



JANET NAPOLITANO  
GOVERNOR

CHRIS CUMMISKEY  
DIRECTOR

STATE OF ARIZONA  
GOVERNMENT INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AGENCY  
100 N. 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 440  
Phoenix AZ 85007

**TO:** Debbie Davenport, Auditor General

**CC:** Melanie Chesney, Director, Performance Audit Division  
Lisa Eddy, Performance Audit Manager  
Jay Dunkleberger, Performance Audit Senior  
Max Ivey, Deputy Director, GITA  
DJ Harper, Communication & Outreach Manager, GITA

**FROM:** Chris Cummiskey

**DATE:** June 23, 2005

**SUBJECT:** Response to Sunset Audit Report

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The Government Information Technology Agency appreciates the work of the Office of the Auditor General in conducting this sunset audit. The professionalism of the auditors should be commended.

GITA agrees with the findings in the report and will implement eight of the recommendations. In Finding Two, Recommendations 1 and 2, GITA will conduct an assessment before deciding on a course of action. Specific responses to your findings are found on pages 2-4.

There is one point of concern. In several places, the report compares GITA with other IT agencies across the country. Though GITA believes this is a good method to determine best practices, it should be noted that the organizational structure and levels of authority vary widely from state to state. For example, while GITA is mostly a strategic planning and oversight agency, many state IT agencies have strategic planning, oversight, and operational responsibilities. This difference in agency mission/organization allows other states access to tools in managing IT that are not available to GITA.

### GITA Response to Finding One

1. GITA needs to take the following steps to improve state agency compliance with security and privacy standards:
  - a. Develop a state-wide security plan that comprehensively addresses identified security and privacy weaknesses.

**The finding is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.**

- b. Consider designating a staff member to serve as a Chief Security Officer for the State.  
**The finding is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.**

2. GITA should take the following steps in order to strengthen IT privacy standards:

- a. Revise its privacy standards to ensure that they are comparable to those used by government and private industry.

**The finding is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.**

- b. Revise its TESA form to ensure it requires agencies to report compliance with all aspects of state privacy standards.

**The finding is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.**

- c. GITA should explore designating a staff member to serve as the Chief Privacy Officer for the State.

**The finding is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.**

3. GITA should take the following steps to identify and address state agency IT training needs:

- a. Use IT Planning groups, such as the CIO Council, and information from state agencies, such as their IT strategic plans, to systematically identify agencies' IT training needs.

**The finding is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.**

- b. Work with AzGU or other training sources to address these needs.

**The finding is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.**

4. GITA should take the following steps to increase its role in IT procurements:

- a. Identify opportunities to coordinate IT purchasing across agencies, including considering steps taken by other states to identify these opportunities.

**The finding is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.**

- b. Reevaluate its practice of not participating on IT proposal evaluation committees and develop criteria with Enterprise Procurement Services defining when it will participate.

**The finding is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.**

5. For future Statewide Strategic IT plans, GITA should continue to seek input from stakeholder groups such as ITAC and the CIO Council.

**The finding is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.**

### GITA Response to Finding Two

1. GITA should seek legislation removing the requirement to review all projects costing \$25,000 or more.

**The finding of the Auditor General is agreed to and a different method of dealing with the finding will be implemented.**

GITA agrees that the \$25,000 threshold may be too low, however GITA values the broad view of IT that is made possible by reviewing all projects over \$25,000. GITA will work with stakeholder agencies to conduct an assessment of possible remedies to ensure that GITA continues to receive adequate information regarding State IT projects, while attempting to reduce the workload for State agencies and allow GITA to focus on higher risk projects.

2. GITA should develop criteria that include project cost and other risk factors to determine which project should be reviewed.

**The finding of the Auditor General is agreed to and a different method of dealing with the finding will be implemented.**

GITA agrees that project cost and risk factors should be considered when choosing which projects should be reviewed and how much oversight they will incur during implementation. GITA will work with stakeholder agencies to conduct an assessment of possible remedies to ensure that GITA continues to receive adequate information regarding State IT projects, while attempting to reduce the workload for State agencies and allow GITA to focus on higher risk projects.

3. GITA should review its current project investment justification information requirements and require agencies to provide:

- a. More detailed descriptions of how the project will meet state Enterprise Architecture standards in order to independently evaluate whether the project meets these standards.

**The finding is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.**

- b. More details on each project's public value and benefits.

**The finding is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.**

- c. Details on how agencies will measure and address risk factors involved in the projects in order to verify that agencies have appropriately considered and addressed project risk.

**The finding is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.**

4. Once it has reviewed its justification information requirements and developed its review criteria, GITA should reassess its staffing and skill needs for its project approval process and reassign staff or seek legislative approval for additional staff as appropriate.

**The finding is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.**

5. GITA should ensure that IT projects come in on time and under budget, by reviewing and implementing techniques used in other states' IT agencies to help enhance project management, including:
  - a. Coordinating Project management training and offering resources such as project management guidelines to assist state agency project managers.

**The finding is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.**

- b. Continuing to explore how to incorporate an industry model for standardizing and improving processes used to develop IT systems.

**The finding is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.**

- c. Ensuring that agencies employ qualified project managers, and continuing to explore options for certifying project managers.

**The finding is agreed to and the recommendation will be implemented.**