scott, federal chief information officer, was the co-lead for three CAP Goals: Cybersecurity, IT Delivery and Open Data). In several cases, there were 3–4 co-leads (e.g., the Smarter IT Delivery and the Insider Threat CAP Goals each had four co-leads). While this had the potential for blurring accountability, having this many co-leads was seen as useful because these leaders helped connect different networks of stakeholders that needed to work together to effectively implement these particular goals.

Goal leaders were typically chosen because of the positions they held, not necessarily because they had an interest in the topic. However, in cases where there was a personal interest, the goal team tended to be more active. For example, several top government leaders invested substantial efforts:

- the administrator of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy in OMB, Anne Rung, for the Category Management CAP Goal;
- the controller of the Office of Federal Financial Management in OMB, David Mader, for the Shared Services CAP Goal and
- the Acting Commissioner for Social Security, Carolyn Colvin, for the Customer Service CAP Goal.

However, according to one interviewee, only 5 of the 15 CAP Goals had career deputies to ensure continuity during the transition between administrations.

When selecting goal leaders, some attention was paid to the personality mix of the leadership team. However, whenever a goal leader in an agency ranked below the deputy secretary/chief operating officer level—such as was the case for STEM Education—those goals reportedly received less attention in President's Management Council meetings where the deputy secretaries reported on the progress of their goals, because lower-level officials are not in attendance.

According to interviewees, the role of goal leader was perceived as an "additional duty" that did not bring any staff or resources to it. Reportedly, an agency often felt "stuck" with having to pick up the cost of staffing, etc. For career staff involved, this work was outside what they were being assessed on in their personal performance agreements, so they felt they were being given an unfunded mandate. This was less of a case when the CAP Goal aligned with an agency's strategic plan or agency priority goal. For example, the Job-Creating Investments CAP Goal aligned well with the Department of Commerce's mission and the Customer Service CAP Goal aligned well with Social Security's strategic plan.

Most goal leaders reportedly did not hold regular quarterly in-person progress meetings, especially in the mission-focused goals. The President's Management Council and agency chief operating officers designated as co-leads for the mission-support goals were more diligent about progress reviews. This observation was also reflected in GAO's assessment (U.S. GAO 2016a).

Managing a CAP Goal. A key role of CAP Goal teams is to provide focus and momentum for joint action by a wide range of stakeholders and collaboration partners. The most successful CAP Goal teams had created a full-time program management office that managed collaboration and shared learning across the networks of agencies involved. For example, the Infrastructure Permitting, the Veterans Mental Health and the Insider Threat CAP Goals each had full-time program management teams. Other CAP Goals had no full-time support staff (at least, not until the White House Leadership Development Program fellows became available in late 2015) and they experienced slower progress. These included, for example, the Customer Service, People and Culture and STEM Education CAP Goals. Once staff support became available, these goals made significantly greater progress.

Having a small team, even if only to serve as a coordinator and meeting facilitator, was found to be essential. Ideally, having a broader team with a mix of skills is helpful; for example, staff with program management, subject matter and communication skills would make the teams more effective. There are a series of collaboration tools that can help these teams that have been developed by the General Service Administration's Office of Executive Councils and the Performance Improvement Council. These include templates for memoranda of understanding, process-tracking tools, guides and handbooks for shared operations. The newly-enacted Program Management Improvement and Accountability Act—which requires the executive branch to develop a network of trained program managers across the government—may help develop program management skills within the CAP Goal teams in coming years.

Responding to Changing Circumstances. Seven of the 15 CAP Goal revised their focus as the result of changing circumstances, new legislation, new administration priorities or due to unanticipated events. Following are several examples of changes in focus of individual CAP Goals:

- When Anne Rung became the new administrator of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy in late 2014, she re-oriented the Strategic Sourcing CAP Goal to become the Category Management CAP Goal—which was a much bolder and broader focus.
- The Insider Threat CAP Goal changed its focus several times in response to external circumstances. Initially created in response to the 2011 WikiLeaks cyber incident and the 2013 Navy Yard shooting, it shifted focus significantly in 2015 after the Office of Personnel Management data breach of personal information of federal employees was uncovered. At that point, it began focusing on reforming the background investigation process.
- The Veterans Mental Health CAP Goal in 2014 was focused on reducing barriers to access to mental health services. A pre-existing task force became the coordinating and oversight body for this goal. In late 2014, the work of the task force expanded significantly when it was assigned responsibility for implementing 19 "executive actions" which were tied to the CAP Goal's quarterly progress review process. In 2015, implementation of a new veteran suicide prevention law was added to the task force's portfolio, followed in 2016 by the addition of other emerging priorities, such as same-day access to mental health care.
- The Climate Change CAP Goal also experienced an expansion of its scope. When designated as a CAP Goal in 2014, it was intended to improve coordination of a 2009 executive order's requirement for strategic sustainability performance plans in each agency. But a new executive order in 2015 set a new, more ambitious greenhouse gas reduction target for the subsequent decade, focusing largely on federal government energy consumption patterns.

Conclusions. The effective management of CAP Goals happens when several threads occur together: committed executive champions as co-leads, full-time staff-level project managers, a project management office with staff drawn from the various agencies involved, training or experience in working in collaborative settings and access to resources—both people and financial. Within such a context, when circumstances change, the team can pivot and still be effective and relevant.

How Is the Federal Government Building Capacity to Undertake Cross-Agency Collaboration?

Successful implementation of individual CAP Goals is premised on effective cross-functional teams that span organizational boundaries. As noted in a series of previous studies, effective teams rely on a set of building blocks: governance, process, financial, collaboration techniques and people skilled at working on teams across boundaries.

Over the past three years, the deputy secretaries on the President's Management Council, along with the Office of Management and Budget, have developed these building blocks for the CAP Goals. Starting in 2014, a series of interrelated initiatives were launched that will help enable cross-functional teams to be effective:

- As part of the career Senior Executive Service reform initiatives announced by the president in December 2014, the White House created the White House Leadership Development Program for promising future career executives. The participants are typically assigned to support CAP Goal projects. The inaugural cohort of 16 participants selected by their deputy secretaries as promising future leaders, was launched in October 2015. It was a

one-year temporary assignment, loosely based on the long-standing, prestigious White House Fellows program. A second cohort of participants is currently helping develop the next round of CAP Goals, among other projects.

- Staff for the CAP Goal teams perform play different roles, depending on the needs of the goal—it could be project management, meeting facilitation, coordinating meetings, metrics development, etc. Many of these roles are filled by the White House Development Program participants, but a small handful of CAP Goals have team leaders that are full-time program managers that extend beyond serving as a secretariat. For example, Richard Kidd, executive director of the Infrastructure Permitting CAP Goal team, was a presidential appointee and coordinated meetings on-the-ground in communities where the infrastructure projects are being developed.
- The Office of Executive Councils, located in GSA, provides staff support for several cross-agency mission-support councils, such as the Chief Financial Officers Council and the Chief Information Officers Council. It launched a "CXO Fellows" program in 2015 for agency staffers working in financial management, information technology and acquisition career specialties. This program is part-time and for one year. Participants range from GS-11 to GS-15; about 50 individuals currently participate. Like the other two programs, it exposes rising leaders to a governmentwide perspective and develops collaboration skills.

In addition to people skilled in cross-functional management, financial resources became available to CAP Goal teams via the FY 2016 appropriations bill. Congress agreed to allow agencies to jointly fund up to $15 million for cross-agency initiatives, including career development in these initiatives. The funding support for CAP Goals is modeled after the CXO Councils' funding—where agencies contribute a share of the costs. To ensure there isn't a sense that this is an "OMB Slush Fund," there is a detailed description of how funds will be used in OMB's congressional budget justification for the CAP Goals.

Conclusions. The CAP Goal is a mechanism for effectively managing cross-agency initiatives. Its core building blocks are not new; they were developed and used during the Bush administration to manage the 24 E-Government initiatives. But these earlier initiatives were transitory; the CAP Goal is statutory and provides a legal and administrative institutional base. However, these capacities the governmentwide team is developing for the CAP goal teams need not be isolated to just CAP Goals. They could be leveraged in the future to expand the use of collaborative approaches more broadly. For example, it could be a foundation for developing a cadre of career senior executives who have cross-agency experience.

How Did Internal and External Reviews and Reporting Take Place?

Congress designed the CAP Goal system to provide internal and external transparency on progress and next steps. Internally, OMB, the President's Management Council, the Performance Improvement Council and the CAP Goal teams developed a quarterly review process that largely worked. According to GAO, "OMB's Deputy Director for Management leads implementation-focused meetings for the eight management CAP Goals approximately three times a year, and OMB's Deputy Director for Budget leads meetings to review the seven mission-focused CAP Goals as necessary." (U.S. GAO 2016a)

Externally, the Performance.gov website provides a one-stop public portal where the quarterly progress of each of the CAP Goals is posted. However, in general, most of the CAP Goals lack outcome-oriented metrics. Most focus on program management actions taken or activity-tracking such as the number of meetings held. For example, one of the Open Data CAP Goal's objectives is to "fuel economic growth and innovation through the increased use of federal

Open Data," but its progress is reported as the number of data sets cataloged on the Data.gov website and the number of forums held to encourage public and business use of these data sets.

Notable examples of goals with clear outcomes include:

- the Climate Change CAP Goal, which reported clear outcomes such as how direct greenhouse gas emissions from federal activities had declined by 17.6 percent by FY 2015, from a 2008 baseline and
- the People and Culture CAP Goal's efforts to increase employees' engagement with their work, as measured by a governmentwide survey. Engagement had been on the decline so a governmentwide effort, with managerial training and data, was launched. As a result, "Between 2014 and 2015, 57% of bureaus in the government increased their engagement scores; 21% of these bureaus increased 6% or more," according to Beth Cobert, former acting director of the Office of Personnel Management and former co-lead of this CAP Goal.

In general, there were few proactive efforts to engage external stakeholders in the implementation of CAP Goals and it was not clear if there was any external interest expressed in their progress as CAP Goals. There was interest in selected topics, such as the White House-sponsored forums on the use of Open Data, but that tended to be an exception.

As noted earlier, dynamics differed between mission-support and mission-focused CAP Goals and this cascaded to the review and reporting processes as well. OMB and the President's Management Council were able to ensure regular reviews were conducted and progress reports prepared on a quarterly basis for the mission-support CAP Goals. In addition, OMB and Performance Improvement Council staff worked with the eight mission-support CAP Goal teams to develop a summary of highlights of progress at the end of the Obama administration. In contrast, reviews occurred less regularly for the mission-focused CAP Goals, since there was no overall "owner" of these processes for the mission-focused goals and there was no summing up at the end of the Obama administration. Budget guidance by OMB for FY 2019 has set new expectations for how CAP Goals will be treated during a period of presidential transition in the future.

Conclusions. The future sustainability of cross-agency collaborative tools such as CAP Goals may well depend on developing more quantitative outcome-oriented progress reports for the public and Congress. If the multiplicity of mandated meetings, committees and working groups is not seen of value, then political and public support could wane.

What Has Been the Impact of CAP Goals?

The wide range of initiatives undertaken makes it difficult to offer a general characterization of the impact of the 15 CAP Goals. There is no single scorecard. However, one interviewee who had a cross-CAP Goal perspective felt that there was significant progress on most goals, especially those where there was strong support from both agencies and Congress.

As noted in the previous section, the measurability of goals has been problematic. As a result, the progress of each goal is typically described on www.performance.gov in qualitative terms. There are no plans to sum up the status of the CAP Goals at the end of the four-year period, which ended September 30, 2017. However, as also noted earlier, there was a qualitative sum-up[3] by the outgoing Obama administration of the eight mission-support CAP Goals (White House 2017).

In summary, the statutory creation of CAP Goals has been beneficial in three ways:

- First, the initiatives designated as CAP Goals have each demonstrated progress, but assessing this progress has been based largely on qualitative rather than quantitative evidence.
- Second, the CAP Goal governance and review processes have resulted in more systematic and effective use of collaborative networks.
- Third, the CAP Goal initiative has resulted in the development of new capacities to govern across agency boundaries on a sustained basis.

Tangible, But Qualitative, Achievements of Mission and Mission-Support Results

As noted earlier, for the most part, CAP Goal metrics for results are not quantitative and don't focus on impact. Most metrics tend to be activity-oriented, and that may be the nature of a quarterly progress reporting system. In addition, there is no systematic annual or final sum-up of the progress toward the goals outlined by each of the CAP Goals (however, as noted earlier, the Obama administration's management team summed up the progress of the eight mission-support CAP Goals).

Nevertheless, a qualitative assessment of the impact of the CAP Goals seems to support observations that there has been demonstrated tangible progress over time when viewed from a longer, institutional perspective.

3. http://www.businessofgovernment.org/sites/default/files/CAP Goal Success Stories.pdf

For mission-support CAP Goals, progress can be typically assessed in terms of achieving greater standardization, consolidation of duplicative services and cost savings. They are also better positioned to be seen as sustainable over time:

- For the **Shared Services** and **Category Management CAP Goals**, policy statements, strategic plans and governance structures were put in place, along with ROI analyses demonstrating the value of investing in a longer-term commitment to these initiatives. They are both positioned to "go to scale" in the near term.
- The **Smarter IT Delivery CAP Goal** led to several sets of metrics and reviews—Portfolio-Stat metrics, the IT Dashboard; TechStat reviews—that have resulted in a more disciplined approach to managing federal IT investments and have demonstrated savings.
- With the **Benchmarking CAP Goal**, OMB instituted annual "FedStat" reviews with each agency to raise the visibility of comparing the cost and quality of similar functions, such as human resources, across agencies. This has helped frame both agency-level as well as governmentwide policies. For example, there is now a common language across departments around common mission-support functions; previously each saw themselves as unique. Also, the data provided the business case for agencies to undertake specific actions, such as the Department of Energy's consolidation of its HR functions. The Benchmarking data may have been helpful as agencies developed their Agency Reform Plans required by the new administration to be submitted to OMB in September 2017.
- The **Lab-to-Market CAP Goal** resulted in an upward trend in transfers of federal patents and licenses for commercialization by the private sector, as well as increased private sector use of federal lab facilities. The statistics to calculate the impacts resulting from this trend, however, lag several years behind the anecdotal evidence and the "counts" of the number of times labs are used or patents are shared.

For mission-focused CAP Goals, progress and outcomes tend to be more diffuse, but measurable in some cases. For example:

- With the **Infrastructure Permitting CAP Goal**, there was a set of strategic objectives that led a shift from one-off efforts to navigate the permitting labyrinth for individual infrastructure projects to a systematic approach with a centralized program management office, a "Permitting Dashboard," funding and new legislative authority. There is also a set of metrics to ensure accountability over the life of an infrastructure project. These new processes can serve as a foundation for advancing the new administration's efforts to accelerate investments in infrastructure.
- There are clear outcome metrics from the **Climate Change CAP Goal**, in large part because the metrics were already in place to assess progress in federal agencies. The goal leaders were able to demonstrate measurable declines in greenhouse gases and increase in renewable electricity as a result of specific federal agency actions taken. For example, the amount of renewable electrical energy consumed by federal agencies more than doubled between fiscal years 2008 and 2015 and the use of energy-saving performance contracts nearly tripled between 2014 and 2016.

Similar progress can be described for many of the other CAP Goals, and this is detailed further in the case studies in Appendix 2.

Improved Governance and Processes for Cross-Agency Collaboration

According to several CAP Goal team interviewees, their initiatives greatly benefited from being designated as a CAP Goal, especially those where cross-agency networks, governance mechanisms and progress review processes were in the formative stages.

For example, improving customer service was an Obama administration priority set in 2011 via executive order, but it wasn't until it was designated as a CAP Goal in 2014 that the effort finally "took off," with co-leads by OMB and the acting commissioner of the Social Security Administration. They used the opportunity to designate a set of 30 "core" federal services and created a Core Federal Services Council of senior leaders, along with a working-level group of staff. Together, these groups developed a focused agenda and common initiatives, such as the development of "feedback buttons" located in high-traffic locations offering federal services, such as at TSA screening stations and Social Security offices. In conversations with CAP Goal staff, they said that the designation as a CAP Goal led to the availability of a staff coordination point and a small pool of innovation funds, along with the visibility of quarterly progress meetings at senior levels. They said all of these factors helped create progress toward a vision set years earlier.

Likewise, as noted earlier, designating Shared Services as a CAP Goal helped lead to a more formalized approach to governing shared services. Creating the Shared Services Governance Board, supported by a Unified Shared Services Management Office at the General Services Administration, resulted in a more strategic enterprise-wide approach to implementation rather than via an agency-by-agency or service-by-service basis as had been the case in previous years.

Other initiatives that interviewees said benefitted from CAP Goal designation include:

- the Jobs Creating Investment CAP Goal, where staff said that the greater visibility and narrower focus led to productive partnerships, especially between the Commerce and State Departments;
- the Infrastructure Permitting CAP Goal, which benefited from $3.5 million in funding for a small program management office and a "dashboard" to track progress of individual projects. Designation also gave the initiative greater prominence as a result of their quarterly progress reviews and
- the Insider Threat CAP Goal, which also resulted in staffing for a small program management office that allowed stronger coordination among the various agencies involved in the initiative. The quarterly progress reviews created a sense of urgency to demonstrate that they were actively collaborating, as well.

Created New Capacities to Govern Across Agency Boundaries

A collateral benefit of the creation of CAP Goals has been the development of a more institutional commitment to working across agency boundaries, not unlike the impact of the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 had on how the military services began working together more effectively. Though not mandated in the GPRA Modernization Act statute, OMB, OPM and GSA have developed training for senior executives on working across boundaries more effectively, a developmental program for rising executives to develop hands-on experience in working in cross-agency settings and an aspirational career path for career federal employees to pursue.

The institutional mechanism of establishing CAP Goals, designating leaders and conducting quarterly review processes has been recognized as an effective way to foster cross-agency collaboration (Moynihan and Kroll 2016). The lessons and capacities developed here can be applied in cross-agency initiatives beyond the formal CAP Goal process.

Encourages Greater Cross-Agency Collaboration Beyond CAP Goals

GAO identified a set of prerequisites for effective cross-agency collaboration in a 2005 report. These include factors such as defining clear goals and strategies, along with agreed on roles and responsibilities. Many of these same characteristics were separately identified via a number of academic studies, as well (Popp 2014) and were incorporated into the 2010 revision of GPRA (Fountain 2013b) and have been observed in this review of CAP Goals (see Appendix 2 for details). Their application has supported several findings about how these statutory requirements have contributed to increased cross-agency collaboration:

Cross-Agency Collaboration Is Increasing. Cross-agency collaboration is not new, but in the past, it typically happened in response to significant events, such as the implementation of the Recovery Act, organizing responses to pandemics and recovery efforts from Superstorm Sandy. Oftentimes, the approaches to undertaking cross-agency collaboration was ad hoc, but in recent years the federal government has begun to formalize its efforts, for example via the use of the Incident Command System approach for emergencies (Moynihan and Kroll 2016), The statutory cross-agency councils, such as the Chief Financial Officers Council and the Chief Information Officers Council, have also contributed to greater cross-agency collaboration. However, the CAP Goal approach has fostered the use of collaborative approaches for longer-term initiatives requiring sustainable governance frameworks, such infrastructure permitting and direct foreign investments. As these initiatives "mature" and are removed from the CAP Goal list, it will be interesting to see if they are sustainable long-term.

The Types of Collaboration Are Broadening in the Federal Government. Parallel to the increased use of collaboration is the different mix of the types of collaborative efforts. Historically, collaborative efforts may have focused largely on policy development or information sharing. Increasingly, they are organizing around joint learning, common goal setting and coordinated service delivery. The greater emphasis on implementation and achieving joint outcomes is increasing, with selected CAP Goals as pioneering efforts, such as Category Management and Shared Services.

The Federal Government Is Increasing Its Capacity to Work Across Boundaries. The institutional infrastructure needed to support cross-agency collaboration finally began to coalesce in late 2015 with funding and staffing support. The existence of the Performance Improvement Council and the Office of Executive Councils in GSA have created an institutional "home" for cross-agency collaborative efforts. In addition, the creation of the White House Leadership Development Program, and ancillary rotational assignments that allow agency staff to experience working in a cross-agency environment, have helped provide a foundation for developing staff. Also, the initiative to increase rotational experiences for career Senior Executives has created a potential incentive for developing executives with cross-agency experiences, and the CAP Goals provide a "testing ground" for developing and using such skills. Separately, IBM Center reports by Rosemary O'Leary and Bruce Barkley provide insights on specific approaches for developing senior executives with collaborative skills.

While cross-agency collaboration is increasing beyond those initiatives formally designated as CAP Goals, being designated helped those initiatives increase their degree of collaboration, according to participants. Interviews of CAP Goal staffs consistently surfaced comments about

how the designation of their initiative as a CAP Goal increased visibility among top leaders and helped lead to greater cooperation among peer agencies within their networks. The broadness of some of the mission-oriented goals, such as interim CAP Goal on doubling US exports, led Fountain to observe: "many agencies and programs are "collaborating" only in the sense that they are focused on the same overarching goal." (Fountain 2013b). In contrast, the mission-support goals saw concrete interactions among network members, such as the development of best practice guides by the members of the CAP Goal working group for improving customer service.

Recommendations for Improving the Next Round of CAP Goals

The following recommendations address the overall approach to developing new goals and-making improvements to the overarching governance system. These recommendations are directed to White House Offices, the Office of Management and Budget, the President's Management Council and the Performance Improvement Council. There are also suggested improvements to goal-level implementation, and these are directed to the CAP Goal leaders and their implementation teams.

Improvements to the Governmentwide Goal Framework and Governance System

Seven opportunities for potential improvement stand out, based on reviews of the progress of the CAP Goals as well as reports from GAO, academics and insights on similar approaches being taken in other countries.

Recommendation 1. Refine Criteria for Selecting New CAP Goals. One of the original criteria for the selection of the 2014 set of CAP Goals was to select cross-agency initiatives where progress has been slow or floundering, and where it was judged that additional attention and resources would increase performance. That led to the designation of initiatives such as improving infrastructure permitting and increasing foreign investments in the US. Based on the progress of many of the CAP Goals, this judgment seemed to be well-placed.

However, many of the CAP Goals were not sufficiently bold to have a publicly noticeable effect. For example, customer service improvement initiatives were fairly small pilot efforts and did not result in broad increases in citizen satisfaction with government services, as measured by Forester Research.

Following are recommendations for refining the criteria for selecting future CAP Goals:

- ***Focus on goals that the general public can identify with.*** Consider bigger, bolder goals that capture the imagination of leaders and the public. For example, setting a goal to reduce the time it takes to navigate the federal permitting and approval requirements for the construction of major infrastructure projects was an example of an initiative that had wide public support. Setting bold goals increases the chances that political champions for the goals will care and invest personal time and effort to achieve them.
- ***Select fewer CAP Goals.*** One senior political appointee interviewed thought that eight would be a more manageable number in terms of attracting senior leaders' engagement. With a larger number of CAP Goals, the emphasis of top leaders is on the process of conducting seemingly endless quarterly reviews and ensuring compliance with publishing progress reports, etc. A smaller number would allow top-level attention on the substance of the goals. However, it may be difficult to designate a smaller number of goals, given the prescriptive statutory requirements undergirding the CAP Goals. The law requires setting goals within specific mission-support functions, such as human capital and real property.

- ***Develop more definitive goals, to be achieved within a 4-year timeframes.*** This would result in the ability to demonstrate progress and achievement. In addition, having a target within a defined timeframe helps muster action, based on the experience of an initiative in New Zealand that has been judged as successful and the experience of the homeless veterans initiative. (Scott and Boyd)

Many of the criteria used to select the initial goals in 2014 remain relevant. For example, one beneficial criterion was to avoid selecting initiatives still in the policy development phase. Initiatives still in the policy development phase are less likely to be able to demonstrate progress than an initiative in its implementation phase. For example, the infrastructure permitting CAP Goal was delayed by almost two years in its ability to stand up a program management office because it was awaiting the passage of authorizing legislation. Some positive characteristics of an initiative that is in its implementation phase are the existence of a governance framework, with statutory or executive authority and resources.

Recommendation 2. Strengthen Focus on Outcomes within a CAP Goal. GAO criticized the lack of quantitative metrics of progress toward intended outcomes. A number of CAP Goals did have progress "dashboards," but they tended to track compliance or activities (e.g., number of open data sets posted on line, number of IT projects on schedule, etc.).

- ***Develop outcome metrics.*** Developing metrics that reflect progress toward an outcome may be difficult, given the requirement to report on progress quarterly and with the reality that some goals take years to show progress. For example, increasing the number of students graduating college with a STEM degree takes years to show any impact of activities undertaken today. However, developing quantitative outcome goals—even if they are interim outcome goals—is worth pursuing. In the case of the Veterans Mental Health CAP Goal, the White House pushed for stretch goals, but the reported progress was on metrics such as the number of people trained to prevent suicides, not metrics tracking whether veteran suicides actually declined.
- ***Link to agency strategic plans.*** Related to better definitions of CAP Goal outcomes is the need for them to be explicitly integrated into agency strategic plans and maybe even linked to related agency priority goals. This can create greater institutional support and link to financial and program resources. For example, the Customer Service CAP Goal was part of the Social Security Administration's strategic plan and received internal support and resources for implementation, as a result. Likewise, the Job Creating Investment CAP Goal was embedded into the Department of Commerce's strategic plan, and this led to higher visibility and funding for SelectUSA (a cross-agency initiative and website to attract foreign investments).

Relevance of the CAP Goals to senior leaders is more important than continuity. A number of CAP Goals changed the focus of their efforts during the four-year period in response to changing events. For example, the Veterans Mental Health CAP Goal added a suicide prevention thrust; the Insider Threat CAP Goal added the creation of a new background investigation function in the government in response to the OPM employee data breach; and the Climate Change CAP Goal set new performance targets after a new executive order established new stretch goals. Re-casting goals in response to external prompts is a good thing.

Recommendation 3. Designate a Lead Over All of the Mission-Focused CAP Goals. Designate someone in the White House—possibly in the office of the chief of staff—to be the overall executive champion for the mission-focused goals. The experience of the first round of CAP Goals was that the deputy director for management at OMB and the President's Management Council were closely involved in providing executive leadership for the mission-support CAP Goals, but there was not an equivalent leader for mission-focused goals. The leads for individual mission-focused goals were typically dispersed among various White House policy coun-

cils, which see themselves as "outranking" or being of equivalent stature as OMB. While the deputy director for management sat in on periodic "deep dives" held on the progress of the mission-focused CAP Goals, no one currently has the authority to be the overall champion to provide ongoing oversight or support.

Recommendation 4. Link OMB More Effectively to CAP Goal Teams. OMB needs to leverage both its management and budget sides more effectively on behalf of the CAP Goal teams. Where there is an internal champion on the budget side, it becomes easier to orchestrate existing resources on behalf of the CAP Goal team. This occurred effectively, for example, with the expansion of iCorps (which links federal lab scientists with private entrepreneurs) under the Lab-to-Market CAP Goal. Ideally, there would be an internal OMB team—including staff from both management and budget—that is designated to support each goal.

Recommendation 5. Strategically Engage Agencies and the CXO Councils. Agency strategic plans, and the strategic plans of the cross-agency (CXO) councils (e.g., the Chief Human Capital Officers Council), typically did not systematically incorporate these initiatives into their mission, and they should. One approach for doing so would be to engage them in helping select the goals, since that would help ensure buy-in and links to their strategy plans, operating plans and budget resources.

Recommendation 6. Improve Communication Strategies. OMB should proactively develop better communication strategies both governmentwide and within each CAP Goal team. These communication strategies should be both internal to the government as well as public-facing. GAO and others have offered specific recommendations to improve the public-facing www.performance.gov website, but the internal communications between agencies and other internal stakeholders needs attention as well.

Recommendation 7. Build on Existing Practices. Acting on the lessons learned from the initial implementation of the interim CAP Goals proved to be effective. Effect practices should be continued. For example:

- Continue to designate co-leaders for the CAP Goals.
- Continue the small central fund and the use of White House Leadership Development Program Fellows to support individual CAP Goal initiatives.
- Continue engaging the President's Management Council.
- Continue the periodic one-on-one "deep dives" on goal progress with the deputy director for management.
- Continue to ensure sufficient legal or executive authority to act on initiatives designated as CAP Goals.

Improvements to the Operating Level CAP Goal Teams

Several observers cautioned that OMB should avoid a "one-size-fits-all, centralized approach" to how the individual CAP Goal teams are managed. The culture and dynamics will vary between the different initiatives. Yet, there are some general observations from the first round of CAP Goals that may benefit CAP Goal leaders in the next round:

Recommendation 8. Establish Full-Time CAP Goal Teams. Those CAP Goal teams that have a defined central support staff made more progress than those without one. Having a central team—at a minimum with one full-time person—allows the development of a theory of change, development of a clear outcome-oriented strategy and persistent attention to progress

by various stakeholders. For some CAP Goals in the first round, there was little progress until a White House Leadership Development fellow was assigned.

CAP Goals with a more robust team with subject matter experts as well as support staff—Veterans Mental Health, Infrastructure Permitting, Insider Threat, Open Data—were able to make greater progress than others. For the most part, these teams already existed and the CAP Goals were a subset of existing activities. However, most did not have other needed skills of effective cross-functional teams, such as communications, data analysis, project management and data visualization.

Recommendation 9. Jointly Develop Cross-Agency and Agency Staffs Working on a CAP Goal Team. There has been some centrally-provided staff development on how to work on cross-agency teams, such as for the White House Leadership Development fellows, but this kind of development needs to cascade to sub-goal working groups so they can create their own dynamics. These would include skill development such as crafting cross-agency process mapping, which was done effectively by the Customer Service CAP Goal working groups. One approach could be to leverage existing agency internal leadership development programs, and their training resources, to help support such staff development.

Recommendation 10. Use Interagency Agreements. Formalizing interagency arrangements—meetings, governance protocols, shared resources, etc.—can be an important element for creating the continuity needed as staffs inevitably change. According to Fountain, such agreements can also include the sharing of information and data, to develop common interpretations and access to administrative flexibilities with regard to statutory and regulatory requirements. Some agencies may have greater authority to act in some areas than do other agencies involved in a collaborative venture, which may result in deferring certain activities to agencies with greater latitude. She notes that sometimes agency general counsel staff may not have the required expertise to help craft a specialized interagency agreement or memorandum of understanding, and that the General Services Administration has an office that can help interagency initiatives to develop such agreements (e.g., sharing contracting authority, managing office space, etc.). (Fountain 2013a)

Recommendation 11. Create Shared Budgets or Cross-cut Budgets. Statutory constraints on sharing resources exist, but there are methods to work within such constraints. OMB has been granted limited authority to coordinate cross-agency funding for CAP Goals. Other methods, such as developing cross-cutting budgets, are possible but would require active engagement by OMB budget staff. One example is the Everglades Crosscut Budget for ecosystem restoration initiatives. (Fountain 2013b)

Appendix 1: Selected IBM Center Reports on Cross-Agency Collaboration and Networks, 2001–2017

Following are selected IBM Center reports, organized around several key themes that have characterized the research the Center supported over the past decade and a half on this topic.

Concepts and Characteristics

Inter-Organizational Networks: A Review of the Literature to Inform Practice, by Janice Popp, H. Brinton Milward, Gail MacKean, Ann Casebeer and Ron Lindstrom (2014) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/sites/default/files/Inter-Organizational%20Networks_0.pdf. This report examines the literature on inter-organizational networks that has evolved over the past decade, written from the perspective of a wide range of academic disciplines such as sociology, business management, public administration and political science.

The Next Government of the United States: Challenges for Performance in the 21st Century, by Donald F. Kettl (2006) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/report next-government-united-states-challenges-performance-21st-century. Future leaders face a very different set of management challenges from the ones that confronted the previous leaders. What can we do to begin predicting and preparing responses to these challenges?

Types, Functions, and Tools

New Tools for Collaboration: The Experience of the Intelligence Community, by Greg Treverton (2016) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/report/new-tools-collaboration-experience-us-intelligence-community. This report describes the use of internal collaborative tools, similar to social media, across the Intelligence Community. The initial focus was tools, but the end focus is collaboration, for while the tools can enable, what ultimately matters are policies and practices interacting with organizational culture.

Adapting the Incident Command Model for Knowledge-Based Crises: The Case of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, by Christopher Ansell and Ann Keller (2014) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/sites/default/files/Adapting%20the%20Incident%20Command%20Model%20for%20Knowledge-Based%20Crises.pdf. This report is a case study of a science-based agency—the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)—which sought to use the standard emergency incident response system model but ultimately developed a significantly revised approach to incident management. The report finds that the transformation happened because the CDC is required to produce authoritative knowledge during a crisis. This calls for a different collaborative response structure than might work for direct frontline operations.

Strategies for Supporting Frontline Collaboration: Lessons from Stewardship Contracting, by Cassandra Moseley (2010) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/report/strategies-supporting-frontline-collaboration-lessons-stewardship-contracting. Dr. Moseley shows how stewardship contracting works, via a series of case studies examining the experiences of the Bureau of

Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service. She found that leaders in these agencies were able to change the behaviors of their hierarchically driven culture by using four strategies to foster collaboration: (1) creating time and space for collaboration, (2) changing agency rules to encourage collaboration, (3) providing staff incentives to collaborate and (4) building the capacity to collaborate in both the agency as well as among stakeholders.

Integrating Service Delivery Across Levels of Government: Case Studies of Canada and Other Countries, by Dr. John Langford, Dr. Jeffrey Roy (2008) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/report/integrating-service-delivery-across-levels-government-case-studies-canada-and-other-countries. This report identifies strategies for, and challenges to, better integrating the delivery of citizen-oriented services. These strategies are based on experiences from Canada and four other countries that are also integrating their service delivery networks. The report concludes that at a minimum, governments and their leaders need to embrace a mindset of interdependence if they hope to chart a comprehensive vision of integrating the delivery of citizen-oriented services.

From Forest Fires to Hurricane Katrina: Case Studies of Incident Command Systems, by Donald Moynihan (2007) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/report/forest-fires-hurricane-katrina-case-studies-incident-command-systems. Professor Moynihan examines the Katrina case, as well as others, and identifies the conditions under which the ICS approach can be successful. Moynihan offers a series of recommendations for managing in hierarchical networks like the ICS. Moynihan concludes that, while the ICS were not used successful in Katrina, none of the subsequent after-action reviews questioned the basic wisdom of the ICS approach.

A Manager's Guide to Choosing and Using Collaborative Networks, by H. Brinton Milward, Ph.D., Keith G. Provan, Ph.D. (2006) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/report/managers-guide-choosing-and-using-collaborative-networks. This report can be viewed as a public manager's primer on collaborative networks. It distills key concepts about the types and purposes of networks and, more importantly, what managers need to do if they find themselves in charge of or participating in a network. Authors' practical insights are rooted in more than two decades of observing ongoing networks, mainly at the local and regional levels, where much of the innovative work in using networks is occurring.

Communities of Practice: A New Tool for Government Managers, by Xavier de Souza Briggs, William M. Snyder (2003) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/report/communities-practice-new-tool-government-managers. This study documents the creation and implementation of several intergovernmental "communities of practice." It traces the history of these networks and documents their structure, activities and outcomes as well as identifies a number of critical success factors related to these groups. Case studies include Safe Cities, Boost4Kids and 21st Century Skills.

Leveraging Networks: A Guide for Public Managers Working Across Organizations, by Robert Agranoff (2001) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/report/leveraging-networks-guide-public-managers-working-across-organizations. This project examines the changing operational challenges faced by today's public managers as they participate in collaborative undertakings with other governments and the nongovernmental sector. The lessons are derived from experiences in several Midwestern states, where many established networks operate.

Network Governance

Interagency Performance Targets: A Case Study of New Zealand's Results Programme, by Rodney Scott and Ross Boyd (2017) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/sites/default/files/Interagency Performance Targets.pdf. Describes how New Zealand developed its equivalent to Cross-Agency Priority Goals, beginning in 2012, including the approach, framework and results of the initiative. The authors offer practice insights on implementation.

Implementing Cross-Agency Collaboration: A Guide for Federal Managers, by Jane Fountain (2013) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/sites/default/files/Implementing%20Cross%20Agency%20Collaboration.pdf. The author notes that effective collaboration consists of two dimensions—people skills and organizational processes—and that successful leaders must make strategic use of both elements to manage in a networked government. She concludes with a series of recommendations for action by leaders of cross-agency initiatives as well as recommending that OMB develop cross-government guidance so agencies can move forward quickly.

Collaboration and Performance Management in Network Settings: Lessons from Three Watershed Governance Efforts, by Mark Imperial (2001) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/report/collaboration-and-performance-management-network-settings-lessons-three-watershed-governance-. The project describes how performance measures and monitoring processes influence the collaborative processes used to develop and implement watershed management programs.

Collaborative Leadership

Effective Leadership in Network Collaboration: Lessons Learned from Continuum of Care Homeless Programs, by Hee Soun Jan, Jesus Valero, Kyujun Jung (2017) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/report/effective-leadership-network-collaboration-lessons-learned-continuum-care-homeless-programs. Based on a survey of 237 homeless program networks across the nation, as well as in-depth reviews and interviews, the authors describe the attributes of a successful management style for network leaders.

Developing Senior Executive Capabilities to Address National Priorities, by Bruce Barkley (2013) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/sites/default/files/Developing Senior Executive Capabilities to Address National Priorities_0.pdf. This report offers a practical, targeted approach for ways to create a cadre of experienced career senior executives who can lead major, cross-agency initiatives on national priorities.

Collaboration Across Boundaries: Insights and Tips from Senior Federal Executives, by Rosemary O'Leary, Catherine Gerard (2012) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/report/collaboration-across-boundaries-insights-and-tips-federal-senior-executives. This report provides valuable insights into how federal senior executives view collaboration. The report concludes with eight insightful tips about how to collaborate in government, including the view of senior executives that the foundation of success in collaboration is common purpose, while another is "don't be afraid of conflict—expect it." The report also includes valuable insights into why agencies collaborate, the barriers to collaboration and the skill set needed to be a collaborative manager.

A Manager's Guide to Resolving Conflicts in Collaborative Networks, by Lisa B. Bingham, Rosemary O'Leary (2006) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/report/managers-guide-resolving-conflicts-collaborative-networks. This report can be viewed as a public manager's primer on collaborative networks. It distills key concepts about the types and purposes of networks and, more importantly, what managers need to do if they find themselves in charge of or participating in a network.

Network Structures

Designing Collaborative Networks, by Jane Fedorowicz, Steve Sawyer (2012) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/report/designing-collaborative-networks. This report offers practical advice to public managers and political leaders who are addressing complex public challenges through multi-organizational networks. The developers of collaborative networks face political, organizational and technological challenges in a world accustomed to the traditional, hierarchical approach to problem solving and accountability.

Environmental Collaboration: Lessons Learned About Cross-Boundary Collaborations, by Kathryn Bryk Friedman, Kathryn Foster (2011) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/report/environmental-collaboration-lessons-learned-about-cross-boundary-collaborations. This report identifies the necessary conditions, capacities, organizational models and experiences that drive successful collaborative ventures resulting in cleaner water, air and land. The authors discuss what it takes to start such a collaborative initiative and—more importantly—how to sustain an initiative over time.

Leveraging Networks to Meet National Goals: FEMA and the Safe Construction Networks, by William Waugh (2001) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/report/leveraging-networks-meet-national-goals-fema-and-safe-construction-networks. This report analyzes the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) work with the private sector in implementing FEMA's goals via public-private partnerships. The project includes an assessment of FEMA's Project Impact Program. The objective of the study is to assess and compare the achievement of national policy goals through private sector partnership programs.

Evolution of Collaborative Initiatives

Coordinating for Results: A Case Study of Interagency Coordination in Afghanistan, by Andrea Strimling Yodsampa (2013) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/sites/default/files/Coordinating%20for%20Results.pdf. This report focuses on interagency coordination, a close "cousin" to collaboration. The author analyzes the evolution of interactions between U.S. civilian and military efforts in Afghanistan from 2001–2009. Describing examples of successful coordination on initiatives such as school and road construction and the 2004 Afghan national elections. Based on her observations, she offers recommendations on how agencies can better assure effective coordination over time.

Designing and Managing Cross-Sector Collaboration: A Case Study in Reducing Traffic Congestion, by Melissa M Stone, Emily O Saunoi-Sandgren, John M Bryson, Barbara C Crosby (2009) http://www.businessofgovernment.org/report/designing-and-managing-cross-sector-collaboration-case-study-reducing-traffic-congestion. This report focuses specifically on a multi-year cross-sector collaborative effort to significantly reduce traffic congestion in the Twin Cities metropolitan area of Minnesota. The organizers of the program concluded that a collaborative, multi-modal approach was crucial to making real headway on a longstanding, costly, nearly intractable public problem. The network's structure and leadership evolved over time.

Appendix 2: Case Studies of the 15 CAP Goals, FY 2014–2017

Mission-Support CAP Goals

1. Delivering World-Class Customer Service
2. Delivering Smarter IT
3. Buying as One through Category Management
4. Expanding Shared Services to Increase Quality and Savings
5. Benchmarking to Improve Mission-Support Operations
6. Opening Data to Spark Innovation
7. Bridging the Barriers from Lab-to-Market
8. People and Culture

Mission-Focused CAP Goals

9. Strengthening Federal Cybersecurity
10. Service Members and Veterans Mental Health
11. Job Creating Investment
12. Cutting Red Tape in the Infrastructure Permitting Process
13. STEM Education
14. Insider Threat & Security Clearance Reform
15. Climate Change (Federal Actions)

NOTE: The following case studies were originally blog posts published between September 2016 and May 2017. The date of publication of the blog posts is noted. The case studies are current as of the date of their original publication, but selected updates have been provided.

Also, the CAP Goal Statement provided for each CAP Goal is the version appearing in the last quarterly update for the CAP Goals, for fourth quarter of fiscal year 2016, which were publicly released in early 2017.

1. Delivering World-Class Customer Service

First published as a blog post on September 20, 2016

CAP Goal Statement: *Increase public satisfaction and promote positive experiences with the federal government by making it faster and easier for individuals and businesses to complete transactions and receive quality services.*

Forrester Research reported in August 2016 that most of the services in 15 federal agencies it surveyed ranked near the bottom of about 300 public and private sector "brands" it reviewed. Even the federal government itself sees the challenge: "Despite some important strides to improve customer service over the past 15 years, many federal government services fail to meet the expectations of the public, creating unnecessary hassle and cost for citizens, businesses, and the government itself."

Background. Improving customer service has been an off-and-on federal priority over a number of years. In fact, it is now more broadly referred to as "customer experience," since research shows that "customer service" accounts for only a quarter of a customer's overall satisfaction with their experience with a company or government agency.

So, what is going on currently?

President Obama revitalized a focus on the government's customers with a 2011 Executive Order that requires agencies to develop customer service plans. In response, some agencies created chief customer service offices, while others wove service initiatives into their regular operations. Agencies pursued a wide range of initiatives, many focusing on internet services. However, when the Government Accountability Office examined selected agencies' efforts underway in 2014, it concluded that progress was mixed.

By his second term, the Obama Administration doubled down. In 2014, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) designated customer service as one of the government's top 15 cross-agency priority goals for the next four years. Lisa Danzig, an OMB official, and Carolyn Colvin, acting Social Security commissioner, were named as co-leads for this governmentwide push.

Efforts shifted into high gear in early 2016 with the creation of the Core Federal Services Council and the designation of 30 "high touch" customer services in the 16 agencies named to the Council. Since its first meeting in April, the Council has developed a set of strategies and a framework that can serve as a foundation to build upon in coming years.

Four Cross-Agency Strategies. The goal leaders and Council have outlined four overarching strategies and undertaken a series of cross-agency initiatives for each of the strategies:

- ***Improve top customer interactions.*** Rather than trying to "boil the ocean," the goal leaders, along with Council members, identified 30 "core federal programs" that provide services that touch a significant number of citizens and businesses. These include, for example, the issuance of passports, IRS on-line tax filing, patent approvals and TSA airport screening programs.
- ***Develop standards, practices and tools.*** Leaders of the 30 individual programs participating in the initiative will develop their own improvement plans, with the goal of creating transaction-specific indicators to track progress. The Council has also piloted an eight-part

customer experience maturity assessment model—developed by a cross-agency community of practice—that each of the service programs has voluntarily used to self-assessed themselves. Currently, leaders within the 30 programs are sketching out "journey maps" of the experiences of their services from a customer perspective to identify priorities for improvement and what matters to their customers.

- ***Feedback and transparency.*** The Council is piloting the use of Feedback USA, a customer feedback "pulse survey" kiosk, in about a half dozen agencies. These include local Passport, Citizen and Immigration Services, Social Security and Veterans Benefit offices. Based on how useful these real-time responses are to managers, the plan is to expand to additional programs in coming months. The broader goal is to make it a standard practice for services to use feedback data in delivering core services and eventually to have transparency of transaction times and satisfaction measures publicly available.
- ***Focus on the front line.*** In addition to focusing on customers, the initiative recognizes that you cannot have good customer satisfaction without satisfied employees. OMB created an annual customer service award program in 2015 to recognize individuals and teams in agencies and at the presidential level. More broadly, there is also a recognition that the trends in annual employee engagement and satisfaction scores of frontline employees for organizations delivering core services relate to data reflecting improved customer experiences for those receiving services. This will be part of a broader focus to determine if special efforts are needed to improve employee engagement, as well.

A Cross-Agency Governance Framework. Danzig and Colvin could do little on their own to move the needle on customer satisfaction. But by creating the Core Federal Services Council and highlighting 30 key service programs, they are now leveraging the efforts of the 16 agencies that have operational responsibility for delivering these services. The Council also serves as a sounding board as well as to identify and resolve policy issues. It is staffed by a White House Leadership Development Fellow, providing a focal point and critical mass to get things done.

In addition to the Council, there is an informal cross-agency Community of Practice. It is comprised of people in these 16 agencies with the knowledge and passion to improve customer experiences. These individuals were originally designated by their deputy secretaries and have the support of internal sponsors. They meet quarterly to identify and develop resources as well as identify common challenges, share best practices and identify practical improvement strategies. For example, they developed a draft maturity model and worked on a Customer Experience Playbook to share more broadly with their peers in other agencies, as well as a cross-agency collaborative platform on the Web.

Finally, for the first time, the governmentwide customer service initiative has access to resources. The fiscal year 2016 budget approved by Congress in March granted OMB funding transfer authority for cross-agency projects and the Council has supported $2 million in funds designated under the customer service goal.

Agency-Specific Initiatives. Many agency plans call for improvements in on-line experiences. But these tend to be longer-term efforts that cost money and action on them is largely in the hands of agency CIOs who are already overwhelmed with demands to address cybersecurity, data center consolidation, replacing legacy systems and other urgent priorities. Yet, there are concrete short-term initiatives underway. Following are examples.

Federal Student Aid (FSA): organizing around the student. FSA provides about $150 billion a year in grants, loans and work study. It is a pioneer in improving customer experience. In 2010, FSA's then-new Chief Operating Officer (COO), Bill Taggert, established a Customer

Experience Office to improve the end user experience. As part of Executive Order 13571, FSA worked on a one-stop mobile-responsive site internally called the "Integrated Student Experience." In the team's initial review of the FSA's customer facing experience, they found FSA did not have a one-to-one relationship with its customers—the students—but rather it worked with an ecosystem of providers, such as servicers and universities. Different divisions within FSA managed different parts of the ecosystem (financial literacy, marketing, applications for aid, repayments, defaults) and these different divisions had created separate processes that did not connect with each other from an end user perspective. As a result, students, borrowers and parents had to deal with separate bureaucracies within FSA throughout the student aid lifecycle.

The Customer Experience Officer reports directly to the COO and has a staff of about 105 FTEs drawn from different divisions within FSA to reflect the entire student aid lifecycle. The Office was treated as a "new startup" that brought together not only staff from different divisions but also a team of statisticians who created actionable insights. The new Office started by consolidating five different websites customers had to deal with and in July 2012 FSA launched the one-stop StudentAid.gov.

Social Security Administration (SSA): A Lifecycle Approach. SSA serves the entire US population, from birth to death and beyond (e.g., survivor's benefits). SSA's strategic Vision 2025 sets out a long-term, omni-channel view of SSA's changing customer expectations. The goal is to foster an internal culture shift among SSA's employees to focus on customer experience, not the business processes that have been put in place.

More than half of SSA's claims are already being filed online. To further encourage the use of online services, they are creating new Customer Engagement Tools that looks across the lifecycle of how citizens interact with SSA, from birth to death.

The system will ultimately have the ability to forecast potential needs of customers in advance and proactively provide information (e.g., applying for a Social Security number at birth or approaching retirement age). This is done by mining various databases (e.g., new birth records) and use analytics to mine information in an enterprise data warehouse. To do this, SSA has created an Analytics Center of Excellence to develop this functionality and it has developed cross-agency relationships to collect or use the data.

Social Security recently introduced the mySocialSecurity portal which currently provides its customers with access various services online- proof of benefits, change of address, replacement Medicare cards and more.

The Passport Service's Feedback Button. The last time Passport Services was in the news was its 2007 backlog crisis of thousands of pending applications, when customers missed vacation and business travel as a result. Congress even passed emergency legislation to bridge a staffing gap.

Today, improving customer service is "part of our culture to help people make their trips," according to Barry Conway, Managing Director of Passport Support Operations in the Bureau of Consular Affairs at the State Department. In fact, the headquarters office has a dedicated customer service division and there is a network of customer service managers in each of the 29 agencies and centers around the country.

The Passport Services' customer satisfaction scores have been rising steadily—77% in 2013 and 81% in 2015—according to the American Customer Satisfaction Index. The recent Forrester survey also shows a sharp jump in satisfaction over the past year—an increase of 10 points on a 100 point scale.

The Service's long-term initiative is to move from a paper-driven to an electronic process wherever possible. For example, they hope to move to electronic renewals of passports by the end of 2017 and to allow on-line appointment-setting for in-person visits to one of the 28 passport offices around the country.

Some of its near-term initiatives include piloting Feedback USA via "feedback button" kiosks in each of the offices with a public counter. Customers exiting the offices can push one of five buttons to reflect their level of satisfaction with services received. The kiosks produce weekly summary reports for managers. Initially the reports were met with skepticism, but they eventually did focus management attention and created some competition between the offices. While it doesn't provide insights as to why customers respond the way they do, the buttons do serve as a good motivator and alert managers when something seems to be seriously awry. Recent results show that 92 percent of customers were satisfied.

What's Next? The four-year cycle for cross-agency priority goals ends in September 2017, nine months after President Trump took office. However, it is not unrealistic to think that the new Administration would also care about improving the delivery of government services! Over a dozen agencies have developed concrete, realistic strategies for their operations—a good foundation to build upon. Furthermore, a 2016 report by the Partnership for Public Service offer several recommendations for action. Interestingly, their recommendations largely mirror much of what is already underway. So, what else should the Trump Administration do?

Postscript (July 2017): The Office of Management and Budget disbanded the Federal Core Services Council in June and suspended the Customer Service Award Program for 2017.

2. Delivering Smarter IT

First published as a blog post on March 2, 2017

CAP Goal Statement: *Eliminate barriers and create new incentives to enable the Federal Government to procure, build, and provide world-class, cost-effective information technology (IT) delivery for its citizens, and hold agencies accountable to modern IT development and customer service standards.*

About 75 percent of the federal IT budget goes to maintaining outdated legacy computer systems, according to the Government Accountability Office (GAO). Some are over 50 years old, yet critical—such as the main IRS tax data base and the nuclear missile launch system. The GAO study went on to note: "Agencies reported 3,427 IT staff employed just to maintain legacy-programming languages, such as COBOL (1,085) and Fortran (613)." In addition, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) recently observed that "43 percent of federal IT projects are reported to be over budget or behind schedule."

These problems are not rooted solely in the lack of dollars. OMB notes that the continued reliance on "waterfall" project management methods results in inflexible, multi-year specifications that are often outdated by the time an IT project is ready. In addition, there is a shortage of tech talent in government because it is hard to recruit, hire and retain specialists. Finally, OMB reports that there are multiple barriers in the acquisition process that deter IT vendors from entering the federal marketplace when compared to doing similar work in the commercial space.

Background. At its outset the Obama Administration pinned its hopes on the use of technology to modernize government. It started with an effort to put its arms around the existing set of systems. In 2009, OMB created a Federal IT dashboard and used TechStat review sessions to monitor major underperforming IT investments on a monthly basis at the project level. It then shifted the leadership of the TechStat reviews to agencies in 2010.

In 2010, then-federal Chief Information Officer (CIO) Vivek Kundra launched an ambitious "25 Point Plan" to reform federal IT management, based in part on what it learned in the prior year from its reviews. This initiative included a shift to shared services, cloud technology, better program management, the continued use of IT dashboards and TechStat reviews and better links between the acquisition and technology cycles. One initiative, to reduce the number of data centers across the government, led to more than 3,000 closings or consolidations with savings or cost avoidances of $2.8 billion as of fiscal year 2015, according to the Government Accountability Office, with a total projected savings of $8.2 by fiscal year 2019.

By 2012, the IT review process expanded to provide an enterprise-wide view of each agency's IT investment via a new set of reviews called "PortfolioStat." The goal was to identify duplicative IT investments across agencies. By 2015, this shifted from annual discussions at the deputy secretary level to quarterly meetings with agency CIOs. Also, a Digital Government strategy was launched that year, with significant involvement of the cross-agency CIO Council and under the leadership of the then-federal CIO, Steve VanRoekel.

The troubled healthcare.gov roll-out in 2013 led to a "60-day sprint" assessment of what went wrong and what needed to be changed to avoid something similar in the future. This led to OMB's assessment that the federal government was short on three sets of critical capacities:

- people,
- procurement and
- processes & practices.

These formed the key objectives of the 2014 Smarter IT Delivery Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goal. There was momentum on these objectives before they were designated to be part of the CAP Goal (e.g., creation of the US Digital Service and 18F to fill critical talent gaps), so the CAP Goal wasn't necessarily a forcing function but rather serves as a monitoring and implementation mechanism.

After the CAP Goal was established by Steve VanRokel and Todd Park in late 2013, new leaders came on board: Tony Scott as the new federal CIO; Megan Smith as the federal Chief Technology Officer and Mickey Dickerson to lead the newly-formed US Digital Service. They became co-leaders of the CAP Goal, along with Sloan Gibson, deputy secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs. They didn't restrict themselves to the original goal, largely because a major IT reform bill was passed (the Federal IT Acquisition Reform Act (FITARA)) and its implementation became a major focus of their priorities.

Objectives of the CAP Goal. The Smarter IT Delivery CAP Goal was launched in 2014 to "eliminate barriers and create new incentives to enable the federal government to procure, build, and provide world-class, cost-effective IT delivery for its citizens, and hold agencies accountable to modern IT development and customer service standards," according to its leaders. They concluded that the best way to do this is by focusing on three core objectives:

- ***Objective 1: People.*** The objective was to get the best IT talent to work inside government. The strategy was to use existing legal authorities to attract top talent and expand the use of flexible hiring authorities.
- ***Objective 2:*** Procurement. Efforts in this area were to streamline the Federal IT acquisition process in order to entice the best IT companies to work with agencies. For example, initiatives included creating higher visibility of contracting opportunities for small, innovative companies and expanding the use of existing contracting flexibilities and best practices.
- ***Objective 3:*** Processes & Practices. OMB set out to put new processes and practices in place to drive effective outcomes and ensure accountability. Lessons learned from these oversight processes were used to expand best practices across the government.

Governance Structure. As noted, four individuals were designated as co-goal leaders. But in practice, the group tended to serve as senior-level stakeholders in the annual "deep dives" on progress and direction. Federal CIO Scott and US Digital Services director Dickerson were the de facto leads for this CAP Goal. VA's Gibson became involved because a "best practice" for the overall CAP Goal process is for each goal to have an agency partner. VA was selected in part because it was committed to IT delivery reforms and had actively worked with the US Digital Service on several projects. VA also had stood up one of the first agency-level digital services shops.

Other entities are involved periodically. For example, the Office of Federal Procurement Policy in OMB is actively involved in periodic "Deep Dive" progress reviews. The President's Management Council and the cross-government CIO Council receive periodic updates, but are typically not as actively involved in the Smarter IT CAP Goal—but are heavily involved in the implementation of FITARA.

Progress to Date. While the Smarter IT CAP Goal team focuses on a wider range of issues than originally specified in the 2014 CAP Goal, there was targeted attention to the original three key objectives:

Objective 1: People. The US Digital Service was created in 2014 to hire a critical mass of high tech senior executives into the government for a temporary tour of duty. This team of experts works with agencies to modernize and improve citizen-facing services. It current employs about 200 digital experts from top private sector tech companies that team up with federal employees in agencies across the government to resolve design and implementation challenges that the agencies have struggled to address on their own.

Located in OMB, this centralized digital team leveraged direct hire authority to bring on board Digital Service Experts, organized into small, semi-autonomous teams. Digital services teams now being created in major departments and agencies. For example, VA's is staffed and operational.

Objective 2: Procurement. The US Digital Service and the Office of Federal Procurement Policy in OMB partnered to develop a cross-agency digital IT acquisition professional community. According to OMB: "Program participants learn about agile software development methodology, cloud hosting, and … integrating system operations with application development teams and processes." To date, there have been 54 graduates from the program and they see themselves ready to tackle IT acquisitions at their home agencies.

In addition to developing IT acquisition talent, the Smarter IT CAP Goal team has helped resolve specific sticking points in the procurement process. For example, it helped streamline the process for small businesses to do business with the federal government by lowering the average time to electronically register to three days. In addition, GSA's FastLane acquisition program reduced the average time to award an IT-related contract from 110 days to an average of 35–45 days.

Objective 3: Processes and Practices. According to OMB, by November 2015, the use of new accountability tools and processes such as the IT Dashboard, agency-level TechStat reviews and the broader PortfolioStat review sessions had led to $3.44 billion in savings since FY 2012.

In addition, the Smarter IT CAP Goal team has worked with a range of partners to release a series of playbooks and other resources to help agencies improve their digital services. These include:

- *The Digital Services Playbook,* which outlines public and private sector best practices, so agencies don't have to develop them from scratch. Provides core principles for digital services development
- *The TechFAR Handbook,* which describes tech-related Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) authorities relevant to adopting an Agile approach to software development. It includes practical tips and sample contract language.
- *US Web Design Standards,* which is a visual guide to creating consistent user experiences across US Federal government websites.

These guides are open source and publicly available so states and localities can benefit from them as well, and they are "living documents" that can be continuously updated.

Examples of Success. Interestingly, when asked about the end results of the Smarter IT CAP Goal, US Digital Services staff highlight the ultimate impact, not just the progress within each of the three core objectives. For example, this resulted in:

- A faster VA disability compensation claim process. According to OMB, a digital team created "a straightforward web-app to improve paperless appeals processing by detecting if required documentation has been added before an appeal can move forward." This electronic error check has reduced preventable errors and sped the processing of appeals.
- A streamlined certification process for small business owners to conduct business with the government. Using agile approaches, a digital team created a web resource in three months, certify.SBA.gov, which, according to OMB, eases access by small businesses and increases the Small Business Administration's capacity to provide small businesses access to the Federal contracting opportunities.
- An improved on-line College Scorecard tool. The Department of Education worked with digital teams to develop a tool that allows parents and students to make more informed choices about which college to attend. It allows comparisons based on college costs, graduation rates, debt and post-graduation earnings.

Next Steps. In 2016, then-CIO Scott championed the need for a governmentwide IT Modernization Fund that would provide for upfront capital planning and the investments needed to support modernization in the face of the irregular federal budget approval cycle. This self-sustaining Fund would support the replacement of legacy systems with newer, less expensive systems. While not approved by Congress, it is still seen by many as a logical next step for smarter IT service delivery.

In addition, the recently released "State of Federal Information Technology" report is a potential guiding vision going forward. It outlines a framework for the next steps to improve IT delivery, based on the progress made to date and offers an updated set of key objectives that could be incorporated into the IT agenda of the Trump Administration. These include: adopting a stronger focus on customers, improving program execution, organizing around outcomes and acting as an enterprise.

Together, the steps taken to by early 2017 via the Smarter IT CAP Goal initiatives and the guiding vision recently developed by the federal tech community can both serve as a foundation for the new Administration. The commercial world has validated what is possible if technology systems are modernized. When done effectively, modernization can both improve services and save dollars.

3. Buying as One Through Category Management

First published as a blog post on October 13, 2016

CAP Goal Statement: *Category management enables the government to eliminate redundancies, increase efficiency, and deliver more value and savings from the government's acquisition programs.*

The "Category Management" initiative, started under the leadership of former OMB executive Anne Rung, is transforming the way the federal government buys goods and services to reflect trends in how leading companies manage their purchases of common goods and services.

Background. Category Management is used by businesses and governments around the world to better manage their common purchases. The approach involves defining a clear strategy for spending on common items or services within a category, which in turn leverages buying power across the entire category to generate a price discount, additional services that reduce total cost of ownership and other sources of value. As such, category management encourages individual agencies to buy from common contracting vehicles and enable purchasing decisions to be managed centrally by specialists who know how to find the best services or products at the best price. In addition to leveraging the government's buying power, it reduces duplication in contracting across the government.

One study suggest that when used effectively, this approach can conservatively generate cost efficiencies of 7.5 to 12 percent of total procurement spending. For the federal government, this could result in more efficient spending of up to $40 billion a year, if this approach is widely adopted. In the private sector, savings have reached 20 percent or more on annual procurement spending.

The Obama Administration began to champion the use of this approach two years ago.

The initiative built upon a prior effort initially begun under the Bush Administration, called strategic sourcing. Strategic sourcing was an agency-by-agency consolidation of common purchases, in order to reduce the complexity of many different contracts and supplies. The Obama Administration expanded strategic sourcing within agencies and piloted its use across agency boundaries with selected services such as package delivery services and office supplies. When this was successful, the foundation was set for OMB's broader initiative.

As OMB's Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy, Anne Rung announced the new emphasis on the use of category management in December 2014, and the initiative was given the high profile status of being one of the Administration's 15 Cross-Agency Priority Goals. This resulted in top-level attention to the initiative's progress on a quarterly basis.

Governance. The initiative was launched with a very structured approach, with an eye toward ensuring its sustainability over time. It also involved a good deal of cross-agency collaboration, as well as some pointed, top-down directives.

The Category Management Leadership Council was created in late 2014, comprised of representatives from Defense, Energy, Health & Human Services, Homeland Security, Veterans Affairs, General Services Administration (GSA) and NASA. In addition, the chief financial officers from each of the 24 largest agencies designated single points of contact to coordinate government-wide category management initiatives.

Ten "super categories" were created that account for more than $270 billion in annual spending. These include areas such as travel, facilities construction, medical supplies and transportation services. A career senior executive was designated as the category manager for each. According to GSA's Steve Krauss, they each "built teams of experts from across the rest of the federal government to begin the process of analyzing the spend and looking for opportunities within that spend portfolio." These teams were staffed with about 350 people from 46 departments and agencies who are identifying performance metrics and talking with top suppliers in their respective categories.

Beneath the ten "super categories" are 50 sub-categories, each category and many sub-categories have their own leads, who develop market intelligence, buying strategies, and identify the best contract vehicles. And for each category, Centers of Excellence are designated within selected agencies that house the expertise to serve as "executive agents" for buyers across the government for that category.

In addition, at the operational level, GSA has created the Acquisition Gateway, where agency acquisition officers can "buy as one." According to GSA: "Inside the Acquisition Gateway, users can find side-by-side comparisons of government-wide acquisition solutions, connect with other acquisition professionals and explore product and service category 'hallways.' The hallways feature category-curated articles, templates, market-research tools, prices-paid data and more to achieve successful outcomes at each step of the acquisition lifecycle." While only launched in January, it already has 10,000 registered government users.

Finally, at the strategic policy level, the Office of Federal Procurement Policy partnered in mid-2016 with other policy officials, including Federal Chief Information Officer (CIO) Tony Scott and GSA Administrator Denise Turner Roth, to issue joint guidance to agencies on the road forward in each of the different categories.

Case Example: The IT Super-Category. OMB decided to focus on one of the largest of the ten super categories as a starting point. The federal government spends $50 billion in common information technology hardware and software. OFFP partnered with the Federal CIO to methodically attack common buying challenges facing federal agencies with routine IT-related purchases. They used the Federal CIO's PortfolioStat to manage overall progress in managing IT portfolio via quarterly meetings, along with other tools and a dashboard.

Following are some actions taken in recent months to improve IT commodity management practices:

- ***Buying Laptops and Desktops.*** In October 2015, a joint memo to agencies called for a standardized set of laptop and desktop configurations for common uses and the reduction in the number of contracts used in order to consolidate their purchases: "In FY 2014, agencies awarded more than 10,000 contracts and delivery orders for common laptops and desktops totaling about $1.1 billion, resulting in reduced buying power, inefficient duplication of contracts, and very little transparency into prices paid." For example, In August 2016, GSA reported that agencies saved over $6 million by conducting reverse auctions via three Blanket Purchase Agreements open to all agencies. Initially, five agencies agreed to potentially buy about 55,000 laptops and desktops, at savings averaging 18 percent.

- ***Buying Commercial Software.*** In June 2016, a joint memo to agencies directed them to develop inventories of their commercial software licenses: "Each year, the Federal Government spends more than $6 billion on software through more than 42,000 transactions, which results in a fragmented and inefficient marketplace."
- ***Buying Mobile Devices and Services.*** In August 2016, a memo on purchases of mobile device services directed agencies to consolidate their requirements to one contract per agency. The federal government spends $1 billion a year on mobile devices and service contracts: "Almost all of that spending is paid to four carriers, yet the Federal Government manages over 1,200 separate agreements and buys more than 200 unique service plans for voice, data, and text capability."

In her final blog post on the OMB website, Anne Rung wrote: "We've saved more than $2 billion through category management and are on track to save $3.5 billion by the end of next year. We've seen prices drop by as much as 50 percent of personal computers since the release of the workstation policy. "

Next Steps. Category management may not be glamorous work—cleaning up acquisition data, making it more transparent, making comparisons between agencies, etc.,—but it makes government work more efficiently. In October 2016, OMB released for public comment a draft circular that would institutionalize the use of category management. The goal is to make this the routine approach for how government buys common goods and services. That draft was not acted upon, but an action plan was developed for all ten categories to carry the initiative through 2017.

4. Expanding Shared Services to Increase Quality and Savings

First published as a blog post on December 1, 2016

CAP Goal Statement: *Strategically expand high-quality, high-value shared services to improve performance and efficiency throughout government.*

The federal government pioneered a shared payroll services operation in 1973—the National Finance Center—in the Department of Agriculture. Initially, it served only Agriculture agencies. Today, it provides payroll services and more for more than 650,000 federal employees in 170 agencies. The use of the shared services approach has since expanded to other common administrative support services.

Background. Shared services—where agencies move their common administrative or operating functions to a provider that already performs those functions for other agencies—started several decades ago in the federal government. Typically, they focus on administrative services that are common across agencies—financial management, human resources, payroll, travel, etc.

According a 2015 study by the Partnership for Public Service, Congress authorized pilot projects in the 1990s, and in 2002 it authorized sharing technology to improve support functions. In 2004, the Office of Management and Budget created task forces to identify opportunities to reduce costs and improve services across common functions. These task forces were called "lines of business"—which later evolved into "shared services." In 2014, Shared Services was designated as a top management objective for the Obama Administration, as one of its Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goals.

There are currently six "lines of business" that are at different stages of implementation, each with its own managing partner:

- Financial and grants management
- Human resources services
- Information systems security
- Budget formulation and execution
- Geospatial information
- Federal health architecture

Financial management and human resources services are the two that are farthest along. In addition, there are other areas where shared service arrangements are used as well, such as travel, payroll (part of federal HR framework), procurement, grants management, real estate, assisted acquisition and components of IT, such as the newly launched Data Centers Consolidation Initiative.

Historically, agencies have been reluctant to give up the operation of their own mission support functions. But recent trends have changed the environment. According to a 2015 report by the Shared Services Roundtable, the level of OMB and agency leadership interest, the budget constraints facing agencies, the availability of technology that makes shared services easier such as cloud services, the loss of agency-level administrative talent as a result of retirements and the successful track record of existing shared services providers have collectively created momentum to undertake the transition.

Interestingly, there is also a private-sector advocacy group, the Shared Services Leadership Coalition, that is promoting legislation to accelerate the transition by removing administrative and financial barriers that currently slow or discourage a transition. For example, it took 26 years to move from 50 payroll systems to 4. Legislation could speed these kinds of transition. The incentive may be that savings of up to $47 billion may be possible over the coming decade, according to the 2015 Roundtable report.

Governance Framework. Shared services and lines of business had started as a series of independent initiatives over the years. David Mader, the controller at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), has been a key champion for expanding the use of shared services and is the co-lead for the CAP Goal, along with Denise Turner Roth, head of the General Services Administration (GSA). He recently remarked: "This is no longer a pet project. It is going to scale. This is how government is going to do its business from now on."

In furtherance of this, he created an overarching governance framework that would serve as both the executive champion of the initiative as well as the convener of stakeholders to create standardized approaches. He announced the creation of a 17-member Shared Services Governance Board in October 2015, that would provide a unified cross-agency approach to implementing and managing shared services. He also created a "project management office" to support it—the Unified Shared Services Management Office at the General Services Administration. This office, led by Beth Angerman, convenes both providers and customers across the shared services ecosystem to resolve specific issues. For example, the office encourages more consistent definitions of services and levels of services for different functions, so agencies can better compare and so they are more interoperable across agency boundaries.

Strategies. In addition to institutionalizing a governance framework, the CAP Goal leads developed policy guidance that institutionalizes migration strategies for agencies and ensures there are metrics to assess progress, manage performance and give a voice to customers. They've also created a framework that outlines best practices for successful migrations to shared services and includes a tollgate review process with both the management and budget sides of OMB. Currently more than 30 agencies are going through a system and/or service migration.

In addition, they've created a performance management framework for service providers, known as ProviderStat, which oversees the progress and performance of service providers of shared services. It also assesses the maturity of the capabilities of the various providers as well transparency in their operations. And finally, the Unified Shared Services Management Office has recently completed a customer survey that gauges the quality of services being provided by the various shared services.

Taken together, these efforts provide a foundation to scale shared services initiatives in coming years.

Case Examples. There are a number of different models of how shared services are organized and delivered. Some provide multiple mission-support services but only within their own agency. Some provide multiple mission-support services, but allow other agencies to purchase from them as well. And some focus on a single line of business, such as payroll, finance or human resources, and offer those services to a wide range of government customers. There are instances of shared services focused on the delivery of mission performance, but that tends to be less common.

- ***Multiple mission support services for NASA Centers.*** According to a report by the Partnership for Public Service, "The NASA Shared Services Center is a fee-for-service unit that performance many administrative support functions for NASA's 10 research space and

flight centers across the country. It provides 55 support services in human resources, finance, IT and procurement." This includes services such as payroll processing, bill payments and grants management. This center was the result of a 2002 study that concluded that, by moving to a shared service environment, NASA could reduce its administrative support costs by 25 percent, moving those funds to support space missions.

- ***HHS Program Support Center (PSC):*** ***Multiple mission support services for multiple agencies.*** The PSC provides a portfolio of services around five lines of business: financial management and grant payments, procurement, real estate operations, federal occupational health and admin operations (travel, mail, etc.). It has a staff of around 3,000 (about 20 percent are federal employees and the remainder are contractors). For about 25 percent of its business, it is the mandatory provider; for the remaining 75 percent, it is competitive with other providers—or in some cases competing directly with the private sector. It is a non-appropriated fund and can retain four percent of its earnings for capital replacement. Its executives have revenue growth targets (e.g., they have an overall 10 percent growth target).
- ***Human Resources Line of Business:*** ***Focuses on a single set of services for use by many agencies.*** The HR LoB oversees the development of a dedicated set of human resource-related services provided by certified providers. For example, it oversaw the consolidation of 26 agency payroll systems into four and the migration of agency HR systems to one of the six federal and four private sector HR shared services centers. Between 2004 and 2015, these consolidations led to the reduction of HR and payroll costs by $1.6 billion. Its customers are the 24 CFO Act agencies, which comprise the LoB's steering committee. It works with the Chief Human Capital Officers' Council to create a 10-year vision for what kinds of functionality it should be providing in the long term. Its goals include: offering a common user experience; creating standardized, accessible data and ensuring common security standards.
- ***Environmental Management Consolidated Business Center.*** In 2004, the Department of Energy created the Environmental Management Consolidated Business Center (EMCBC) to centralize the process for the cleanup and closures of sites contaminated with radioactive nuclear waste from the WWII Manhattan Project. Rather than develop duplicative staffs of specialists at each site, the EMCBC was created to provide expertise and standardized business processes for carrying out such activities—and this staff was available to other agencies, as well. The business center gained valuable expertise in contract management that was shared with multiple sites, and it resulted in earlier completions of projects, saving money.

Lessons Learned About Implementing Shared Services. In support of the CAP Goal, OMB sponsored a study in late 2015 to develop an "as-is" baseline description of shared services initiatives in five areas (information technology, human resources, acquisition, financial management and grants management). The objective was to paint a "to-be" picture of what the shared services ecosystem could look like in the future, as well as the migration strategy for getting there, in order to tee up such initiatives for the next Administration.

The study engaged over 160 individuals from 26 different agencies to glean their insights on what elements need to be in place and what it would take to go to scale. The key priorities expressed were the importance of ensuring consistency, quality and levels of service. Participants also expressed the importance of developing cross-cutting, integrated solutions. Some highlights of the interviews include:

- The value of standardizing administrative processes within and across agencies before going to commercial service providers (although standardizing while undergoing a migration is an option used successfully by several shared services).

- The need to decide up front what services should/should not be part of a shared services environment—e.g., it may be more appropriate to outsource repetitive, standardized processes (e.g., payroll, fleet management), but keep in-house "qualitative" services (e.g., recruiting, clearances).
- Use outcome-based requirements, not technical requirements, when describing services to be provided.
- Start with the results of the cross-agency benchmarking survey of administrative services and consider using the results of those surveys as the baseline for evaluation and starting a governmentwide business case.
- 70 percent of what needs done can be done administratively, without legislation.
- The interagency resource-sharing process needs to be fixed—"There's no government version of PayPal" to manage funding transfers. Every agency's general counsel interprets the Economy Act differently, so there is a lot of friction in doing interagency business (e.g., GSA building lease payments from agencies varies agency-by-agency and this is true for all sorts of other services).

Next Steps. While there has been significant progress in recent years expanding the use of shared services, some key challenges remain in order to take shared services initiatives to scale. For example, there are legislative constraints on "retained earnings" by shared service functions, which are needed to support infrastructure investments and the capabilities needed to go to scale. However, there are opportunities to expand the shared services approach from mission support to mission delivery functions, for example joint call centers, joint benefit determination processes or joint healthcare insurance fraud detection initiatives.

The White House Office of American Innovation has identified this initiative as one that it would like to continue and expand. Legislation has also been proposed that would address the legislative constraints.

5. Benchmarking to Improve Mission-Support Operations

First published as a blog post on December 20, 2016

CAP Goal Statement: *Improve administrative efficiency and increase the adoption of effective management practices by establishing cost, quality, and customer satisfaction benchmarks for mission-support operations, giving agency decision makers better data to set priorities, allocate resources, and improve processes.*

Beginning in the early 2000s, annually-collected Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey data has been collected and is now made available to line managers across 28,000 work units. The survey results are analyzed and compared across work units and used to gauge employee engagement in their work in order to fine tune management priorities. Most career senior executives are held accountable for trends in employee survey results in their organizations.

In early 2013, an analogous initiative was launched by the Office of Management and Budget to gauge the efficiency and effectiveness of five common administrative functions in federal agencies. A year later, its visibility was elevated to be one of the government's 15 cross-agency priority goals—to Benchmark and Improve Mission-Support Functions.

Background. There have been ad hoc efforts over the past two decades to benchmark federal agency performance for common administrative functions, such as call centers and IT performance. But the current initiative is far more systematic and focuses on five mission-support areas:

- Acquisition
- Financial management
- Human capital
- IT management
- Real property

The relevant cross-agency councils, such as the Chief Acquisition Officers Council and the Chief Financial Officers Council, are supporting the initiative for their respective functions. These councils are supported by the Office of Executive Councils in the General Services Administration (GSA), which serves as a clearinghouse for the initiative. In addition, there has been strong support from the President's Management Council, comprised of the chief operating officers (often the deputy secretaries) from the departments and major agencies (a more detailed background can be found in an earlier blog post on this topic).

Evolution of the Data Being Collected. The annual surveys being conducted as part of this CAP Goal have undergone three rounds of data collection—comprised of about 40 cost/efficiency metrics, about 26 operational quality metrics and about 26 customer satisfaction metrics. The first year was devoted to collecting baseline cost and efficiency data. The second year, quality and satisfaction measures were added. And in 2016, the focus was on improving comparability across bureaus and agencies.

For example, for Financial Management, metrics were developed for "payables" (such as cost per vendor invoice and vendor invoices paid on time) as well as "receivables" (such as eligible debt referral rates and cost per public receivable transaction).

The customer satisfaction survey—reaching nearly 140,000 managers across the government—provided insights into how managers perceived the quality and timeliness of services across all five mission-support areas. This data has added an important dimension of quality for assessing effectiveness. For example, analysis showed that agencies that attained significant scale in financial operations not only had lower overall costs but higher customer satisfaction as well. In addition, the team was able to demonstrate that, although HR cost reductions can be achieved by cutting HR staff, there was a breakpoint beyond which lower costs resulted in lower customer satisfaction.

Results Are Increasingly Informing Agency Management Decisions. Much like the availability of employee survey data in the early 2000s—with the increased availability of cross-agency comparisons and time trends—the benchmarking data are increasingly being used by agency leaders to improve their operations. GSA has created a web portal where it posts benchmarking and survey results from all bureaus and agencies. It is accessible to any federal employee who has credentials to access the OMB MAX.gov federal community website. This has made it easier to access and customize data presentations for internal uses, such as:

Annual OMB-Agency "FedStat" Reviews. OMB's deputy director for management and each department's deputy secretary meet annually to assess mission-support issues in their agencies, in the context of how well they are delivering on their agencies' overall mission. These meetings identify priorities and provide a clearer picture of costs and services in the context of what other agencies are doing. Specific actions are summarized and, where appropriate, incorporated into the President's budget proposals.

Agency Internal Assessment Reviews. Many agencies have created their own internal dashboards and hold periodic management reviews. With the benchmarking data, agency leaders can compare their own data to other agencies that are similar and see—oftentimes for the first time—their full performance picture in terms of the cost and quality of their mission support services. They can then ask evidence-based questions and strategically assess trade-offs. This led to several decisions, per the staff managing the benchmarking initiative. For example:

- The Department of Energy used results from the benchmarking initiative to quantify the high costs in its human resource operations in its bureaus in 2013. This created urgency and led to a decision to centralize them, resulting in cost reductions of 26 percent by 2015, with further consolidations underway. The department's chief human capital officer, Robert Gibbs, said: "Without a true understanding of your total costs (and other key metrics) … achieving and sustaining meaningful reform is almost impossible."
- The Department of Justice's financial management function used the benchmarking results to identify differences in the performance of financial management across the department's bureaus. This led to a diagnosis of root causes and remedies, resulting in one bureau's consolidation of certain financial management operations in a centralized processing center, which reduced costs through economies of scale.
- The Department of Commerce used the benchmarking data to baseline costs for its contracting, financial management, human resources and information technology functions to assess whether moving to a shared services arrangement would lead to better service at a lower cost.

Framing Decisions on Governmentwide Policies. In several instances, the benchmarking data played a critical role in informing the development of governmentwide policies. For example, OMB's guidance to agencies on invoice automation and the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Hiring Excellence Initiative.

In terms of the invoice automation policy changes, the benchmarking staff noted: "The data revealed a strong relationship between cost per invoice and percent of invoice processing automated (more automation is associated with lower cost). This built the business case behind OMB Guidance on Invoice Automation."

And in the case of OPM's hiring reforms, the benchmarking data showed that, of all the functions performed by agency personnel offices, agency managers were least satisfied with hiring and recruiting efforts. This data an analysis led to OPM's emphasis on this area as a priority for attention.

Next Steps (as of August 2017). Steve Brockelman and Trey Bradley, who staff the governmentwide benchmarking initiative on behalf of OMB and GSA, say that they have completed the fourth annual cross-agency benchmarking survey. They say the goal will be to mine the benchmarking results to diagnose areas of underperformance and identify pockets of excellence to be shared across the government. They say these new data, along with past trends and the identification of best practices, will be useful to new Administration leaders at OMB, the new agency chief operating officers, the cross-agency councils for CFOs, CIOs and others.

Brockelman and Bradley are also working with GSA's Unified Shared Services Management office to identify performance, cost and quality metrics so agencies can also "make decisions on whether to adopt shared services and to ensure shared services are providing value to customers."

6. Opening Data to Spark Innovation

First published as a blog post on March 23, 2017

> ***CAP Goal Statement:*** *Fuel entrepreneurship and innovation, and improve government efficiency and effectiveness by unlocking the value of government data; adopting management approaches that promote interoperability and openness of these data.*

Data can support the quality of important choices citizens make every day. For example, the federal government's Open Data initiative has led to the creation of a useful one-stop resource: the College Scorecard, hosted by the US Department of Education. And, the Open Data initiative has led to similar information resources in other parts of the economy.

Background. Access to government information has exploded over the past two decades. For example, during the expansion of the Internet in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the federal government created a one-stop directory of all federal websites. But that didn't necessarily provide access to agency data sets.

One of the distinctive initiatives of the Obama Administration was its advocacy of Open Government. A key element of this broad initiative was to make federally-created data even more openly available to the public and entrepreneurial businesses. It claimed that open data "strengthens our democracy and promote efficiency and effectiveness" as well as increasing transparency and accountability. But more concretely, ready access to government data can empower individuals and businesses to make better decisions. Its first tangible step in 2009 was to create a one-stop website, Data.gov, where agencies could register their "high value" data sets for public access.

President Obama issued an executive order in 2013 that formalized and expanded this effort. The order requires agencies to make government data "open and machine-readable" wherever possible. This was supplemented with a directive from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to "manage information as a strategic asset" and make it openly available—while ensuring privacy, confidentiality and national security.

Objectives of the Cross-Agency Priority Goal. In early 2014, the Open Data initiative was designated as one of the federal government's 15 cross-agency priority (CAP) goals. The Open Data goal has two primary objectives:

- ***Fuel economic growth and innovation through the increased use of federal Open Data.*** This includes the release of additional "high priority" datasets identified by the agencies and/or the public. It also includes the development of tools and support for agencies and data users, as well as sponsorship of quarterly events to encourage the use of agency data, such as "data jams," code-a-thons and incentive prizes.
- ***Make open and machine-readable "the new default" for all government information.*** This includes the development of "enterprise data inventories" across all agencies and making this data "discoverable" by the public.

At the same time that the Open Data initiative was designated a CAP Goal, the Data.gov website was relaunched, with a simpler user interface that makes it easier to search for relevant data sets.

Governance Structure. This CAP Goal has three co-leads:

- the U.S. chief information officer, located in OMB;
- the U.S. chief technology officer (CTO), located in the Office of Science and Technology Policy in the White House and
- the deputy secretary of the Department of Transportation.

They were supported by a small staff in the General Services Administration (GSA), whose primary responsibility is the operation of the data.gov website. The staff also helps in the coordination and standard-setting that occurs across a broader community, the Federal Interagency Open Data Working Group. This working group is co-led by the three CAP Goal leaders and it meets biweekly. The group also holds an open quarterly meeting to directly engage with civil society groups. In addition, daily communications among the 800 government members takes place on GSA's listserv.

Evolution Over Time. From the time of its launch in 2009 until 2013, Data.gov was a place where agencies could register their data sets for public access. In conjunction with the 2013 Executive Order, OMB launched a Project Open Data Dashboard to track agency progress toward implementing the executive order on a quarterly basis.

In 2013, under the leadership of U.S. CTO Todd Park and U.S. Deputy CTO Nick Sinai, the Obama Administration began using term-limited Presidential Innovation Fellows to help agencies unlock data, engage external stakeholders and generally focus on the use of Open Data.

Along with the 2014 relaunch of Data.gov, the Obama Administration released an Open Data Action Plan, recommitting the Administration to its policies, in the context of the broader National Action Plan for Open Government—an international commitment to Open Government that is revised periodically with new commitments (most recently in 2015).

In 2015, the White House appointed DJ Patil to serve as the federal government's first Chief Data Scientist. As a part of the office of the Chief Technology Officer, he helped develop data policies but also helped "foster partnerships to help responsibly maximize the nation's return on its investment in data, and help to recruit and retain the best minds in data science to join us in serving the public," according to a White House statement.

During 2016, the Office of Science and Technology Policy hosted a series of Open Data roundtables, including a White House Open Data Innovation Summit in late 2016. This summit crystalized the energy and enthusiasm for the movement among public and private sector trailblazers and entrepreneurs committed to using data to improve government efficiency, citizen health and wellness and economic opportunities.

In addition to the CAP Goal, the topic of Open Data has gained an increasing circle of interest outside of the federal executive branch, since the broader movement encourages opening private sector, non-profit, state and local data. For example, there is a corporate advocacy group, the Data Coalition, and there is congressional interest in legislating Open Data initiatives. In the last Congress, the OPEN Data Act—which would require agencies to standardize their data in an open format that is machine-readable—cleared the Senate and is expected to be reintroduced in the current Congress.

Progress to Date. Agencies have opened many of their data sets to the public. As of mid-March, 195,016 have been cataloged on Data.gov. Agencies are also beginning to document their data sets in a common format, which improves the chances that researchers and the

public can find them. Interestingly, over 50 states and localities have adopted the federal open data standards and are posting their own data on Data.gov so they can be integrated with federal agency data.

Examples of Uses of Open Data. The emphasis of the Open Data initiative has evolved over time from the supply of data, such as via Data.gov, to the use of these data. Agencies were asked by the Office of Science and Technology Policy to actively find out how their newly-opened data were being used. Some uses were internal to the government. Others were by private sector entrepreneurs. For example:

- **College Scorecard**—The Department of Education launched a redesigned tool in 2015 to help parents and student to compare college costs and outcomes. According to the Department, the "refresh includes more than 1,700 data points for more than 7,000 institutions of higher education." It also includes: "statistics on debt, federal loan repayment, completion rates and post-college earnings of alumni in an easy-to-understand format." In addition, it offers a streamlined application for federal student aid.
- **The Opportunity Project.** Hosted by the Census Bureau, this project set out in early 2016 to create data sets and digital tools to help communities navigate information about quality housing, schools, jobs and transportation. The project has worked with cohorts of tech companies, non-profits and federal-state-local agencies to create tools to help connect unemployed with skills and jobs. For example, one partner, LiveStories.com, worked with Marin County, CA, health officials to bring together stakeholders around a shared goal of reducing obesity in their community.
- **Police Data Initiative.** This initiative, launched in 2015, is intended to increase transparency and accountability. A year later, more than 50 police departments had joined, releasing over 90 data sets on police-citizen interactions (use of force, traffic stops, pedestrian stops, etc.). The data sets that became available via the Open Data initiative became the basis for a broader Public Safety Data Portal sponsored by the non-profit Police Foundation.
- **Zillow.com,** a private sector on-line nationwide real estate media company, is largely based on Open Data from federal, state and local sources. It provides estimates of home and rental values to allow consumers to make more informed choices. It draws on federal census data, labor statistics and housing data.

Next Steps. The various federal data communities continue to meet on a periodic basis, providing additional data sets as well as refreshing examples of how these data are being used. While in early 2017, media reported that several high-profile data sets had been removed from federal websites, nearly 2,000 new data sets have quietly been added to data.gov as of mid-2017.

Unlike any of the other CAP Goals, the Open Data goal has an interesting international dimension, in that it can be seen in the context of a global "megatrend." This trend is powered in large part by the belief that it can contribute to new economic growth. A World Bank study in 2014 cites economic opportunities in the range of $3–5 Trillion a year. In addition, there is a Global Open Data Index that assesses the extent to which governments around the world are open with their data, as judged by citizens, not by the governments themselves.

As a result, the US Open Data initiative—even beyond the CAP Goal designation—can learn as well as contribute to best practices among peers across the world, in addition to practices at the state and local levels.

7. Bridging the Barriers from Lab-to-Market

First published as a blog post on April 7, 2017

> ***CAP Goal Statement:*** *Increase the economic impact of federally-funded research and development by accelerating and improving the transfer of new technologies from the laboratory to the commercial marketplace.*

Soft robotics is a relatively new field of research. It will allow the robots of tomorrow to squish, stretch and squeeze, not unlike a real human hand, according to the National Science Foundation. Discoveries like these are an entrepreneur's dream, but they live in a different world than the scientists who develop these technologies. And their paths rarely cross. How can this dynamic be changed so discoveries move from the lab to markets more quickly and don't remain "a lamp under a bushel basket?"

Background. The federal government invests over $130 billion a year in research and development. This R&D is conducted in a wide range of federal facilities, universities and private sector companies. The federal R&D system has led to significant job-creating technology breakthroughs including the Internet, the Global Positioning System and decoding the human genome.

But according to the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP): "Despite the critical importance of federal R&D to economic development, agencies historically have lacked the resources and interagency platforms to act together in the commercialization of their technologies."

In response to this observation, a 2011 Presidential Memo directed agencies to "establish goals, measure performance, streamline administrative process and facilitate local and regional partnerships to facilitate R&D commercialization." Agencies were given six months to develop action plans and agencies designated staff to coordinate informally with staff from other agencies. In 2014, the national objective of moving discoveries and inventions from labs to commercial markets was designated as one of 15 Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goals. In the intervening years, there have been a number of tangible successes.

Objectives of the Cross-Agency Priority Goal. The Lab-to-Market CAP Goal was created in 2014 to: "Increase the economic impact of federally-funded research and development by accelerating and improving the transfer of new technologies from the laboratory to the commercial marketplace." This goal reinforces the efforts begun under the 2011 Presidential Memorandum and focuses efforts in five areas:

- Develop human capital with experience in technology and entrepreneurial skills,
- Empower effective collaborations through partnerships and tech transfers,
- Open federally-funded labs and other R&D assets to private users,
- Fuel small business innovation by streamlining grant programs and
- Evaluate the impact of these initiatives to identify best practices.

Governance Structure. The 2011 presidential memo that created a national focus on accelerating the commercialization of federal research resulted in an informal cross-agency working group to coordinate efforts and share information, under the auspices of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP).

The informal working group was formalized with the launch of the CAP goal in April 2014 and sub-goals were developed. While formal leadership rested with OSTP and the Department of Energy, Commerce's National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) became a pivotal point for the coordination effort and the dynamics started to shift from cross-agency conversations to cross-agency activities.

By March 2016, OSTP wanted to ensure sustainability through the upcoming presidential transition. It chartered the Lab-to-Market working group as a formal subcommittee of the White House's National Science and Technology Council. That subcommittee's charter will soon be renewed and extended by six months, awaiting further guidance from the new Administration once OSTP leadership is in place. The subcommittee taps into the expertise of four interagency working groups that focus on issues such as technology transfer, access to government-created intellectual property, access to federal lab facilities and engaging small businesses.

Evolution Over Time. According to one staffer, the CAP goal-designation helped spur action on the part of participating agencies by crystallizing the goals, placing a higher priority and greater visibility on the issues and requiring public accountability for progress. The quarterly progress reporting requirement was a catalyst, as well. But in the early days, the effort received no additional funding and is still largely voluntarily supported by the agencies involved.

In 2015, NIST requested funding for several sub-goal initiatives and received $6 million for interagency projects. A team of Presidential Innovation Fellows came to work with the working group on increasing private investment in commercially-viable projects. Other projects included supporting entrepreneurship among scientists and expanding external reporting on government inventions. This focus on Open Data—related to another CAP Goal—led to improved search tools and data consolidation initiatives.

Progress to Date. The most recently available annual report on federal lab tech transfers, tracks the sharing of government-funded patents, invention licenses and Cooperative Research and Development Agreements with private sector entities. The trend data shows increases in each of these metrics since 2011 and a study is underway to quantify the economic impact that results from these sharing efforts.

The Lab-to-Market initiative has spawned a number of specific projects that have contributed to the progress in transferring federal intellectual property. For example:

- A tech transfer playbook was "developed to highlight existing agency resources and programs that facilitate commercialization activities" and document best practices from federal labs around the country so other agencies can see how particular legal authorities and transfer mechanisms can be used.
- The Federal Lab Consortium, which is a professional network of federal labs across the country, launched FLCBusiness 2.0, which "provides a one-stop search for finding information on more than 300 federal laboratories and 2,500 user facilities and specialized equipment."
- Improved exchange of scientific personnel between the government and the private sector. A 2016 rule developed by NIST clarifies the use of Cooperative Research and Development Agreement authority to facilitate the process of personnel exchanges between federal and non-federal scientists to enhance commercialization-based research.
- The Small Business Voucher pilot program at the Department of Energy creates a single point of entry for small business to access the department's various lab resources for clean energy projects.

The Innovation Corps: An Example of Success. One of the highest profile success stories is the expansion of the "I-Corps" initiative, evolved out of an effort begun in 2010 by the then-director of the National Science Foundation (NSF), Subra Suresh. He challenged his staff to teach entrepreneurship to the science community, and this was the genesis of the Innovation Corps initiative. The 2011 presidential memorandum, and the subsequent inclusion in the CAP goal, provided additional impetus.

Since then, this initiative has trained over 829 teams comprised of over 2,500 researchers to be entrepreneurial and provided direct experience interacting with potential customers. According to a recent report: "This has led to the creation of over 320 companies and over $83 million in follow-on funding."

How does this work? I-Corps is comprised of cohorts of 21 teams. There are three components to each team: a faculty member who has been previously awarded with an NSF research grant; a post-doc or grad student responsible for lead development and a third-party business partner who is a volunteer mentor. They conduct 100 interviews of people in their proposed industry who can provide valuable information on whether the team has a commercial opportunity, an innovation and/or can start a business. They have six months to do this, and it includes seven weeks of classroom work with other teams in their cohort.

The classroom instruction is delivered through eight "nodes." For example, the University of Michigan is the lead institution for the Midwest Node. The Nodes provide NSF with I-Corps instructors: entrepreneurs, investors and industry executives who teach the 14 I-Corps courses per year. Along with the instructors, I-Corps nodes are increasingly engaging program alumni, etc., for support and mentoring of budding new research entrepreneurs. In addition to university-based programs, the I-Corps Nodes have community-based training as well. Lastly, the I-Corps Nodes conduct periodic evaluations and research projects to ensure the instructional I-Corps program is effective and stays relevant in the growing entrepreneurial support ecosystem in the US. Each NSF I-Corps Node uses its own approach to achieve maximal impact in the local regions.

NSF's I-Corps has been replicated in different forms in 11 other federal agencies, with the support of the CAP Goal network. The two most robust are at the National Institutes of Health's Cancer Institute and the Department of Energy. The other nine agencies leverage NSF's existing network of nodes and use NSF's training materials. In 2016, NSF's I-Corps program was formally authorized via legislation. In addition, several state governments are launching I-Corps programs.

Next Steps. The future of the Lab to Market initiative is unclear, but its objectives are aligned with the Trump Administration's efforts to create new jobs and industries, provide U.S. leadership in commercial global markets, increase government efficiency and reduce the amount of paperwork needed for the private sector to work with the government.

8. People and Culture

First published as a blog post on February 22, 2017

> ***CAP Goal Statement:*** *Innovate by unlocking the full potential of the workforce we have today and building the workforce we need for tomorrow.*

For at least three decades, politicians and the public have called for "civil service reform" without a strategic view of what that might look like. Some see it as increasing accountability, others see it as streamlining and empowering employees, while yet others see it as making it easier to fire poor performers.

But little seems to happen. There have been dozens of studies and reports over the past three decades. However, there has not been a major overhaul since 1978, and many piecemeal legislative efforts, such as performance pay and streamlining the classification system, have been derailed. So pragmatically, what can be done in the near-term, without a major legislative effort?

Background. The Obama Administration chose to not pursue large-scale civil service, legislative reforms. Instead, it focused on improving the workplace and the culture of the workforce. During the second term of the Obama Administration, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and members of the President's Management Council (PMC) honed in on several personnel-related issues that were widely seen as sticking points to improving the government's workforce and culture:

- federal employees were expressing less positive views about their leaders, supervisors, work experience and other drivers of employee engagement;
- senior career executives were not being developed or held accountable to be successful in an increasingly complex work environment and
- managers and applicants continued to complain about a broken recruiting and hiring process that stymied them from getting the best talent.

There were other issues, but many of them required statutory changes that seemed unlikely in the current environment. The Administration decided to pursue executive actions that could lead to tangible results.

The Cross-Agency Goal. OPM and the Presidential Personnel Office, with the help of OMB and the PMC, jointly opted to pursue: "… a three-pronged approach to make sure the federal government successfully unlocks the talent of today's federal workforce and builds the workforce needed for the future." These three priorities—employee engagement, senior executive reforms and hiring reforms—comprise the "People and Culture" cross-agency goal. The three were determined to be the best targeted interventions to improve the performance and culture of federal agencies. Their selection was based on what had been identified as some of the key drivers in agencies well-regarded for their performance and culture, such as NASA.

Governance Structure. This particular cross-agency goal tended to largely function as three separate sets of priorities overseen by the acting heads of OPM and the Presidential Personnel Office. They met on a weekly basis with OMB and developed good working relationships. Each priority has a senior career executive designated as the point person in OPM and with assistance and guidance from OMB staff. There's no team dedicated solely to the goal full-

time, per se, but there is a lot of top-level attention. There are communities of interest around each of the three elements, comprised of career agency staff.

The PMC and the Chief Human Capital Officers' Council are not directly involved (except the PMC's subcommittee on the SES priority) but serve as strategic partners, offering insights on areas needing further attention.

Progress to Date. The three sets of priorities seem to be on track with the goals originally set in 2014. They don't seem to have been diverted to new priorities by emerging events, like some of the other CAP goals, and are making steady progress:

Priority Area 1: Create a Culture of Excellence and Engagement to Enable Higher Performance. The 2014 CAP goal committed to using data-driven approaches to improve engagement. OPM created a website, UnlockTalent.gov, a data-driven dashboard that gives agencies and their managers access to this data for over 13,000 work-level units across the country (up from just a few hundred units in 2012. OPM notes: "This level of specificity in data will provide agency managers with actionable information to target areas where improvement is needed most and where there are management best practices that can provide a model for success."

OPM developed a guide for agency managers on how to interpret and use the data to make changes in the workplace that can improve employee engagement. In 2014, the White House, OMB and OPM set expectations for agency leaders to improve employee engagement, requiring them to designate a point person to lead their efforts. Subsequently, agency leaders committed to including engagement improvement as an element in rating the effectiveness of their managers, and regular progress reviews are embedded as a component of an agency's quarterly data-driven "HRStat" review, which has been embedded into how agencies strategically manage their workforce.

Has any of this effort made a difference? According to Beth Cobert, former acting director of OPM: "… Between 2014 and 2015, 57% of bureaus in the government increased their engagement scores; 21% of these bureaus increased 6% or more."

Priority Area 2: Build a World-Class Federal Management Team Starting with the Senior Executive Service (SES). An early initiative of the PMC was to broaden the experience and skill base among the 7,000-member career SES Corps. President Obama addressed a gathering of nearly half of the SES Corps in December 2014, offering several reform initiatives. This also included the creation of a White House Advisory Group launched in 2015, comprised of two dozen career SES executives. They identified "pain points" that could be addressed administratively in areas such as recruitment and hiring, development and accountability.

Based on the Advisory Group's findings, President Obama issued an Executive Order incorporating their recommendations in December 2015. These included:

- Formalizing succession planning in agencies.
- Streamlining the hiring/promotion process for the SES and developing a formal executive onboarding program.
- Increasing rotations of SES between agencies as part of executive development.
- Raising the bonus opportunity cap on SES bonuses and setting in motion pay adjustments to fix salary imbalances where they exist between SES and subordinate GS-level managers.

Implementation of certain EO elements began in all agencies in 2016. Additionally, other longer-term initiatives are being spread over three years, with one-third of the major agencies undertaking work each year. The first phase in FY 2016 covered seven agencies. The second phase, in FY 2017, is underway and covers an additional seven. Phase 1 agencies are partnered to Phase 2 agencies to serve as "lessons-learned" partners.

To date, OPM has developed a baseline of metrics to measure progress on accountability, pay, awards and executive mobility. As a result, it can now track the progress agencies are making in each of these dimensions.

Good progress has been made in some agencies, particularly in improving their recruitment, hiring and promotion processes. For example, several have piloted "resume-only" applications. This method is more in line with private sector recruiting practices, thereby opening up the process to a wider pool of candidates. In a pilot at the General Services Administration this has resulted in a shorter time to hire, more applications from a more diverse pool of applicants and hiring managers who are more satisfied with the quality and variety of the pool than before.

Priority Area 3: Enable Agencies to Recruit and Hire the Best Talent from All Segments of Society. For frontline managers, one of the biggest complaints was their inability to hire the right talent, quickly. This was a perennial issue during the entire course of the Obama Administration that is still a challenge, though President Obama launched an initiative in 2010 to improve the process. In the short term, OPM identified existing authorities and flexibilities and set out to map the processes in major agencies to identify areas for improvement. It worked with both the PMC and the Chief Human Capital Officers Council to develop a hiring reform "one stop" website as well as a "myth buster" guide to both educate HR staff and agency managers about what is and is not possible.

In the longer term, OPM says it will "use demonstration projects and/or legislation and regulatory changes to ensure that our hiring processes attract and retain America's talent. We will measure the success of this effort by assessing manager satisfaction with the quality of both applicants and their hires after six months on the job."

Near the end of the Obama Administration, OMB and OPM jointly launched a "Hiring Excellence" campaign, which former Acting OPM Director Cobert described as: "a series of training sessions with Federal HR professionals and hiring managers designed to address common barriers that agencies face during the hiring process. The campaign was designed to spread best practices and help agencies use existing authorities to meet their needs." Based on insights and lessons learned from the campaign, OPM and OMB also released a joint memo, in November 2016 that required agencies to select proven practices out of a list of seven provided that they would commit to focus on throughout 2017. Proven practices included items such as "Supervisors/Hiring Managers are actively involved in every appropriate step of the hiring process" and "HR specialists have the expertise to meet the needs of their customers to consult and advise Supervisors/Hiring Managers through the process."

Potential Next Steps. The status of these three sets of initiatives is unclear, in part because progress relied heavily on the engagement of top political leaders. However, the recent creation of OPM's Strategic Initiatives Group is intended to serve as the focal point for these efforts and drive delivery of these and other large, cross-cutting personnel-related initiatives. This group taps into different parts of OPM for data and support, and it includes expertise such as IT and strategic communication, in order to be effective in a cross-functional environment.

As for the specific initiatives, the annual governmentwide Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey was conducted across the government on a rolling basis between April and June 2017, with summary results to be made available starting in September. In addition, the SES reforms are underway in the second tranche of agencies slated to begin implementing the use of rotations among executives, etc. Finally, improving the recruitment and hiring process remains a long-term challenge. A September 2016 Government Accountability Office report, for example, cataloged 105 different hiring authorities created by Congress, the President or OPM. It found that agencies tend to use only 20, and these comprised 91 percent of their hires.

9. Strengthening Federal Cybersecurity

First published as a blog post on February 9, 2017

CAP Goal Statement: *Improve awareness of cybersecurity practices, vulnerabilities, and threats to the operating environment by limiting access to authorized users and implementing technologies and processes that reduce risk from malicious activity.*

During his campaign, President Trump promised to beef up cybersecurity efforts. Press reports on a draft Executive Order from the Administration parallel campaign commitments to launch an immediate review of all US cyber defenses by a Cyber Review Team comprised of individuals from the military, law enforcement and private sector. But his team won't be starting from scratch.

The data breach at the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in the spring of 2015 was breathtaking in scope—nearly 22 million sensitive personnel records stolen. But this wasn't a new issue. There had been breaches at the FBI, Department of Homeland Security, the IRS, even the National Security Agency.

But the OPM breach was clearly a turning point. It resulted in the removal of the agency head and agency CIO. Yes, federal agencies have been subject to cybersecurity requirements since 2002 under the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA). And Congress held periodic hearings excoriating numerous agencies for not complying. Yet, compliance didn't always translate into changes in the day-to-day federal government's culture. This led to the enhancement and expansion of multiple efforts as reflected in the cross-agency priority goal for cybersecurity, which serves as launching point for the new Administration's efforts.

Background. In 2013, the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) convened a public-private sector forum to develop a risk management framework to strengthen cyber defenses. It was published in 2014 as the NIST Cybersecurity Framework and is seen by many in government and industry as the cyber risk management "gold standard." NIST continues to review potential updates to keep the Framework current.

Following the publicity of the OPM breach, the White House launched a 30-day "cyber sprint" in June 2015 to implement high-priority fixes. It also identified critical gaps and emerging priorities that were summed up in a Cybersecurity Strategy & Implementation Plan. Its implementation is being overseen by the President's Management Council, comprised of top agencies' chief operating officers.

A Cybersecurity National Action Plan was released in February 2016. A capstone of seven years of efforts, it assessed cybersecurity trends, threats and intrusions and made a number of recommendations, such as boosting federal investments in cybersecurity to $19 billion (an increase of 35 percent), designating a federal chief information security officer and establishing a Commission on Enhancing National Cybersecurity.

The White House Cyber Commission released its report in December 2016, recommending joint public-private sector action. It developed a set of guiding principles and identified areas for future action, including the importance of the new administration taking action in its first 100 days in order to better equip government to operate in the digital age. It also recom-

mended unifying all federal civilian agencies under a single common network.

A January 2017 report by a bipartisan cyber policy task force sponsored by the Center for Strategic and International Studies spans both public and private sector cyber challenges. It cautioned: "The temptation for grand national initiatives should be avoided, as these usually fall flat." It concluded that any initiatives must be carefully attuned to market forces, have congressional support and not be run out of the White House. It offered recommendations, noting: "We can bring clarity to the task of cybersecurity if we start by assessing what actions create risk." And at that point, specific steps can be proposed to reduce risks by changing behaviors, using incentives—in both the public and private sectors.

The Cross-Agency Goal. Even before the OPM data breach in 2015, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) convened an interagency team in late 2013 to identify a subset of the FISMA requirements to focus on as one of the 15 Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goals. As a result, the goal focused on three sets of risk management initiatives and developed a set of targeted metrics to track progress at a high level:

- *Information Security Continuous Monitoring Mitigation.* The focus is to provide ongoing observation, assessment, analysis and diagnosis of an organization's cybersecurity posture, hygiene and operational readiness.
- *Identity, Credential and Access Management.* The focus is to put in place a set of capabilities that ensure users have legitimate access to IT systems required for their job function.
- *Anti-Phishing & Malware Defense.* The focus is on implementing technologies, processes and training that reduce the risk of malware being introduced through email and malicious or compromised websites.

The metrics are tracked by each agency and centrally reported via the Department of Homeland Security's CyberScope portal, which is used to monitor implementation of FISMA requirements.

Governance Structure. The President's Management Council oversaw the implementation of this goal, and the goal's staff support are located in OMB. In late 2016, the first federal Chief Information Security Officer, Greg Touhill, was appointed and became the point person for the implementation team. However, his scope was broader than just the set of initiatives reflected in the CAP goal. Several subgroups sponsored by the cross-agency Chief Information Officers (CIO) provide support as well. These include a cross-agency Chief Information Security Officers Council and a Joint Cybersecurity Metrics Working Group.

Strategy. The CAP goal was implemented within the context of other, broader cybersecurity initiatives and the dynamics associated with ongoing breaches and incidents. The distinguishing characteristic of the CAP goal, however, is that it focuses more on risk management than on technology fixes. OMB annually issues guidance to agencies describing new initiatives, requirements and priority areas of interest. OMB also convenes periodic "Cyberstat" reviews, which are "deep dive" face-to-face meetings with agency officials to discuss progress within their individual agencies and to develop strategies to better focus resources.

Current Status. While there has been significant churn, there has also been measurable progress, including:

- Designation of a federal chief information security officer to serve as a voice and executive champion for cybersecurity issues within agencies and across the government.
- A governmentwide set of continuous monitoring tools.
- A quarterly scorecard of status and progress by each agency.
- Clarification of the roles and responsibilities of federal agencies in responding to cyber incidents.
- Additional cybersecurity talent hired into government—6,000 in 2016 alone.

Next Steps. The CAP goal has been a useful foundation for several key elements of the broader federal cybersecurity strategy. It provides metrics, insight and oversight of agency efforts. As a result of its efforts, the fiscal year 2017 budget requested a total of $19 billion to support cybersecurity efforts; its approval awaits completion of the pending budget. This includes legislation pending to create an IT modernization fund to replace vulnerable legacy systems.

The federal CIO Council, under the leadership of former federal CIO Tony Scott, offered an assessment of the status of federal IT, including cybersecurity, and recommended future actions, most of which are reflected in existing plans and reports. In addition, Touhill, the former federal Chief Information Security Officer, offered his insight, as well. According to *Federal News Radio,* he concluded: "'agencies don't need any more policies around cybersecurity and technology… In fact, … the Office of Management and Budget had identified 63 policies that needed to be rescinded… ' The success measure is not the number of policies, but how well you execute them."

The new Administration is still putting its agenda in place. According to NextGov: ""An executive order seemingly prepped for President Donald Trump's signature would order four major reviews of the nation's cyber vulnerabilities and capabilities but would not make any immediate changes to U.S. cyber posture."

But a day later, *Federal News Radio* reported that the pending executive order would be more proactive, where: "… department secretaries now will be held more accountable than ever for managing their agency's cyber risks. The draft order would require agency senior leaders to implement the cybersecurity framework developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology to measure and mitigate risk… Then, the Office of Management and Budget would assess and manage cyber risk governmentwide."

Postscript: President Trump signed Executive Order 13800 in May 2017 to require greater risk management of federal cyber systems, improve the resilience of critical infrastructure in the face of attacks and develop a national workforce with cybersecurity specialties.

10. Service Members and Veterans Mental Health

First published as a blog post on April 19, 2017

CAP Goal Statement: *Improve mental health outcomes for Service members, Veterans, and their Families.*

Combat-related concussions, depression and combat stress are examples of immediate or delayed invisible wounds for military personnel. In WWI, many of psychological symptoms were referred to as "shell shock" or "the thousand-yard stare." During that time warfighters were reluctant to discuss psychiatric symptoms resulting from war for fear they would be labeled "weak," or worse.

Today, we are more likely to talk about PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) and related mental health issues such as alcohol and substance use as they are recognized medical conditions with effective treatments available. Since September 11, 2001, more than 2.69 million troops have returned from deployments to Iraq or Afghanistan. In a 2012 study, about 40 percent of those who left military service and sought help from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) have been diagnosed with mental health, alcohol and/or substance use disorders, as a result of their service. This has forced a systemic re-think of how to approach the treatment of our Veterans.

For decades, military Service members and Veterans have resisted care for combat related mental health conditions due to the social and professional stigma associated with seeking mental health services. Today, there is increased national interest in improving access to mental health care and in reducing the stigma associated with seeking care.

Background. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) in 2012 documented a sharp year over year increase in Veterans seeking mental health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs, with about 900,000 seeking care in fiscal year 2006, to about 1.2 million seeking services in 2010.

A decade after the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness: "roughly 18 to 22 Veterans died from suicide each day. These alarming numbers pressed President Obama to step in and take action" in 2012, issuing an Executive Order detailing specific actions to enhance access to mental health services, to include suicide prevention efforts for Veterans, Service members and their families.

The Interagency Task Force. The 2012 presidential order led to the creation of the Interagency Task Force on Military and Veterans Mental Health, which is co-chaired by senior leaders from Defense, Veterans Affairs and Health and Human Services, with a joint program management staff. The task force developed goals and metrics to monitor progress on the implementation of the order. Over the next five years, the role and responsibilities of the task force increased.

In early 2014, the Administration announced a set of 15 cross-agency priority (CAP) goals, one of which focused on reducing barriers to seeking mental health services by service Members, Veterans and their families. The task force's leadership has become the de facto coordinating and oversight body for this goal.

In late 2014, the scope of the task force grew when it was assigned responsibility to implement a set of 19 specific "Executive Actions," such as expanding mental health awareness campaigns and providing opportunities for Service Members, Veterans and their families to return unwanted medications (oftentimes powerful opioids) for destruction. Progress on these executive actions were tied to the CAP Goal.

In addition, in 2015, the Secretary of VA was assigned the task force the lead for implementing a new law supporting suicide prevention efforts among Veterans (The Clay Hunt Act). And in 2016, the CAP Goal was expanded to include additional activities that addressed emerging priorities, such as same day access to care.

The goal of addressing the mental health needs of Service members, Veterans and their families is, and has been, a focus of public attention and legislative interest and the task force has been an instrumental part of making that happen. The CAP Goal is described in more detail below and includes a focus on reducing barriers to care, increasing access to care, improving patient safety and expanding research. The Executive Actions target improvements in the transition of care from Defense to VA and largely reinforce the CAP goals with more specificity.

The Cross-Agency Priority Goal. The Service Members and Veterans Mental Health CAP Goal is a subset of a broader national agenda to prevent suicides and address the mental health needs of Service members, Veterans and their families. The CAP Goal initiative is focused on the following work streams:

- ***Barriers.*** "Reduce barriers for service members, veterans, and their families to seeking mental health treatment and support." Examples of specific actions include:
    - VA and Defense public awareness campaigns
    - Hosting mental health summits to identify unmet needs
    - Community-based programs and services
- ***Access.*** "Enhance access to and improve the quality of mental health care and support available to service members, veterans, and their families." Examples of specific actions include:
    - Identifying effective VA and Defense programs
    - Integrating mental health and substance abuse programs into primary care
    - Supporting an open source directory of vetted resources for community-based providers
    - Improving VA and Defense medical record data sharing across health care locations
- ***Research.*** "Identify and develop more effective diagnostic and treatment methodologies to improve outcomes, including traumatic brain injury (TBI), PTSD and related conditions."
    - Follow through on an agreed-upon National Research Action Plan
    - Develop new metrics for substance abuse disorders
    - Evaluate the impact of ongoing VA and Defense research to improve diagnosis and treatment.
- ***Patient Safety.*** Create a joint culture to improve patient safety, such as reducing substance abuse and suicides.
    - Drug take-back services for VA and Defense medical facilities
    - Develop and disseminate firearm safety training and toolkits

While some of these initiatives predated the CAP Goal, participation in the CAP Goal process helped to refine measurable targets, hasten implementation and provide greater visibility to senior governmental officials about the progress being made.

Governance Structure. This CAP Goal had a high degree of White House attention, with one of the four co-leads being a Deputy Chief of Staff of the White House. This high degree of visibility ensured active engagement by affected agencies, who provided staff support for the Interagency Task Force. There was also support from the National Security Council and the Domestic Policy Council.

The interagency task force has been responsible for establishing policies, benchmarks and measures of progress. In addition, it provides concrete coordination and program management services such as professional facilitation of meetings.

Examples of Actions Taken. The overall initiative has dozens of specific actions underway and a set of activity metrics such as the number of web hits to the MakeTheConnection web resource (372,732 web hits in fiscal year 2016). Another initiative changes the "In Transition" program, which establishes an explicit handoff between military and VA mental health providers for Veterans with a history of mental health and substance use disorders as they transition from military to civilian life, from an "opt in" to an "opt out" process. As a result, participation in the program increased four-fold.

GAO has assessed progress on specific activities being undertaken, as well. For example, its 2016 review of the VA's suicide hotline found calls were not being answered in a timely manner and were rolling over to a backup number. In response, the VA has built a new call center in Atlanta, nearly doubling its capacity. Another GAO report examined wait times for access to mental health evaluations and found internally conflicting policies in VA regarding acceptable wait times. According to the latest CAP progress report, VA has completed implementation of standard operating procedures for same-day initial screenings in 100 percent of all of its facilities.

Next Steps. A November 2016 status report declares many of the task force's original recommendations have largely been completed, but additional efforts will continue, even beyond the targeted completion date of the CAP goal—which is September 30, 2017. In the report, the task force said in coming years, it "will continue its governance function, with the Co-Chairs shaping the design and execution of the [task force's] recommendations to proactively identify and address emerging issues in American mental health."

11. Job-Creating Investment

First published as a blog post on May 4, 2017

CAP Goal Statement: *Encourage foreign direct investment (FDI), spurring job growth by improving federal investment tools and resources, while also increasing interagency coordination.*

The U.S. is seen as one of the safest places in the world to invest. And these investments turn into jobs. The Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that in 2014, 6.4 million Americans were employed by U.S. subsidiaries of foreign firms.

As of 2015, foreign firms had invested more than $3.1 trillion in the U.S. over the years, with a record-high of $348 billion that year alone. However, its overall share of global trends in foreign investments declined when compared to the pre-recession period of 1999–2008. So, how can this trend be reversed? One key strategy has been to enlist the federal government as both a promoter and a one-stop shop for foreign investors.

Background. Historically, economic development had been left to states and cities to compete among themselves for investments in their local economies. While this model may have worked in earlier years—before the unprecedented increases in investments by foreign companies in the global economy—competitor countries have now developed national strategies to attract foreign investments on a scale that U.S. states and localities could not.

In 2007, the George W. Bush Administration launched the Invest in America Initiative —the first U.S. government-wide program promoting and facilitating job-creating business investment in the U.S. Building on the success of Invest in America, SelectUSA was established by executive order in 2011. Housed within the International Trade Administration in the Department of Commerce, SelectUSA focuses on attracting high-impact investment that drives jobs, R&D spending and exports in the United States.

The executive order also created an Interagency Investment Working Group that includes more than 20 member federal agencies that coordinate activities to promote investments, helping "to make the United States a welcoming and supportive environment for businesses to open or expand," according to SelectUSA's website. In fact, there are even investment teams at posts led by ambassadors around the world. SelectUSA: "uses the convening power of the U.S. government to showcase investment opportunities and bring investors and U.S. locations together." It held its first annual investment summit in 2013 where President Barack Obama announced expansions to the effort, including:

- a clear system within the federal government to advocate for high-priority, job-creating investments, led by senior Administration officials;
- a single point of contact for foreign investors looking to bring jobs and production to the U.S. and
- engaging in "unprecedented coordinated support" for states and localities to help them attract investment.

In 2014, the visibility of this initiative rose when it was designated as one of 15 Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goals for the federal government.

The Job Creating Investment CAP Goal is the focus of a smaller subset of agencies represented in the working group, and they have more a more defined set of common goals than the broader group. The key players involved in the CAP Goal include the Departments of Commerce, Agriculture, State and Homeland Security, as well as the Small Business Administration and the Export-Import Bank.

The Cross-Agency Priority Goal. The federal Cross-Agency Priority Goal, "Job-Creating Investment" facilitates foreign direct investment in the U.S. by improving federal investment tools and by increasing interagency coordination. The overarching intent is to create a whole-of-government, one-stop shop approach to assisting foreign investors. It is comprised of three sub-goals:

- Promote and market the U.S. as a premier investment destination for foreign investors;
- Improve federal services, tools and resources that facilitate investment by foreign companies and
- Improve and execute federal business processes that assist potential investors and state-local economic development organizations.

Governance Structure. Three co-goal leaders were tapped to lead this effort --one each from the Department of Commerce, the Department of State and the National Economic Council. The Goal Team, with staff from these three agencies, convenes monthly to assess the progress of sub-goals and milestones.

The CAP Goal team also works with the broader Interagency Investment Working Group, which helps facilitate transaction-level work, helping individual potential investors navigate the intricacies of the federal government and resolve sticking points, especially between agencies.

In addition, according to its website: "SelectUSA is largely responsible for leading this goal's day-to-day operations. The program is housed within the International Trade Administration (ITA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce."

Progress to Date. CAP Goal team staff say that the more defined goals and smaller subset of agencies helps create greater focus and allows analyses of different types of investment transactions. Staff also observed that being designated a CAP Goal helped create additional visibility for SelectUSA, which in turn helped foster increased collaboration efforts within a smaller nucleus of agencies. More specifically, it led to improved relationships with, and a better understanding by, the State Department's foreign service officers and chiefs of mission as to the value of encouraging foreign direct investments. This has led to greater mutual support of each other's missions. For example, at the 2015 SelectUSA Investment Summit, 54 U.S.

chiefs of mission stationed in countries around the world led delegations and came together on improving foreign investment attraction efforts.

The broader SelectUSA program has blossomed, in part because of the visibility that being designated a CAP Goal gave it. The CAP Goal helped a relatively new organization unify, raise visibility, encourage collaboration and hold partners mutually accountable for achieving common goals. The team relies on "agile" management approaches to its work, including the use of rapid testing, piloting and learning in a meaningful way.

Examples of Results. The SelectUSA year-end progress report outlines several results that stem from the CAP Goal designation:

- To date, SelectUSA has assisted in facilitating over $23.1 billion in client-verified investment, supporting tens of thousands of U.S. jobs. For example, Switzerland's Kudelski Group, a leading cybersecurity advisor and innovator, announced in June 2016 that it would be opening a second global headquarters in Phoenix, Arizona. The Kudelski Group expects to create a significant number of high wage jobs over the next three years. The team at the U.S. Embassy in Switzerland and SelectUSA assisted the company with customized research reports and facilitated access to federal, state and local level services
- In fiscal year 2016, SelectUSA and the Department of Commerce assisted a record 6,072 unique investment clients, more than tripling its comparable fiscal year 2015 performance. For example, SATA Group, a manufacturer headquartered in Valperga, Italy, announced on May 5, 2016 that it will invest $114 million to build a machining operation in Brownsville, Texas, that will create 300 jobs over the next decade.
- About 70 percent of attendees at the 2016 Investment Summit participated in "matchmaking" meetings. For example, the Italian tissue paper maker Sofidel participated in both the 2013 and 2015 SelectUSA Investment Summits and has made multiple investments across the United States. The company has committed to investing over $300 million in the U.S. through 2017 and creating over 600 jobs by 2018.

Postscript. The 2017 SelectUSA Investment Summit was held June 18–20, 2017 in the Washington, DC area. The summit hosted over 2,800 participants, with more than 1,200 international companies and 650 economic developers from 51 U.S. states and territories.

12. Cutting Red Tape in the Infrastructure Permitting Process

First published as a blog post on October 24, 2016

> ***CAP Goal Statement:*** *Modernize the Federal permitting and review process for major infrastructure projects to reduce uncertainty for project applicants, reduce the aggregate time it takes to conduct reviews and make permitting decisions, and produce measurably better environmental and community outcomes.*

President Trump has pledge to boost spending for crumbling roads, bridges and other infrastructure. But if current permitting and review processes take an estimated six years for major projects, can his Administration preside over any ribbon-cutting ceremonies for completed projects?

The Obama Administration first faced a similar dilemma of delays when implementing the 2009 Recovery Act. It launched an effort in 2011 to untangle the nest of 35 sets of permitting and review responsibilities across 18 different agencies. An initial assessment study concluded, drolly, that the interplay among these different statutory requirements "is challenging and can sometimes result in uncertainty."

Background. Historically, no coordinating mechanism existed to bridge the different laws administered by different agencies at the federal level, let alone at the state or local levels. Each agency focused on its own mandates, largely without any awareness of what other agencies are doing or if there would be any benefit from coordinating efforts.

While it is important to weigh competing interests and values around historical, safety, environmental and social justice values that are reflected in the reviews, there is growing agreement among various stakeholders that there needs to be a process clear enough to reach a resolution—whether it is "yes," or "no."

Former Harvard president Larry Summers points to a local Boston bridge rehabilitation project as an example of "American sclerosis" where repairs have been delayed more than four years with no end in sight: "a gaggle of regulators and veto players, each with the power to block or to delay, and each with their own parochial concerns. All the actors—the historical commission, the contractor, the environmental agencies, the advocacy groups, the state transportation department—are reasonable in their own terms, but the final result is wildly unreasonable."

It is this lack of clarity that has triggered outrage and frustration among some, leading to charges that the government is broken. The advocacy group Common Good claims "that a six-year delay in starting construction on public projects costs the nation over $3.7 trillion, including the costs of prolonged inefficiencies and unnecessary pollution. This is more than double the $1.7 trillion needed through the end of this decade to modernize America's infrastructure." The group recommends cutting the review process to two years for major projects.

But is it possible? The Obama Administration has taken an iterative approach to improve the permit and review processes, with increasingly hopeful results. Historically, streamlining was viewed by some stakeholders as an attack on environmental, endangered species, historical preservation or other policies. Instead, the Office of Management and Budget framed the new streamlining effort as a management improvement challenge, which was acceptable to a wide range of stakeholders.

A Series of One-Off Heroic Efforts. Early on, the Obama Council on Jobs and Competitiveness recommended establishing an infrastructure steering committee and a permitting dashboard for about 50 priority projects, many associated with the Recovery Act or rebuilding after Superstorm Sandy. The steering committee improved the timeline on a number of these projects—largely by encouraging concurrent rather than sequential reviews. For example, it reduced the timeline for the replacement of the Tappen Zee Bridge in New York by two to three years and reduced project timelines for selected rail projects in Minneapolis and California by up to 30 percent.

To support these efforts, the president signed a directive in 2011 that instructed Federal agencies to prioritize and expedite the environmental review and permitting process for a set of infrastructure projects with significant potential for job creation and to improve the accountability, transparency and efficiency of those processes. This led to the piloting of the Federal Infrastructure Permitting Dashboard to track progress on 14 significant projects.

In 2012, building on lessons learned from the pilot projects, the president signed an executive order that expanded use of the dashboard to additional types of projects. It also created a Steering Committee on Federal Infrastructure Permitting and Review Process Improvement. The committee worked to expedite over 50 major infrastructure projects, including bridges, rail, waterways, roads and renewable energy generation projects. Of these, 30 had been completed by 2014 (and one was denied).

However, these time-intensive efforts did not result in systemic changes to the permitting and review systems. Therefore, in 2013, another presidential directive directed the Steering Committee to come up with an implementation plan to move from an ad hoc process to a more standardized, repeatable process with an overall governance structure. That plan was completed in 2014 and laid the groundwork for the initiative to be designated as a Cross-Agency Priority Goal. The plan set out 96 milestones with a goal of cutting the permitting and review process time in half, "while improving outcomes for communities and the environment." Much of this would be done by creating greater interagency coordination and transparency.

Moving to a Systematic Approach. Designating the steering committee's implementation plan as a Cross-Agency Priority Goal for the administration in 2014 gave it new prominence. Having the plan in hand resulted in a high degree of clarity for what needed to be done to move the Priority Goal forward—albeit, much of the plan's success hinged on the creation of a central office to manage the cross-agency efforts and this required congressional support and funding. The CAP Goal team—co-led by OMB, the Council on Environmental Quality and the Department of Transportation—ensured that the required quarterly progress reviews by top leadership focused attention on the need for a central office.

In the Fall of 2015, the Obama Administration released guidance that would expand the process improvement efforts to all major infrastructure projects. As the Administration was gearing up to implement the guidance, Congress passed the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act in December of 2015. According to a brief history on the Dashboard's website, Title 41 of the Act (dubbed "FAST-41") created "a new entity—the Federal Permitting Improvement Council—to oversee the cross-agency Federal permitting and review process, composed of agency Deputy Secretary-level members and chaired by an Executive Director appointed by the President."

The law also required each of the 13 participating agencies to designate a Chief Environmental Review and Permitting Officer which will serve as the agency point of contact responsible for agency-specific training and process improvements as well as facilitating effi-

cient and timely processes for environmental reviews and authorizations for FAST-41 covered projects, including dispute resolution. In addition, the CAP Goal team focused the existing working group of operational staff (from each participating agency created by the 2012 executive order) on FAST-41 implementation.

The new law also expands the range of infrastructure projects that could be included, such as conventional energy generation and manufacturing. In addition, it "establishes new procedures that standardize interagency consultation and coordination practices" and granted the authority to collect fees from major projects in order to fund the new cross-agency coordination processes for federal permits and reviews.

Funding and staff support became available in early 2016 to stand up the new Council and update the Permitting Dashboard. Richard Kidd was named the first executive director by midsummer, and an updated inventory of projects being tracked on the Dashboard was posted on the website to reflect new statutory requirements in mid-September. The 34 projects on the Dashboard have 60 days to develop the statutorily-required Coordinated Project Plans and post project timelines on the Dashboard.

Next Steps. In January 2017, President Trump signed an executive order to expedite environmental reviews and approvals for infrastructure projects and, at an event at the Department of Transportation in June, President Trump announced that he was creating an office in the White House Council of Environmental Quality to help project managers navigate the maze of federal permitting and reviews required for infrastructure projects. In August 2017, he re-designated this initiative as a Cross-Agency Priority Goal and signed an executive order that " requires federal agencies to process environmental reviews and permitting decisions for major projects under a "One Federal Decision" plan" with a designated lead agency to develop a unified schedule for project completion. The order also sets a goal "to process all actions required by federal law for environmental reviews and permits of major infrastructure projects within two years."

13. STEM Education

First published as a blog post on March 17, 2017

CAP Goal Statement: *Improve science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education by implementing The Federal STEM Education 5-Year Strategic Plan announced in May 2013, and specifically seek to:*

- *improve STEM instruction;*
- *increase and sustain youth and public engagement in STEM;*
- *enhance STEM experience of undergraduate students;*
- *better serve groups historically under-represented in STEM fields;*
- *design graduate education for tomorrow's STEM workforce;*
- *build new models for leveraging assets and expertise; and*
- *build and use evidence-based approaches.*

President Trump signed a bipartisan bill in his first weeks in office to promote mentoring programs to encourage girls and women to enter the aerospace field. These programs are part of a broader ecosystem of existing federal programs to bolster careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

The new legislation adds to a loosely organized network of continuing federal efforts to boost Americans' engagement in STEM education. In fact, President George W. Bush placed a governmentwide emphasis on STEM education in his State of the Union address in 2006 as a part of his national competitiveness agenda.

Background: STEM career fields in the U.S. jobs market have tripled in recent years and the White House Office of Science and Technology (OSTP) projected in 2013 that the demand for these skills will outstrip the supply by at least one million jobs if STEM education trends do not change.

A 2010 law required OSTP to develop a plan to better coordinate the federal government's STEM education investments. In May 2013, it released the first-ever governmentwide 5-year STEM education strategic plan. The plan highlights five investment areas, such as improving STEM instruction by preparing 100,000 highly-qualified STEM teachers in grades K-12. Another targets the closing of the one-million-person skills gap by increasing the number of STEM-educated college graduates.

A Network of STEM Education Programs. The federal government has encouraged STEM education since the 1950s, in part as a reaction to the Russian's launch of Sputnik to the surprise of Americans. Out of self-interest, many science-based agencies such as the Department of Energy have created programs to serve as pipelines of technical talent needed to meet their missions. Other agencies, such as NASA, have sponsored STEM programs to infuse science skills into the broader economy. In fact, there is even an advocacy group promoting STEM education!

These programs evolved largely independent of each other. But in the mid-2000s, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Government Accountability Office (GAO) stood

back and took a more strategic view, voicing concern over the effectiveness of the investments in myriad federal programs; these concerns contributed to the requirement for a plan in the 2010 law.

In 2013, GAO inventoried existing programs and found: "In fiscal year 2010, 13 federal agencies invested over $3 billion in 209 programs designed to increase knowledge of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields and attainment of STEM degrees. The number of programs within agencies ranged from 3 to 46, with the Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Energy and the National Science Foundation administering more than half of the 209 programs. Almost one third of all programs had obligations of $1 million or less, while some had obligations of over $100 million.... Eighty-three percent of the programs GAO identified overlapped to some degree with at least one other program in that they offered similar services to similar target groups in similar STEM fields to achieve similar objectives."

That same year, the newly-released 5-year STEM plan was a first step in rationalizing the many programs and the creation of a more formal coordination network among them.

The STEM Education CAP Goal. The 2014 STEM Education Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goal is one of 15 such goals created by OMB in response to a separate 2010 law requiring the establishment of such goals. This CAP Goal outlines a multi-prong strategy with sub-goals to implement key elements in the STEM Education 5-Year Strategic Plan. The eight sub-goals include initiatives to improve STEM instruction; increase and sustain youth and public engagement in STEM and build and use evidence-based approaches. Milestones and metrics were developed to assess the progress of each strategy.

Governance Structure. Leaders from OSTP and the National Science Foundation were designated as the co-leads for the STEM Education CAP Goal. In developing a broader governance structure, the co-leads leveraged an existing OSTP advisory group, the Subcommittee on Federal Coordination in STEM Education (FC-STEM), whose membership is drawn from the 14 federal agencies involved in STEM education programs.

To manage across the breadth of this CAP Goal, FC-STEM established seven interagency working groups, responsible for implementing the eight sub-goals. These working groups provide quarterly progress reports to FC-STEM, which compiles them into the quarterly progress reports required by law. According to an interagency staff that coordinates the efforts of the working groups, the designation of these efforts as a CAP Goal has led to greater coordination of funding and helps ensure there are not gaps in, or duplication of, programs to targeted groups.

For example, the interagency working group on Undergraduate STEM Education identified the high failure rate in introductory math for undergraduates as a barrier to students completing a STEM-related degree. In response, they've developed a focus on improving high school math instruction and measuring improvements through national testing scores. The ultimate key indicator will be the number of STEM bachelor's degrees earned annually. While there are historical measures for this indicator, the data lag does not allow an assessment of progress since 2013.

The subcommittee, the interagency working groups and the interagency coordinating staff all predated the 2010 law, the 5-year plan and the CAP Goal. However, they were seen as policy discussion forums, without an emphasis on implementation. The CAP Goal designation in 2014 created a new mechanism for coordination, implementation and reporting progress that helped agencies "get credit" for diffuse activities occurring across myriad STEM education pro-

grams in multiple agencies. The CAP Goal framework of high-level quarterly progress meetings gave the community more visible and encouraged a greater degree of voluntary coordination. In the eyes of some observers, the CAP Goal serves as a catalyst for a shift from information sharing to joint action to meet common objectives, such as increase the number of STEM graduates.

Progress to Date. In comparison to many of the other CAP Goals, the STEM Education CAP Goal was initially seen as one of the least mature in terms of a pre-existing network of participants focused on cross-agency implementation of initiatives. However, when GAO examined its progress in 2016, it was positive about how this network evolved in a relatively short period of time.

For example, GAO said that the STEM Education CAP Goal leader from OSTP: "found contributing agencies to be more receptive to directives and efforts for implementing the CAP goal because they come jointly from the National Science Foundation (NSF) and are not solely based on OSTP's policy perspective. They also told us that NSF's leadership of CAP goal activities and its ability to secure agency buy-in, among other things, makes it an effective CAP goal leader."

But GAO also noted that the STEM CAP Goal coordinating staff "did not identify a target—expressing both magnitude and direction—for 12 of its 15 performance measures. The most recent data available for these measures is from 2013, prior to the start of the current CAP goal period."

Nevertheless, one of the more concrete cross-agency successes was the creation of a one-stop portal that the Department of Energy hosts on its science.gov "gateway to U.S. federal science" website. This portal inventories opportunities for federally-funded undergraduate and graduate STEM education programs. The STEM Education CAP Goal team helped enable the cross-agency coordination needed to make this initiative go "live."

Examples of Results. OSTP in late 2016 catalogued numerous examples of different STEM initiatives underway, for example:

- **TechHire**. In 2015, the White House launched an initiative to expand local tech sectors by building tech talent pipelines across the country, supported by grants from the Labor Department and other agencies. A year later, more than 1,000 employers in 70 communities across the country were working with new training programs, such as coding boot camps, that resulted in "thousands of new hires."
- **Computer Science for All.** An early 2016 White House initiative launched "a nationwide effort to give every student the opportunity to learn computer science." The effort, co-sponsored by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Corporation for National and Community Service, engaged selected states, school districts and non-profit organizations in providing computer science learning experiences. Grants were also provided to ensure availability of the tools needed, such as high-speed broadband, tech infrastructure and Wi-Fi.
- **Teaching Computer Science.** NSF announced in late 2016 that it will invest $20 million in the coming year to "help K-12 teachers expand opportunities for teaching computer science and computational thinking for students across the United States." This funding is part of a five-year initiative to develop support materials for teachers.

Next Steps. This initiative has created enough momentum among its network of partners that existing STEM Education programs are carrying forward, pending designation of new leaders.

14. Insider Threat & Security Clearance Reform

First published as a blog post on January 27, 2017

CAP Goal Statement: *Promote and protect our nation's interests by ensuring aligned, effective, efficient, secure, and reciprocal vetting processes to support a trusted Federal workforce.*

Who can you trust? The tragic Navy Yard shootings in 2013 crystallized a long-simmering problem: how to proactively manage potential threats from the government's own employees and contractors. President Obama in one of his last acts in office, set a framework in place.

Background. Reform legislation adopted in 2004 in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks that restructured the intelligence community included requirements to standardize and better align the background security clearance process across agencies. But in the years that followed, the consolidation efforts took time, culminating in a 2008 presidential directive to improve the process.

A series of incidents increased the visibility and urgency to act. Chelsey Manning's dump of sensitive information to WikiLeaks in 2011, Edward Snowden's disclosure of highly classified information in May 2013 and the Navy Yard shooting in September 2013 all brought to a head the importance of addressing potential insider threats to protect our nation's information and provide a safe workplace.

In response to the WikiLeaks incident, President Obama issued an Executive Order requiring agencies to create an Insider Threat Program. But the Navy Yard shooting in 2013 resulted in significantly more action. President Obama directed a 120-day review of the "suitability and security" processes used to hire and oversee employees and contractors for the federal government to ensure personal safety at federal physical facilities as well as protect our nation's most sensitive information..

The 120-Day Review's report recommended creating a full-time program management office to support the Performance Accountability Council (PAC), the development of reform policies and facilitate their implementation across the government. The reform initiatives supported by this office were ultimately designated by the Administration as one of the 15 cross-agency priority goals in 2014.

Changing Scope and Objectives. The scope and objectives of the Insider Threat and Security Clearance Reform initiative has evolved over time in response to changing events. The initial objective of the initiative—long before it was designated a cross-agency priority goal in 2014—focused on implementing ongoing efforts to create more secure personal identity verification (PIV) cards and reform the security clearance process.

The 2015 Office of Personnel Management (OPM) data breach of personnel information of 21.5 million federal employees and contractors from its background investigations and clearance contractor led to a shift in emphasis. The PAC was tapped to conduct an inter-agency 90 day review of the background investigation process. The review recommended creating a new organization within OPM dedicated to the conduct of background investigations. It also recommended relying on the Defense Department to develop and operate the technology backbone for hosting the background investigation process and records.

In late 2016, the cross-agency priority goals for this initiative were revised to reflect these new priorities and other ongoing reform initiatives, to include implementing continuous vetting and establishing a continuous performance improvement model for this mission.

How Is the Initiative Organized? The 2008 reforms introduced by President Bush focused on streamlining the background clearance review process. To lead that effort, he created the Suitability and Security Clearance Performance Accountability Council (PAC), comprised of top officials from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and the Department of Defense. Other council members included Energy, State, Justice, Homeland Security and Treasury. After the 2014 report to the president, membership was further expanded to other organizations.

The PAC is largely responsible for the alignment and oversight of government-wide security, suitability and credentialing reforms, as well as ensuring forward momentum. In addition, the PAC created an Enterprise Investment Board to oversee the alignment and funding of information technology requirements and established several shared services to provide targeted enterprise-wide services to agencies. They believe that their efforts have resulted in greater consistency across the executive branch. They also work closely with the Insider Threat Task Force created earlier in 2011, as well as the new National Background Investigations Bureau created in late 2016.

The PAC Program Management Office uses "agile scrum" to manage its operations, which are largely tactical and responsive to current events. However, it also manages a research and innovation program that is strategically forward-looking. The responsibilities of the "Security Executive Agent" are vested in the Director of National Intelligence, while the responsibilities of the "Suitability Executive Agent" and the "Credentialing Executive Agent" are vested in the Director of the Office of Personnel Management. The program management staff sees itself as responsible for aligning activities between the PAC, the Executive Agents, the agencies and key stakeholders in order to remove bureaucratic barriers.

Results and Next Steps. Several tangible results from the past decade of reform efforts include enrolling 500,000 federal employees in a continuous evaluation program and reducing the number of people with clearances by 20 percent.

A number of actions taken in recent months have resulted in an enterprise-wide framework that is designed to ensure sustainability over the next few years. These include:

- Issuing a PAC Strategic Intent document in July 2016, outlining a five-year framework to sustain progress. This was supplemented in October, with an Enterprise IT strategy to support the plan, an implementation plan in final approval.
- Issuing a new "Security Executive Agent Directive" that requires agencies to report defined events such as bankruptcies and foreign travel of staff. It also includes requirements on how agencies are to protect this sensitive information.
- Standing-up in October of the National Background Investigations Bureau, housed within OPM, to conduct background investigations. The bureau is now officially the government-wide service provider for background investigations.
- Completing a set of electronic business rules for the automated adjudication of favorable Secret and Confidential background investigations, which speeds reviews and saves significant resources.
- Expanding training on insider threats, provided by the National Insider Threat Task Force.

15. Climate Change (Federal Actions)

First published as a blog post on May 25, 2017

> ***CAP Goal Statement:*** *Increase Federal government consumption of electricity from renewable sources to 30% by 2025 and improve energy efficiency at Federal facilities including $4 billion in performance contracts by the end of 2016 as part of the wider strategy to reduce the Federal government's direct greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40 percent from a 2008 baseline.*

With the end of the national energy shortage in the 1970s, efficiency efforts were ultimately re-cast and broadened to become "sustainability" initiatives. Will energy efficiency continue to be a federal priority in coming years?

Background. Federal energy efficiency initiatives over the past dozen years have been bipartisan affairs. For example, the federal Energy Policy Act of 2005 set goals and standards to reduce energy use in existing and new federal buildings. This was followed in 2007 by a George W. Bush Administration executive order that expanded those goals. Congress, in turn, legislated these higher standards in the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 and increased federal energy reduction goals to 30 percent by fiscal year 2015.

President Barack Obama signed an executive order in 2009 that expanded the scope of these goals and required all federal agencies to appoint a Senior Sustainability Officer to prepare and implement a Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan for their agency.

To create better cross-agency collaboration on meeting these goals and sustained high-level attention, these initiatives were designated in 2014 as one of the 15 Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goals of the Administration, per a statutory requirement to designate a handful of priority goals.

A third executive order, signed by President Obama in 2015, updated the provisions of the two earlier directives and set "ambitious climate, energy and environmental sustainability goals for Federal agencies over the next decade… [because] … The U.S. government must lead by example." The higher goals set in this directive led to revisions to the CAP Goal to raise the bar.

Objectives of the Cross-Agency Priority Goal. The actions begun under the federal cross-agency priority goal, "Climate Change (Federal Actions)," largely focus on federal government energy consumption and energy efficiency. The goal, and subsequent actions, set a series of targets for the government as a whole and for each agency to:

- Reduce direct Greenhouse Gas Emissions by the federal government by at least 40 percent by 2025 (from a 2008 baseline).
- Increase the federal government's consumption of renewable electricity by 30 percent by 2025.
- Increase the use of performance-based contracting to improve energy and water efficiency in federal buildings by $4 billion, by the end of 2016.
- Reduce the Greenhouse Gas Emissions of the federal government's major suppliers and monitor progress with a scorecard.

Governance Structure. Like the other CAP Goals, there is an overarching governance body to oversee the implementation of the goal. In this case, this body is housed in the White House Council on Environmental Quality's Office of Federal Sustainability and is led by a Federal Chief Sustainability Officer. Its work is supported by agency-level chief sustainability officers who form the Interagency Sustainability Steering Committee. The Council and Office support four implementation teams, one for each of the sub-goals, each with different mixes of agency partners:

- Greenhouse Gas Emission reduction
- Renewable Electricity
- Performance Contracting
- Supply Chain Greenhouse Gas Emission Management

Progress to Date. While agency plans and progress status scorecards are no longer available on the cross-governmental performance.gov website, they are available on each agency's site. For example, the Department of Energy's fiscal year 2015 scorecard shows that it exceeded its targets in six of seven major categories. And its 2016 Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan makes measureable commitments to the ten goals outlined in the 2015 executive order.

The governmentwide progress status report for the CAP Goal at the end of fiscal year 2016 noted measurable progress:

- By the end of FY 2015, direct Greenhouse Gas Emissions from federal activities had declined 17.6 percent from the 2008 baseline.
- At the end of FY 2015, the original renewable electricity goal of 7.5 percent was exceeded; it was 8.3 percent of total electricity use (the 2015 executive order set a higher goal of 30 percent by 2025).
- The goal of committing at least $4 billion to performance-based contracting goal was exceeded.

Example of Results. According to the progress status report, in August 2016, the U.S. Army announced that it had completed contracting for $1 billion in energy-savings projects. The Army report that in the previous five years, it had undertaken 127 energy-efficiency projects with the private sector, aimed at making energy-savings upgrades to federal buildings, noting that: "These upgrades will use long-term energy savings to pay for up-front costs, at no cost to taxpayers."

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