



## FEATURES

CEC Spotlight.....2  
New Members .....4

## COLUMNS

President's Message ..... 1  
Treasurer's Report.....6  
The Bottom Line.....7  
Technically Speaking.....8  
But I Digress ..... 8  
Government News..... 9  
Tech Talk..... 10  
National AGA News ..... 11  
Auditor's Perspective..... 12

## OTHER

Chapter Officers.....2  
Quote of the Month .....2  
Upcoming Events .....3  
Comm Service Corner.....6  
Chapter Ways & Means.... 13

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

With the passing of Labor Day weekend, so ends what most of us in the United States consider the end of the summer season. As softball and golf leagues begin to wind down, swimming pools begin to close for the year, children start back to school, and the thoughts of our summer vacations are still fresh in our minds, we begin the transition from summer to fall. We'll soon begin to see the changing colors of the foliage, the new television season begins...and so too begins the football season. Fall is in the air!

The Greater Columbus AGA has a unique opportunity to participate in a fundraising event in conjunction with Ohio State Football games. During all home games, our chapter will be selling Ohio State merchandise for The Official Team Shop, which has several stands located both inside and outside the stadium. Volunteers will assist in selling clothing related merchandise. Tasks will include interacting with fans, helping with questions and merchandise sales, and handling money.

Why should you volunteer? By volunteering, this is a great way to get involved with the Greater Columbus AGA, have some fun with fellow members and to help raise funds for our chapter while enjoying the excitement of OSU football.

Why does our chapter want to raise funds? The Chapter Executive Committee (CEC) is trying to raise funds to implement our future vision of our chapter. Our goal is to raise enough funds to increase the number of educational, charitable, and social events offered. In addition, the CEC would like to make it possible for all events offered by the chapter to be free of charge to members, and would also like to begin offering educational scholarships to it's members and their families. With your continued support of this and other funding raising opportunities, we hope to make this vision a reality. Don't get me wrong...by working these events, this will not alone mean that we can implement our vision immediately. But it will put us on track to ultimately achieve our goal; thereby increasing the value of your membership in the chapter.

If you should have any questions, or would like to volunteer for one of the remaining home games, please contact our Ways & Means co-Director Joyce Maleski at [Joyce.Maleski@dfas.mil](mailto:Joyce.Maleski@dfas.mil) or 614-693-1334.

*Jim*

## CHAPTER OFFICERS

### PRESIDENT

JIM GILLENWATER  
jim.gillenwater@dfas.mil

### PRESIDENT-ELECT

NANCY ZMYSLINSKI, CGFM  
nancy.zmyslinski@dfas.mil

### REGIONAL V.P.

LORI MIKESELL  
lori.mikesell@dfas.mil

### TREASURER

HEATHER DRAKE  
heather.drake@dfas.mil

### SECRETARY

JOHN YERKEY  
john.yerkey@dfas.mil

### EARLY CAREER

LYNDSEY FOELL  
lyndsey.foell@dfas.mil

### LA'VARIS POOLE

Lavaris.poole@dfas.mil

### COMMUNICATIONS

MERLE ROBINSON  
merle.robinson@dfas.mil

### KENNETH GEORGE, CPA

kenneth.george@dfas.mil

### CHAPTER HISTORIAN

HENRIANN FRANKLIN, CGFM  
henriann.franklin@dfas.mil

### PROGRAMS

RACHEL SWARTZ, CPA  
rachel.swartz@dfas.mil

### DIANA SPONSELLER

diana.sponseller@dfas.mil

### MEMBERSHIP

JUSTIN SPONSELLER  
justin.sponseller@dfas.mil

### JUSTIN MORRISON

justin.morrison@dfas.mil

## CEC SPOTLIGHT

**Name:** Benjamin Novotny

**Length of AGA Membership:** 3 years

**Certifications:** CDFM, CGFM

**CEC Position:** Director of By Laws

**Agency:** DFAS Columbus

**Current Position:** Supervisor, EBS Entitlements

**Length of Service:** 4.0 Years Civilian

**Alma Mater:** Franklin University



### What are some current responsibilities and highlights from your CEC position?

As the director of Bylaws, I am responsible for coordinating the yearly reviews of the chapter bylaws, and making sure that we keep to the set practices. We recently completed a full review, and will present the changes to the members during the August luncheon for approval.

### What are some personal accomplishments or highlights you would like to share with other AGA members?

My greatest personal accomplishment was finishing the Masters of Business Administration program at Franklin University. It took 17 months of hard work, but was the most rewarding experience that I have been a part of. I would suggest this program to anyone that is interested in pursuing a graduate level education.

### What are your future plans/goals (personal and professional)?

My next personal goal would be to start a family with my wonderful wife Emily. Other personal goals include re-learning to play the piano and reading as much as I can. The one professional goal that I have right now is to continue to learn new parts of the DFAS mission and how it relates to the position I am currently in.

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

I firmly believe that any man's finest hour, the greatest fulfillment of all that he holds dear, is that moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle - victorious.

*Vince Lombardi*

## CHAPTER OFFICERS (CONT)

### CERTIFICATION

BOB OSBORNE, CGFM  
osborner@ohiodominican.edu

AUBREY MARTIN, CGFM  
aubrey.martin@dfas.mil

### EDUCATION

KATIE ALFERA  
katie.alfera@dfas.mil

BARB BAIL, CGFM, CDFM-A  
barbara.bail@dfas.mil

### COMMUNITY SERVICE

KORTNEY WHITEMAN  
kortney.whiteman@dfas.mil

BETH WINSOR, CDFM  
beth.winsor@dfas.mil

### WAYS AND MEANS

KEVIN BRUNS, CPA  
kevin.bruns@dfas.mil

JOYCE MALESKI  
joyce.maleski@dfas.mil

### BY LAWS

BENJAMIN NOVOTNY, CGFM  
benjamin.novotny@dfas.mil

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### SEPTEMBER LUNCHEON

11 SEPTEMBER 2008

11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

DFAS CONFERENCE CENTER C136/137

**Speaker:** Jonathan Witter, Deputy Director DFAS Columbus

**Topic:** “Making a Difference in Financial Management: The Future and You”

The presentation will address emerging opportunities for financial managers to influence business decisions in government. Using the Department of Defense as an example, the presentation will demonstrate how the financial community can improve its partnership with mission leaders to address a wide variety of opportunities ranging from controlling costs for energy consumption to improving war fighter readiness.

**Menu:** Your choice of an assortment of wraps, pasta salad, chips, pretzels, brownies and cookies. Assorted beverages will be provided.

Member Price: \$11.00

Non-Member Price: \$14.00

Note: Please contact Diana Sponseller (3-0730) or Rachel Swartz (3-0592) if you should have any questions or special dietary needs. Also, luncheon tickets are non-refundable.

### ABOUT OUR SPEAKER

#### JONATHAN WITTER

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DEFENSE FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING SERVICE  
COLUMBUS**

Jonathan Witter is the deputy director of DFAS Columbus. In this capacity, he is responsible for assisting the DFAS Columbus Director in the delivery of DFAS services and managing the day-to-day operations of a modern, \$80 million complex where more than 3,000 employees perform accounting and finance functions for the Department of Defense. He is also responsible for providing the best value possible considering customer requirements, effectiveness of business practices and cost.

Mr. Witter most recently served as the Acting Deputy Director, Strategic Business Management, responsible for establishing the business requirements for DoD transformation initiatives related to finance and accounting activities. Previous to that he was the Director, Business Requirements and Integration, a position he held since joining DFAS in February 2006. He was the sole requirements approval authority for functional requirements in DFAS, overseeing the development of the DFAS operational architecture. He was responsible for strategic planning in systems integration, initiatives



### AGA's Third Annual National Internal Control & Fraud Conference

September 22-23, 2008

Wyndham Phoenix  
Phoenix, AZ

## NEW MEMBERS

**Keeley L. Hankinson – DFAS**

*Sponsor: Justin Sponseller*

**Terra E. Hansen – DFAS**

*Sponsor: Lacey M. Gochneaur*

**Kristen M. Hershberger – DFAS**

*Sponsor: Melinda S. Davenport*

**Jonathan Korting – DFAS**

*Sponsor: Lyndsey E. Foell*

**Kendall Marchyshyn – DFAS**

*Sponsor: Lyndsey E. Foell*

**Christopher D. Miller – DFAS**

*Sponsor: James Cox*

**Sean A. Smith – DFAS**

*Sponsor: Merle Scott Robinson*

**Denise R. Wellman – DFAS**

*Sponsor: Diana M. Sponseller*

**Patricia M. Eberts – DFAS**

*Sponsor: Lyndsey E. Foell*

**J. Steven Murfee – DFAS**

*Sponsor: Kenneth A. George, CPA*

**Savannah Stewart – DFAS**

*Sponsor: Lyndsey E. Foell*

**Victoria A. Wiley – DFAS**

*Sponsor: Yoely Perez*

sponsored by the Business Transformation Agency, DFAS corporate solutions and overall audit readiness. He was the senior DFAS liaison with the Business Transformation Agency and the Office of the Secretary of Defense Financial Improvement and Audit Readiness Directorate.

Prior to joining DFAS, Witter was the Director, Financial Improvement and Audit Readiness in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), where he led Defense-wide financial improvement initiatives and oversaw the development of the Defense Financial Improvement and Audit Readiness Plan. He led DoD efforts to support the President's Management Agenda for Improved Financial Performance.

Witter was selected into the Senior Executive Service in May of 2004 as the Associate Director for Financial Improvement in the Accounting and Finance Policy and Analysis Directorate of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), later becoming the director of that office. While at the Comptroller's office, he oversaw development of policy published in the Financial Management Regulation, the Department of Defense Management Control Program, and the Department's quarterly and annual financial statements. He was responsible for overseeing the preparation of the Department's Performance and Accountability Report, delivered annually to Congress.

Witter started his federal career in 1995 as an auditor in the Office of the Department of Defense Inspector General, performing Defense-wide operational audits of telecommunications capabilities. Subsequently, he performed financial audits of Defense Agencies and eventually became the project manager for the audit of the Department of Defense agency-wide financial statements.

Witter is an Indiana University of Pennsylvania graduate and has a master's degree from Central Michigan University. A certified public accountant and a certified defense financial auditor, he is a member of both the Association of Government Accountants and American Society of Military Comptrollers. He has been awarded both the Office of the Secretary of Defense Medal for Exceptional Civilian Service and the Office of the Secretary of Defense Joint Meritorious Award.

## AUDIO CONFERENCE

**Topic:** Fraud Prevention and Detection – The Cost with No Return

**Date:** Wednesday, September 10th, 2008

**Time:** 2:00 pm to 3:50 pm

**Location:** Kansas City Room, C146

**Description:** Unlike a theft or vandalism against an organization, fraud is a quiet, unseen crime that is designed to go undetected and hidden from the light of day. Its perpetrators hide in the shadows and gaps within the existing internal control structures to avoid detection and continue their unlawful enterprise.

**USAJOBS**  
"WORKING FOR AMERICA"

But what exactly is fraud? How do you detect it? Who is responsible for detecting and preventing fraud? Good questions, but what are the answers? This audio conference is designed to give the participants some of the answers. Participants will get a contemporary definition of fraud which clearly differentiates it from mismanagement and waste. It also gives participants many real work, experience-generated signs of how to recognize fraud in procurement awards and employee actions. Finally, the program will touch on who is responsible for detecting and preventing it in the first place.

To share his practical experiences in auditing and investigating fraud is Bruce N. Crandlemire, CPA, Senior Consultant with EAM, Inc./Mosley & Associates, who has more than 31 years of audit and investigative experience in the federal government and inspector general community, including the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Government Accountability Office (GAO). Please join us for two hours of lively discussion about this important and timely topic. In addition to the speaker's commentary, there will be approximately 20 minutes for Q & A so that the participants can ask the speaker questions and share their own experiences.

## **24TH ANNUAL REGIONAL AGA PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE (PDC) 20-22 OCTOBER 2008**

The Greater Columbus Chapter, in association with the Central Ohio Chapter, would like to invite you to the 24th Annual Regional AGA PDC to be held October 20-22, 2008, at the Columbus Athenaeum, 32 N 4th Street, Columbus, Ohio, 43215. Since still in the planning stages, the exact topics and speakers are still to be determined. More details to follow in the coming months. Please contact Diana Sponseller (3-0370) or Rachel Swartz (3-0592) if you should have any questions.

## **NOVEMBER LUNCHEON 13 NOVEMBER 2008 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM DFAS CONFERENCE CENTER, C147**

**Speaker:** Edna Knight, Deputy Director Standards and Compliance

**Topic:** The Art of Completed Staff Work

**Menu:** TBD

Menu: Opened Face Turkey Sandwich, Mashed Potatoes and Gravy, Corn Bread Stuffing, Tossed Salad, Cranberry Relish with Orange Sauce, Pumpkin Pie with Whipped Cream, and Assorted Beverages.

Member Price: \$11.00

Non-Member Price: \$14.00

Note: Please contact Diana Kaufman (3-0730) or Rachel Bosch (3-0592) if you should have any questions or special dietary needs. Also, luncheon tickets are non-refundable.

## **OCTOBER IS EARLY CAREER MONTH**

Get ready for Early Career month! If you are within your first three years of government service, join in the Early Career festivities and network with other AGA members!

The Early Career committee will be organizing many exciting events during October such as a breakfast with the director of DFAS-Columbus, an off-site social event, as well as other fun activities!

Watch for emails going out to all Early Career members to give you information on all upcoming events.



### **GARDEN SMILES FUNDRAISER**

See Page 13

# COMMUNITY SERVICE CORNER

## COLUMBUS READS

Columbus Reads is a tutoring program for all kindergarten children in 17 selected schools.

The local AGA and ASMC chapters are supporting this program. Several volunteers are needed for one and a half hours per week. For DFAS employees there is no need to use your own leave to volunteer. There is an EBIZ code set up specifically for the tutoring program. However, supervisory approval is needed.

Currently, the program needs many tutors: some on Tuesday and some on Thursday. A school bus provides transportation and will pick up the tutors at 10:10 in front of Building 21 B pod, and return them to the same location. Tutoring is scheduled from 10:30 - 11:30.

Many Spanish speaking tutor are needed.

Once volunteers are identified, training will be provided which is 45 minutes to 1 hour and will be held here.

For more information, please contact Charles Miller @ 3-5315 or [charles.miller@dfas.mil](mailto:charles.miller@dfas.mil). If interested, please respond to Kortney Whiteman @ 3-0553 or [kortney.whiteman@dfas.mil](mailto:kortney.whiteman@dfas.mil) by September 19th, 2008.

## DOG SHELTER/HUMANE SOCIETY DONATION DRIVE

During the months of August and September 2008, the Greater Columbus Chapter of the Association of Government Accountants (AGA) will be sponsoring a Dog Shelter/Humane Society Donation Drive

The purpose of service project is to collect donations for the local dog shelters and humane societies so that they can care for the abused, abandoned and neglected animals in our community.

Most Popular Requests:

- Newspapers (start saving them NOW)
- New or used (but clean) towels
- New or used (but clean) sheets
- New or used (but clean) blankets
- Dog and cat toys

Please see the two websites below for more donation ideas.

[http://www.franklincountyohio.gov/commissioners/ancl/programs/shelter\\_donations.cfm](http://www.franklincountyohio.gov/commissioners/ancl/programs/shelter_donations.cfm)

[http://www.cahs-pets.org/get\\_involved/wish\\_list.htm](http://www.cahs-pets.org/get_involved/wish_list.htm)

## TREASURER'S REPORT

By Heather Drake, Treasurer

*As of 25 August 2008*

### Checking Account

Beginning Balance	\$ 1,548.84
Deposits	\$ 2,901.52
Expenditures	\$ 0.00
Transfer from Savings	\$ 0.00
Ending Balance	\$ 4,450.36

### Savings Account

Beginning Balance	\$ 6,533.42
Transfer to Checking	\$ 0.00
Interest Earned	\$ 0.00
Ending Balance	\$ 6,533.42

**Total Balance** \$ 10,983.78

# THE BOTTOM LINE

## GAO FINDS MANAGEMENT FLAWS IN NAVY MODERNIZATION EFFORTS

By Jill R. Aitoro  
*NextGov.com*

The Navy has managed two major business system modernization efforts poorly, leading to cost overruns, schedule delays and potential information security risks, the Government Accountability Office concluded in new reports.

Comment on this article in The Forum. The two efforts -- the Enterprise Resource Planning program initiated in 2003 to standardize business processes, and the Navy Cash program started in 2001 to eliminate the need for currency on ships by issuing sailors smart cards for retail purchases and banking transactions -- are part of a broader ongoing business systems modernization initiative at the Defense Department. GAO has designated the initiative as high risk, largely due to a lack of key information technology management controls.

### Enterprise Resource Planning

The first stage of the ERP program is expected to cost about \$2.4 billion and be completed in fiscal 2013. Despite some progress in justifying investments in the effort, and managing risks and system requirements, GAO said, weaknesses in controls have contributed to a more than two-year schedule delay and almost \$600 million in cost overruns. They "will likely contribute to future delays and overruns if they are not corrected," the watchdog agency said in a report (GAO-08-896) released on Monday.

GAO pointed to problems implementing earned value management, a tool that allows contracting officers to compare actual cost, planned cost and tangible return over the duration of a project to ensure efficiency. The Navy did not develop an effective master schedule for meeting program milestones and failed to perform a baseline review of the first stage's system releases, the report said.

Also, program administrators have not established acceptable processes for mitigating risks associated

with converting data from the Naval Air Systems Command's legacy computer systems to ERP and positioning NAVAIR for adopting the new business processes embedded in ERP software.

GAO recommended that Defense officials ensure the Navy follow proper earned value management standards and assign an independent organization to oversee progress. It also recommended that the secretary of Defense direct the secretary of the Navy on plans for mitigating risks associated with converting data from legacy systems to Navy ERP and moving business processes to the new system, and that the secretary of the Navy provide frequent progress reports.

"The department has already taken steps to address some of GAO's recommendations and the Navy [ERP] program office is committed to implementing recommendations that will contribute to the program's success," wrote Paul Brinkley, deputy undersecretary of Defense for business transformation, in response to the report.

### Navy Cash

Navy Cash is expected to cost about \$320 million over 14 years, with \$220 funded by Navy and \$100 million by the Treasury Department's Financial Management Service. The Navy is responsible for managing the acquisition of the system components, while FMS develops and maintains the system and manages its funding.

GAO found that a number of key IT management controls to ensure that system investments and processes for deployment are cost effective have not been implemented fully. "As a result, investment in the system has not been justified," the agency said in a separate report published on Monday.

Navy officials failed to properly analyze whether

## TECHNICALLY SPEAKING

### GASB PROPOSES TO TRANSFER GUIDANCE FROM AICPA AUDITING LITERATURE—PROPOSAL INTENDED TO ASSIST PREPARERS IN APPLYING GUIDANCE

*www.gasb.org*

Norwalk, CT, August 28, 2008—The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) is seeking comments on two new Exposure Drafts that set forth proposals to transfer accounting and financial reporting guidance currently contained in the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) auditing literature into the GASB's accounting and financial reporting literature for state and local governments. The proposals are intended to make it easier for preparers of state and local government financial statements to identify and apply guidance on related party transactions, going concern considerations, subsequent events, and the generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) hierarchy for state and local governments.

As proposed in the Exposure Drafts—Codification of Accounting and Financial Reporting Guidance Contained in the AICPA Statements on Auditing Standards and The Hierarchy of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles for State and Local Governments—the relevant parts of the AICPA's Statements on Auditing Standards (SASs) would be moved to the GASB literature without substantive changes, although some editing has been proposed to make the guidance specific to state and local

governments. Because the GASB chose not to reconsider the guidance provided in the SASs, the accounting and financial reporting guidance would remain unchanged in practice.

"Until now, preparers of state and local government financial statements have had to look to the auditing literature to find accounting and financial reporting guidance on these issues" said Robert H. Attmore, GASB chairman. "Our proposals would make it easier for preparers of financial statements to locate and apply this important guidance."

The Exposure Drafts can be downloaded free from the GASB website at [www.gasb.org](http://www.gasb.org). Any individual or organization may obtain one printed copy of each of the Exposure Drafts without charge until October 30, 2008, by writing or phoning the GASB.

Written comments should be provided no later than October 30, 2008; addressed to the Director of Research and Technical Activities, Project No. 33 (Codification) and Project No. 33-1 (Hierarchy); and emailed to [director@gasb.org](mailto:director@gasb.org) or mailed to the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, 401 Merritt 7, PO Box 5116, Norwalk, CT 06856-5116.

## BUT I DIGRESS

Ah, September. Indian summer; where the days are warm, the nights are cool and the harvest brings thoughts of fresh vegetables, to delight the palate. The sights and sounds of football season: crowds at my favorite diner getting breakfast before the kickoff; crowds trying to park at the stadium; crowds trying to get home after the game. Ok, enough of the crowds.

September, kids are back in school, so the School Day Scramble Hassle has resumed: getting kids awake, dressed, fed, supplied with lunches, homework, signed permission slips, and out the

door 'on time'. Those large, cumbersome orange busses are everywhere!

September is Labor Day, Grandparents Day, Patriot's Day, and other holidays; it also brings the end of the fiscal year; the mad scramble to commit funds, reconcile accounts and worry if things will balance. Amidst the hectic pace we choose for ourselves, take a moment to reflect in Indian summer, what seeds have you sewn this year? What will you harvest from your efforts? What will you enjoy now and what will you carry forward with you to sustain you in the coming winter? But I digress . . .

# GOVERNMENT NEWS

## OMB WILL REQUIRE AGENCIES TO USE NETWORKX

By Gautham Nagesh

[www.nextgov.com](http://www.nextgov.com)

A memorandum released by the Office of Management and Budget on Thursday effectively requires agencies to make use of the General Services Administration's new Networkx telecommunications contract. Agencies deciding not to use Networkx must conduct extensive analysis to justify their decision.

Comment on this article in The Forum. The memo, signed by Karen Evans, administrator for e-government and information technology at OMB, stated: "Agencies shall use the General Service Administration Networkx contract to satisfy requirements currently being met via the FTS2001 contract." According to the memo, the decision to require Networkx was based on a cost-benefit analysis OMB and the Federal Chief Information Officers Council conducted.

Networkx is the government's largest telecommunications contract, with a ceiling of \$68 billion for 10 years. It has two components, Networkx Universal and Networkx Enterprise. Its predecessor, the now-expired FTS2001 contract, was not mandatory.

Agencies have until April 1, 2010, to switch to the new contract and be reimbursed for one-time transition costs. In July, the Government Accountability Office reported that agencies were mostly on track in planning the transition.

The memo stated that agencies must use cost-benefit analysis to justify their decision to not use Networkx to fulfill future requirements, including requirements that currently can be satisfied by Networkx.

"They're sort of saying it's a mandatory source," said

Ray Bjorklund, senior vice president and chief knowledge officer for FedSources Inc., a market research firm in McLean, Va. "They are not explicitly declaring it to be mandatory, but this is as close as I've seen. [They're saying] you've got to prove to us or your CIO why it makes better business sense to migrate away from this path."

Bjorklund said the analysis referenced in the memo showed that Networkx made good business sense and was attractive economically for FTS2001 customers. "This is good for the Networkx program, there will be more customers in the Networkx family, more customers for this service which should help stabilize prices more quickly," he said.

Neither OMB nor GSA responded to requests for comment, so it is unclear why they felt it was necessary to make Networkx mandatory. Bjorklund speculated that it could be because some FTS2001 agencies have expressed reluctance to embrace Networkx, particularly the Defense Department. In 2006, the Treasury Department attempted to set up its own telecom vehicle, but was persuaded by Congress and GSA to use Networkx. Defense was the largest user base under FTS2001, but the department now has its own telecom networks for national security reasons.

"DoD is not using GSA vehicles as often as they used to," Bjorklund said. "It's only a guess, but it may be possible because Networkx was fairly long in coming as a program. Treasury for one was inclined to do its own thing."

Agencies creating their own vehicles "might consequently create a higher priced environment under Networkx," he added.



AGA's Fourth Annual  
NATIONAL PERFORMANCE  
MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

Promoting Government Accountability through Performance Management

October 27-28, 2008 | Seattle, WA



# TECHTALK

## DHS UNVEILS INTEROPERABILITY TECHNOLOGY DHS UNIT DEMONSTRATES NEW RADIO OVER WIRELESS BROADBAND APPLICATION

By Wyatt Kash

*www.gcn.com*

The Homeland Security Department and Washington, D.C.'s, Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) introduced a working prototype of a new interoperable communication technology, called Radio Over Wireless-Broadband, at a pilot demonstration on Capitol Hill yesterday.

The ROW-B technology connects existing wireless radio systems with computers, smart phones and other devices used by firefighters and emergency services providers.

The technology uses a new implementation profile known as Bridging Systems Interface. BSI relies on standard IP/SIP (Session Initiation Protocol) messaging as a medium to provide voice over IP access to Land Mobile Radio (LMR) networks. But it also integrates data applications, including real-time location mapping, and the ability to detect the presence of users on the network and enable location-based group calls.

The pilot program is being developed jointly by DHS' Office for Interoperability and Compatibility, the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Office of Law Enforcement Standards, the Institute for Telecommunications Sciences (ITS), and a variety of industry partners, including ISCO International and Raytheon JPS.

"The capability to communicate among radio and broadband system users will significantly improve emergency response operations by allowing non-radio users to communicate with response units in the field," said Dr. David Boyd, director of the Command, Control and Interoperability division in DHS' Science and Technology Directorate.

In a demonstration of the technology, ITS representative Emil Olbrich showed how a voice command, spoken into an LMR radio, was transmitted to OCTO's servers, routed via the Internet through a virtual private network to ISCO International servers hosting the BSI technology in Aurora, Ill., and back to Capitol Hill to a laptop with a wireless broadband card in about 600 to 800 milliseconds.

In a related demonstration, Olbrich demonstrated how the location of public safety workers, each with different GIS-enabled phones and radios, appeared on a computer-generated map depicting the area surrounding the Capitol building. Using unified communication technology and the ROW-B interface, it was a simple matter of clicking selected individuals represented on the map, and creating a group call almost instantly.

D.C. Deputy Fire Chief Demetrios Vlassopoulos, who represented OCTO at the demonstration, praised the potential of the system. He said he is looking forward to testing the system in the field to evaluate how it actually performs. The demonstration pilot will use the Washington, D.C., Regional Wide Broadband Network, a high speed, 700 MHz wireless broadband network — currently the only one in the nation — that covers 69 square miles of the District.

The ability of wireless carriers to maintain wireless broadband service during emergencies remains a major concern to officials like Vlassopoulos. Longer term funding for the project also remains unclear, he said. But ROW-B's capabilities to facilitate dynamic talk groups and locate responders in an emergency offer great appeal, he said.

# NATIONAL AGA NEWS

## EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNMENT FELLOWS PROGRAM



AGA and The Council for Excellence in Government (CEG) have combined

their strengths to create a financial management careers focus of the Excellence in Government Fellows program. A special area of emphasis has been added for mid-level managers with responsibility in financial management specialties. Specific occupations include budgeting, accounting, auditing and investigations, financial systems and program management.

The Excellence in Government Fellows Program is CEG's flagship program. This hands-on, results-based leadership development program is central to the missions of both CEG and AGA: to improve the performance and accountability of government.

### Who Should Apply

The Financial Fellows program is for exceptional individuals in federal, state and local government financial management and related careers who are committed to enhancing their leadership skills and accomplishing significant results in their organizations. Financial Fellows should:

- Have a record of strong accomplishment and demonstrate high potential.
- Rank at the GS-14 or GS-15 level (or equivalent in the military or other pay systems). Exceptional individuals at the GS-13 or equivalent level are also encouraged to apply.
- Find a sponsor in their organization that will support them throughout the program year.

### Time Commitment

During the course of a year, Fellows will meet every six weeks or so for three or four days. The program consists of large group meetings, small coaching team meetings, and financial management and leadership benchmarking site visits.

### Register Today

The next Financial Fellows program begins Oct. 20, 2008. We strongly encourage early applications

(before Oct. 10) to ensure a space in this exciting program. CEG may request an interview during the application process.

Applicants are encouraged to apply online or printed applications may be requested via email. Fax your application to 202.728.0422 or mail to The Council for Excellence in Government, 1301 K St., NW, Suite 450 West, Washington, D.C. 20005, Attn: Financial Fellows. If you have questions, contact Joe Jozefczyk, AGA, at 703.562.0088 or Chris Wingo, CEG, at 202.728.0418.

## CGFM EXAMINATIONS UPDATE COMPLETED



To ensure the CGFM designation remains the first-rate certification and reflects the current government financial management profession, the CGFM Program just completed a

comprehensive update of all three CGFM Examinations, including a Job Analysis study of the role of the Certified Government Financial Manager. The new CGFM Examinations went live on Aug. 15. See the CGFM Examinations Update page for more information.

It has been a big undertaking and we could not have done it without our subject matter experts—CGFMs who volunteered their time to serve on the Job Analysis committee, be a question writer or participate in a cut score study. Our deepest thanks to our subject matter experts who worked on the CGFM Examinations update.

# THE AUDITOR'S PERSPECTIVE

## CLEAN OPINIONS ON GAO'S PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL AUDIT PEER REVIEWS

[www.intosajournal.org](http://www.intosajournal.org)

The U.S. Government Accountability Office's (GAO) system of quality assurance got two votes of approval in June 2008. An international team of government auditors reviewed GAO's performance audit work, and the accounting firm KPMG LLP reviewed GAO's financial audit work.

Generally accepted governmental auditing standards issued by the U.S. Comptroller General require organizations conducting audits of federal government programs to undergo an independent external assessment, or peer review, of their quality assurance every 3 years. This is the second time GAO's performance audit work has undergone a peer review; its financial audit and accounting work has undergone a peer review five times since 1995.

Both reviews found that the systems of quality assurance in effect for the year ending December 31, 2007, were suitably designed and operating effectively to provide GAO with reasonable assurance that it conformed with applicable professional standards.

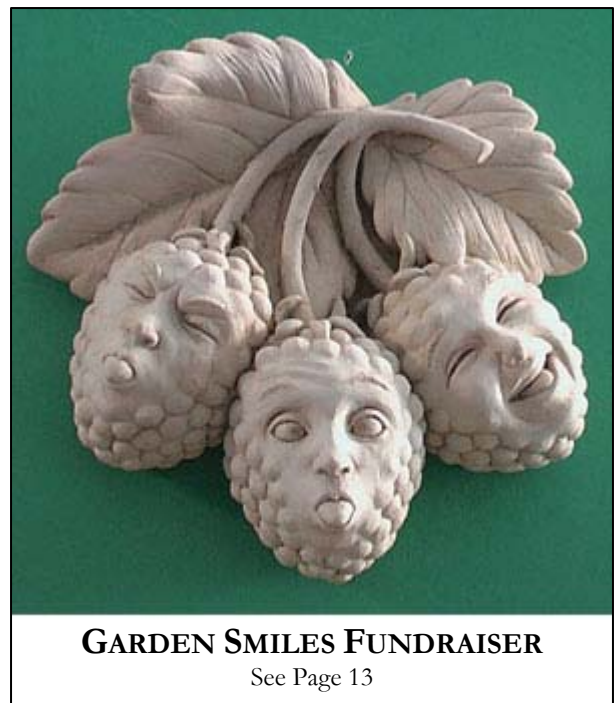
The Office of the Auditor General of Canada headed the international team that conducted the peer review of GAO performance audits completed in 2007. Over the course of 7 months, the team visited GAO several times, reviewing documented policies and procedures related to applicable professional standards and documentation for a representative sample of 2007 audits. The team also interviewed professional and administrative staff and relied on the work of GAO's own inspection team.

In its report, the team noted several best practices that other national audit offices may wish to consider. The team was particularly impressed that one of GAO's units used its accumulated knowledge about Department of Defense weapon systems to develop a model to inform decisions about moving from planning to designing and acquiring systems.

The peer review team also commended GAO's use of structured approaches to collecting and synthesizing interview data. Several human capital practices were singled out, including the use of statements of independence; GAO's college-level recruiting program; and the adjunct faculty program, which trains and certifies GAO instructors for GAO's internal Learning Center.

The team offered a number of suggestions to continue to improve GAO's performance audit work. Specifically, the team suggested that GAO provide more explicit criteria in its reviews, mandate the use of a data reliability tool, improve the organization and accessibility of audit documentation, and clarify its policy for obtaining and disclosing third-party comments on its audits. GAO will develop an action plan to address the report's suggestions.

The peer review reports have been posted on the Internet at [www.gao.gov/about/review.html](http://www.gao.gov/about/review.html).



**GARDEN SMILES FUNDRAISER**

See Page 13

## THE BOTTOM LINE

Continued from Page 7

they were duplicating programs already available through the Air Force and the Army, which both provide smart card technology for electronic retail transactions, the report (GAO-08-922) stated.

The Navy also failed to accurately compare costs of the program, said to be \$133 million, with potential benefits, according to GAO. For example, Navy estimates its share of program costs to be \$100 million over six years, but the program's life cycle is now estimated to be at least 14 years. Also, expected cost savings include \$40 million that will be shifted to another group and do not constitute actual savings.

Additionally, GAO cited inadequate documentation; failure to develop procedures for identifying and mitigating risks; and poor management of security for shipboard devices, applications and data. The program office has not fully implemented a patch management process, enforced processes for responding to known information security weaknesses, ensured that Treasury's FMS has effective security controls in place, or developed an adequate contingency plan in case of security breach, the report stated.

"As a result, the confidentiality, integrity and availability of deployed and operating Navy Cash shipboard devices, applications and financial data are at increased risk of being compromised," the report noted.

GAO recommended that future investment in Navy Cash be limited to deployment of already developed and tested capabilities, correction of information security vulnerabilities and weaknesses on ships, and analysis for deciding whether continuation of the program is in Defense's best interest.

In a written response, Brinkley agreed that an updated economic analysis of Navy Cash was necessary and that noted system weaknesses must be addressed, but he emphasized the need to continue funding the program.

"Navy Cash must remain operational while corrective actions to address GAO's recommendations are under way," Brinkley said. "The earliest installed systems are nearing the end of their expected operational life due to aging hardware and technology obsolescence. These must be replaced through a planned technical refresh in order to maintain already developed and tested capabilities.

## CHAPTER WAYS & MEANS

### OSU FUNDRAISER

AGA will be participating in a fundraising event in conjunction with Ohio State Football games. Our chapter will be selling Ohio State merchandise for The Official Team Shop. The Team Shop has several stands located inside/outside the stadium that needs volunteers to assist in selling clothing related merchandise. AGA will be volunteering at one of these stands. Our tasks will include: interacting with fans, helping them with questions and merchandise sales, and handling money.

Further details will be provided to the volunteers once the work schedule has been finalized. In the meantime, please contact Joyce Maleski at [joyce.maleski@dfas.mil](mailto:joyce.maleski@dfas.mil) or 693-1334 if you should have any questions or concerns.

### GARDEN SMILES

Help support your AGA chapter! We will be selling Carruth Studio Garden Smiles for our Fall fundraiser. There are 54 designs that are hand-cast in stone, which are suitable for home or garden display. Each of these designs is gift boxed and includes a gift card.

The fundraiser will end in October to ensure delivery after the Thanksgiving holiday. These will make wonderful Christmas gifts for your friends, family, and yourself! To view the fundraiser catalog, please go to the following web address. <http://www.carruthstudio.com/2008FundraiserCatalog.pdf>

Please contact Joyce Maleski at [joyce.maleski@dfas.mil](mailto:joyce.maleski@dfas.mil) or 693-1334 if you have any questions or concerns.

