

OPEGA Recommendation for Project Direction

Office of Information Technology

Background

The Government Oversight Committee (GOC) first considered and moved a review of the Office of Information Technology (OIT) to OPEGA's work plan at its October 18, 2011 meeting. This OIT review came to the Committee's attention as a multifaceted request for an OPEGA review. The concerns represented in the request were also mirrored in a number of unsolicited complaints OPEGA had received on the topic and indicated that the recommendations in OPEGA's 2005 report on Statewide Information Technology Planning and Management had not all been fully or adequately implemented.

After some discussion of possible review approaches, OPEGA's Director suggested a review of OIT's current organizational structure and capacity (human and fiscal resources) for effectively and efficiently supporting state government. It appeared these could be root causes for the lack of progress on issues previously identified by OPEGA and the DAFS Deputy Commissioner indicated that such a review could prove useful in moving the entity forward. The GOC subsequently voted unanimously to add an OIT project with that scope of work to OPEGA's work plan and directed OPEGA to perform preliminary research to determine whether a consultant might be required to complete this review and what estimated consulting costs might be.

In conducting preliminary research OPEGA reviewed unsolicited complaints received on this topic, reviewed past reports of reviews conducted by OIT's Internal Auditor and the report resulting from a consultant's recent review of OIT billing. We also met with the State's new Chief Information Officer (CIO), on the job since January 2012, to discuss the current state of the organization and relevant changes he has underway.

Through this work, OPEGA discovered that the CIO is well aware of several significant issues in OIT which seem relatively unchanged from those described in OPEGA's 2005 report. These include strategic IT planning and investments, project management, business continuity planning and supporting State agency data and information needs. The OIT Internal Auditor has also continued to raise some of these issues with OIT management over the years since that report. The new CIO has made some changes and others are underway. However, given the lack of past progress, the financial and human resource constraints the organization still faces, and the criticality of information technology to the rest of State government, it would seem prudent for the Legislature to hold OIT more formally accountable for effectively addressing these known concerns going forward.

OPEGA's Recommendation

Given that key problems areas are already known and new management is attempting to address them, OPEGA believes the best use of our resources would be in performing a formal follow-up review of some of the issues in our 2005 review of the State's Information Technology. The follow-up review would focus on ensuring OIT has a roadmap for getting from the current state to the desired future state and is making acceptable progress in the critical areas of:

- Project Management,
- Business Continuity Planning and Disaster Recovery, and
- Supporting the Data Needs of Executive Branch Departments.

OPEGA's work would include:

1. Requesting that OIT provide a detailed description of what improvements the organization could reasonably expect to achieve in two years' time with regard to the three critical areas listed above; and assessing whether those improvement goals appear adequate and appropriate to address the State's needs.
2. Requesting that OIT provide an action plan, including timeline, for how the organization will reach those improvement goals and specify what benchmarks will be used to verify that the progress has been as desired; and assessing whether the action plan and benchmarks appear adequate and appropriate.
3. Assessing whether the planned actions are successfully completed as scheduled in the action plan.

OPEGA anticipates that a consultant may be required to assist in OPEGA's assessment of adequacy and appropriateness for some of these objectives. Given that the consultant would primarily be serving as a subject matter expert when needed, OPEGA anticipates the consulting costs should be relatively low.

OPEGA's work would be ongoing but potentially sporadic, depending on OIT's action plan, over a period of 2 years. As a result, we expect this review would not be complete until the end of the first quarter 2015. Should OIT successfully complete all of its planned actions in any of the three critical areas sooner, OPEGA could potentially release targeted reports focused on those areas as they are completed.