



HIGHLIGHTS

Office of Inspector General
United States Department of State

AUD-CGI-23-20

What OIG Audited

The Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA) is responsible for issuing passports, visas, and other documents to citizens and foreign nationals to facilitate travel to and from the United States. To achieve its mission, CA needs modern, reliable, and secure IT systems. Toward that effort, CA initiated the Consular Systems Modernization (CSM) program to modernize and consolidate approximately 90 discrete consular legacy IT systems into a common technology framework.

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted this audit to determine whether the Department of State (Department) applied project management principles governing the management and administration of IT investments to realize the goals of the CSM program. OIG reviewed four task orders under the primary CSM contract awarded in 2018.

What OIG Recommends

OIG made 20 recommendations to improve CA's program and project management and its administration of task orders. On the basis of the Department's responses to a draft of this report, OIG considers 9 recommendations resolved, pending further action, and 11 recommendations unresolved. A synopsis of management's responses to the recommendations offered and OIG's replies follow each recommendation in the Audit Results section of this report. Responses received from the Under Secretary for Management, CA, the Bureau of Budget and Planning, and the Bureau of Information Resource Management are included in their entirety in Appendices D through G, respectively.

July 2023

OFFICE OF AUDITS

CONTRACTS, GRANTS, AND INFRASTRUCTURE DIVISION

Audit of the Management and Administration of the Consular Systems Modernization Program

What OIG Found

The Department did not consistently apply program management principles when executing the CSM program. Specifically, OIG found that CA did not properly design the CSM program, develop a monitoring plan that complied with Department guidance, evaluate the CSM program, or perform required IT governance reviews. These actions are essential for the proper management of IT investments. The deficiencies occurred, at least in part, because of insufficient management oversight from key Department bureaus and the appointment of unqualified project managers. As the organization that provides passport services and support to U.S. citizens, it is critically important that CA, in coordination with other key Department bureaus, address the identified deficiencies to advance and realize the goals of the CSM program.

OIG also found that the Contracting Officer's Representatives (COR) assigned to the CSM program did not administer task orders in accordance with requirements. Specifically, invoice reviews were not properly documented, contractor reports were missing, performance-based fees may have been improperly awarded, and assessment reports were not completed in a timely manner. These deficiencies occurred because CA and the Bureau of Administration did not enforce the Department's policies for invoice reviews, ensure that CORs were maintaining contract files in the Department's eFiling system, or provide sufficient guidance to fully assess contractor performance. As a result, OIG is questioning \$14,291,001 in unsupported costs related to the invoices reviewed.

Lastly, CA did not develop and execute an acquisition plan for the CSM program in a timely manner. The deficiency occurred in part because CA's guidance did not contain all requirements specified in the Federal Acquisition Regulation, and leadership did not provide sufficient oversight. As a result, CA's original procurement package lacked technical specifications, and the acquisition process had to be started over, delaying implementation of the CSM program by approximately 58 months.