



At a Glance

Catalyst for Improving the Environment

Why We Did This Review

The Office of Inspector General conducted this audit as a result of receiving Hotline complaints about desktop deployments. We sought to determine whether the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

- Responded to resolve issues identified during Customer Technology Solutions (CTS) deployment.
- Implemented processes to eliminate recurring problems with deploying CTS.
- Implemented oversight practices for the CTS contract.

Background

CTS service includes acquiring, installing, maintaining, and supporting computers and network printers. The CTS deployment schedule projected 11,744 computers to be replaced in 18 locations across the United States. CTS is provisioned through EPA's Working Capital Fund and provides and coordinates all information technology end-user support and services for Headquarters and field offices.

For further information, contact our Office of Congressional, Public Affairs and Management at (202) 566-2391.

To view the full report, click on the following link:
www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2010/20100823-10-P-0194.pdf

EPA Needs to Improve Management Practices to Ensure a Successful Customer Technology Solutions Project

What We Found

Although EPA indicated it could avoid spending more than \$115.4 million over 8.5 years by consolidating the desktop computing environment, improved management practices are needed to ensure this cost avoidance is realized. CTS scheduled replacing 11,744 computers in 12 months, and also began providing maintenance and support for those computers and attached network printers, without sufficient planning to ensure ongoing success. This lack of planning has led to questions about (1) the quality of the helpdesk supporting the project; (2) a quality management program that is not finalized; (3) key business processes to support ongoing operations not being defined; and (4) vacant leadership positions needed to facilitate communication and coordination with customers about CTS equipment deployments. These conditions resulted in many end users voicing dissatisfaction with the CTS deployment and continued dissatisfaction with helpdesk support.

The CTS technical proposal indicates the consolidated desktop services solution will result in increased customer satisfaction and provide the technical tools and training needed to support EPA's critical programs. However, missteps in project planning led to sustained negative customer acceptance of CTS. Without CTS improving its service quality, end users may foster a degree of skepticism that will be hard for EPA to overcome.

What We Recommend

We made various recommendations to the Director of the Office of Technology Operations and Planning, Office of Environmental Information, to include:

- Implementing and maintaining a helpdesk that responds to and resolves issues in a manner that meets performance metrics;
- Improving the CTS Quality Management Program by developing and implementing an Independent Verification and Validation process and finalizing the Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan;
- Documenting milestones for the completion of overdue and future business process documents; and
- Filling vacant CTS leadership positions.

In general, the Agency agreed with the findings and recommendations.