



Report Summary

Social Security Administration
Office of the Inspector General



Quick Response Evaluation: The Social Security Administration's Ability to Address Future Processing Requirements (Limited Distribution) (A-44-09-19098)

Our objective was to assess the Social Security Administration's (SSA) efforts to address future processing needs and infrastructure issues at the National Computer Center (NCC). Specifically, we assessed SSA's actions to address significant issues identified in Lockheed Martin's (LM) NCC Feasibility Study. This report provides an overview of issues that must be addressed at the existing NCC as well as provide a basis for OIG and stakeholders to evaluate SSA's strategy for using Recovery Act funds for the new NCC.

SSA's NCC houses the infrastructure that supports the Social Security programs. The design and age of the NCC, as well as the increasing workload, has raised concerns about SSA's ability to address future processing requirements. In Fiscal Year 2008, LM completed a study of the NCC that identified infrastructure and data processing capacity issues.

LM recommended 17 projects that should be undertaken at SSA's NCC and its Utility Building to sustain existing information technology (IT) operations through the end of Calendar Year 2014. Based on our review, we found SSA had taken or planned some corrective action on 13 of the 17 recommendations. Of the 17, LM recommended three projects the Agency should defer because of the NCC's anticipated change in functional role. LM identified four alternatives deemed viable to resolve the Agency's long-term data processing needs. SSA is progressing on both immediate and long-term solutions to its Data Center needs. Until the significant issues identified by LM are fully addressed and a long-range Data Center solution is implemented, the Agency's operations remain vulnerable.

Going forward, the Agency needs to focus its efforts on detailed plans (1) to acquire, construct and operate a new Data Center; (2) to estimate costs for the use and/or disposal of the NCC should a new primary Data Center be built; and (3) for IT requirements for the next 5, 10 and 20 years. Further, SSA should identify the underlying factors that allowed the current NCC situation to occur and implement the necessary controls to prevent this situation from recurring in the future.

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