# Government Accountability and Transparency Board

November 15, 2011 Minutes

A meeting of the Government Accountability and Transparency Board (GAT Board) was held at the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board (Recovery Board) Office in Washington, D.C. on Thursday, November 15, 2011, at 9:00 a.m. and continued until 2:25 p.m.

**ATTENDEES**
**Board Members:**
Earl Devaney, Chairman, Recovery Board
W. Scott Gould, Deputy Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs
Allison C. Lerner, Inspector General, National Science Foundation
Daniel Levinson, Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services
Ellen Murray, Assistant Secretary for Financial Resources and Chief Financial Officer, Department of Health and Human Services
Calvin L. Scovel, III, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Transportation
Kathleen Tighe, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Education
Daniel I. Werfel, Controller, Office of Management and Budget
David C. Williams, Inspector General, U.S. Postal Service

**Proxy Attendees**
Richard Ginman, Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, U.S. Department of Defense
Dan Tangherlini, Chief Financial Officer, Department of the Treasury

**Agency Staff:**
Ross Bezark, Executive Director, GAT Board, and Chief of Staff, Recovery Board
Sheila Conley, Deputy CFO, Health and Human Services
Kay Daly, Assistant Inspector General for Audit Services, Health and Human Services
Jennifer Dure, General Counsel, Recovery Board
Peter Levin, Chief Technology Officer, Veterans Affairs
Joel C. Spangenberg, Special Assistant to the Deputy Secretary, Veterans Affairs
James Warren, Chief Innovation Officer, Recovery Board
Cynthia Williams, Board Secretary, Recovery Board
Michael Wood, Executive Director, Recovery Board

**MITRE Personnel:** [1]
Shaun Brady
James Cook
Gary Ingben
Gordon Milbourn

**Discussion:**
The meeting was called to order at approximately 9:00 a.m.  Chairman Devaney opened the meeting and reviewed the agenda items and the discussion topics for the day.

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[1] Attended during the MITRE discussion only

Mr. Gould offered a correction to the minutes of the October 27, 2011 meeting, which included more descriptive information regarding the role of a contractor in determining the best method for data collection and data display system consolidation. The members engaged in a brief discussion of the proposed amendment. By unanimous vote of the members present, the minutes were approved, as amended.

Representatives from MITRE joined the meeting to continue the discussion of the Universal Award ID (UAID) Feasibility and Solutions Alternatives Study. Mr. Milbourn provided the members with a comprehensive presentation on the results of the MITRE assessment, to include the challenges imposed by a lack of a UAID, the implementation and format options for a UAID, and a discussion of next steps. Questions regarding associated costs, data elements, and processes were addressed. Mr. Milbourn informed the members that the next phase of the study is underway. The members requested that MITRE include use cases for the implementation alternatives presented during the meeting. MITRE will provide follow-up information as it becomes available.

MITRE exited the conference room. Mr. Wood then facilitated the discussion of the Universal Award ID topic from the draft report and recommendations to the President. The members engaged in a brief discussion on the 2014 Government-wide Accounting Program Initiative and the relationship of this effort with the UAID. After a thorough discussion, the members agreed that the implementation of a UAID is the first logical step to moving the government forward in the area of data standardization. Additionally, most members agreed that a UAID would aid with agency and recipient data reconciliation, the alignment of government-wide data in more citizen and management friendly categories, and fraud detection. A motion to accept the recommendations and implementation guidelines discussed from the draft report, to include building and validating UAID use cases via agency and recipient data; analyzing governance issues; and determining if leveraging other government systems in the UAID process is possible was adopted. Agreed upon revisions will be incorporated into the next draft of the report and recommendations document for the GAT Board.

Mr. Werfel next facilitated the discussion of a government-wide accountability framework subject from the draft report and recommendations to the President. He provided background information on the government's efforts to prevent and detect fraud and error in government programs. He commented that the Recovery Board's model helped to bridge the gap between private sector fraud and error tools and the application to federal oversight. A thorough review of the draft report language for this recommendation ensued. Most members agreed that a centralized accountability solution would improve the effectiveness of forensic capabilities within all government agencies. The need for agencies to develop agency-specific complimentary and innovative accountability systems was also discussed. The members agreed to broad recommendations and implementation guidelines that are focused on expanded testing and execution, authorities, and guidance. Again, agreed upon revisions will be incorporated into the next draft of the report and recommendations document for the GAT Board.

Mr. Gould then facilitated the discussion of data collection and data display system consolidation. He reviewed the problem statement and identified two contrasting approaches for

developing a centralized solution. The group discussed the information needed to initiate a review of a central solution. Mr. Wood agreed to provide the members with the system documentation for Recovery.gov and FederalReporting.gov. The members engaged in an in-depth discussion of the scalability of the Recovery Board model. It was generally agreed that the recommendation should include a method to ensure data standards but there were differing opinions on the development approach. The members agreed to reconvene the ITAP to review the Recovery Model documentation along with various approaches for consolidation. Mr. Werfel also agreed to send technical representatives from the General Services Administration to discuss their SAM model. The team will report to the GAT Board at the next meeting.

Mr. Gould suggested that the final report include information from the governance sub-group and on performance metrics. Ms. Tighe proposed that the governance sub-group provide a briefing to the members at the next meeting. At the request of the Chairman, Mr. Gould agreed to present a draft of the initial language on performance metrics for review and discussion at the next meeting. Chairman Devaney again encouraged the members to provide input into the overall draft report.

The next meeting of the Board is tentatively scheduled from 9 a.m. to 11a.m. on December 1, 2011.

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**Cynthia Williams**
**Secretary**