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Accessible Version

June 30, 2025

Dr. Shantrell N. Collier
Deputy Chief Information Officer
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Chief Information Officer Open Recommendations: Department of Justice

Dear Dr. Collier:

I am writing to you with respect to your role as the Deputy Chief Information Officer (CIO) for the Department of Justice (DOJ). As an independent, non-partisan agency that works for Congress, GAO's mission is to support Congress in meeting its constitutional responsibilities and help improve the performance and ensure the accountability of the federal government. Our work includes investigating matters related to the use of public funds, evaluating programs and activities of the U.S. Government at the request of congressional committees and subcommittees or on the initiative of the Comptroller General, and as required by public laws or committee reports. Our duties include reporting our findings and recommending ways to increase economy and efficiency in government spending. The purpose of this letter is to provide an overview of the open, publicly available GAO recommendations to DOJ that call for the attention of the CIO.

We identified recommendations that relate to the CIO's roles and responsibilities in effectively managing IT. They include strategic planning, investment management, and information security. We have previously reported on the significance of the CIO's role in improving the government's performance in IT and related information management functions.[1] Your attention to these recommendations will help ensure the secure and effective use of IT at the department.

Currently, DOJ has seven open recommendations that call for the attention of the CIO. Each of these recommendations relates to a GAO High-Risk area: (1) Ensuring the Cybersecurity of the Nation or (2) Improving IT Acquisitions and Management.[2] In addition, GAO has designated one of the seven as a priority recommendation.[3] Fully implementing these open recommendations

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[1]See for example, GAO, *Federal Chief Information Officers: Critical Actions Needed to Address Shortcomings and Challenges in Implementing Responsibilities*, GAO-18-93 (Washington, D.C.: Aug. 2, 2018).

[2]GAO, *High-Risk Series: Heightened Attention Could Save Billions More and Improve Government Efficiency and Effectiveness*, GAO-25-107743 (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 25, 2025).

[3]Priority recommendations are those that GAO believes warrant priority attention from heads of key departments or agencies. They are highlighted because, upon implementation, they may significantly improve government operations, for example, by realizing large dollar savings; eliminating mismanagement, fraud, and abuse; or making progress toward addressing a high-risk or duplication issue. Since 2015 GAO has sent letters to selected agencies to highlight the importance of implementing such recommendations.

could significantly improve DOJ's ability to address threats and manage its critical systems, operations, and information. I have summarized selected recommendations here. See the enclosure for a full list, and additional details on the recommendations.

Ensuring the Cybersecurity of the Nation. DOJ needs to make progress in its cybersecurity incident response preparedness by taking steps to improve its investigation and remediation capabilities. Specifically, we recommended that DOJ fully implement event logging requirements per federal guidance. Implementing this recommendation will improve the department's ability to detect, investigate, and remediate cyber threats.

Improving IT Acquisitions and Management. DOJ needs to manage its software licenses more efficiently. For example, we recommended that DOJ track in-use software licenses and compare those to existing inventories to reduce costs and better inform investment decisions. Implementing this recommendation will assist the department with efforts to identify duplicative or unnecessary software licenses.

In addition, DOJ needs to fully address statutory requirements for IT portfolio management. Specifically, we recommended that DOJ complete annual reviews of its IT portfolio consistent with federal requirements. Until DOJ implements this recommendation, investments with substantial cost, schedule, and performance problems may continue unabated without necessary corrective action.

Copies of this letter are being sent to the appropriate congressional committees and the Federal CIO. The letter will also be available at no charge on the GAO website at https://www.gao.gov. In addition, we sent a separate letter related to department-wide priority recommendations, which discusses the importance of addressing cybersecurity risks, to the Attorney General.[4] We are also sending a letter on key issues related to financial management in the federal government to DOJ's Chief Financial Officer.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss any of the recommendations outlined in this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me at marinosn@gao.gov. Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this letter. Our teams will continue to coordinate with your staff on addressing these seven open recommendations that call for the attention of the CIO. I appreciate DOJ's continued commitment and thank you for your personal attention to these important recommendations.

Sincerely,

//SIGNED//

Nick Marinos
Managing Director
Information Technology and Cybersecurity

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Greg Barbaccia, Federal CIO, Office of Management and Budget

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[4]GAO, *Priority Open Recommendations: Department of Justice*, GAO-25-108009 (Washington, D.C.: May 2, 2025).

GAO-25-108478 DOJ CIO Recommendations

Enclosure

Chief Information Officer Open Recommendations to the Department of Justice

This enclosure includes the open, publicly available GAO recommendations to the Department of Justice (DOJ) that call for the attention of its Chief Information Officer (CIO). We have divided these recommendations into two categories: (1) ensuring the cybersecurity of the nation and (2) improving IT acquisitions and management.

Ensuring the Cybersecurity of the Nation

Federal agencies depend on IT systems to carry out operations and process, maintain, and report essential information. The security of these systems and data is vital to protecting individual privacy and ensuring national security. Table 1 provides information on the open cybersecurity-related recommendation relevant to the DOJ CIO.

Table 1: Open Chief Information Officer-related Cybersecurity Recommendation for the Department of Justice

GAO report number	GAO report title	Recommendation
GAO-24-105658	Cybersecurity: Federal Agencies Made Progress, but Need to Fully Implement Incident Response Requirements	The Attorney General should ensure that the agency fully implements all event logging requirements as directed by the Office of Management and Budget guidance. (Recommendation 9)

Source: GAO summary based on previously issued reports. | GAO-25-108478

Improving IT Acquisitions and Management

Federal IT investments too frequently fail to deliver capabilities in a timely, cost-effective manner. Key management challenges—such as a lack of disciplined project planning and program oversight—continue to hamper effective acquisition and management of the government's IT assets. Table 2 provides information on the open IT acquisition and management-related recommendations relevant to the DOJ CIO.

Table 2: Open Chief Information Officer (CIO)-related IT Acquisition and Management Recommendations for the Department of Justice (DOJ)

GAO report number	GAO report title	Recommendation
GAO-24-105717	Federal Software Licenses: Agencies Need to Take Action to Achieve Additional Savings	The Attorney General should ensure that the DOJ consistently tracks software licenses that are currently in use for its widely used licenses by, at a minimum, developing and implementing procedures for tracking license usage. (Recommendation 7)
		The Attorney General should ensure that the DOJ consistently compares the inventories of software licenses that are currently in use with information on purchased licenses to identify opportunities to reduce costs and better inform investment decision making for its widely used licenses on a regular basis. At a minimum, it should develop and implement procedures for comparing the inventories of licenses in use to purchase records. (Recommendation 8)*

GAO-25-108478 DOJ CIO Recommendations

GAO report number	GAO report title	Recommendation
GAO-24-106137	Cloud Computing: Agencies Need to Address Key OMB Procurement Requirements	The Attorney General of the United States should ensure that the CIO of Justice updates guidance to put a service level agreement in place with every vendor when a cloud solution is deployed. The guidance should include language that addresses the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) required elements for service level agreements, including remediation plans for non-compliance. (Recommendation 18)
GAO-25-107041	IT Portfolio Management: OMB and Agencies Are Not Fully Addressing Selected Statutory Requirements	The Attorney General should direct the CIO of the DOJ to work with OMB to ensure that annual reviews of their IT portfolio are conducted in conjunction with the Federal CIO and the Chief Operating Officer or Deputy Secretary (or equivalent), as prescribed by the Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act. (Recommendation 23)
GAO-25-107114	Cloud Computing: Selected Agencies Need to Implement Updated Guidance for Managing Restrictive Licenses	The Attorney General should update and implement DOJ guidance to fully address identifying, analyzing, and mitigating the impacts of restrictive software licensing practices on cloud computing efforts. (Recommendation 1)

The Attorney General should assign and document responsibility for identifying and managing potential impacts of restrictive software licensing practices across the department. (Recommendation 2) |

Source: GAO summary based on previously issued reports. | GAO-25-108478

*Indicates a priority recommendation.