United States Government Accountability Office

Report to Congressional Committees

February 2024

FEDERAL HIRING

USA Staffing System Supports Hiring Needs, but Actions Are Needed to Strengthen Training and Program Management
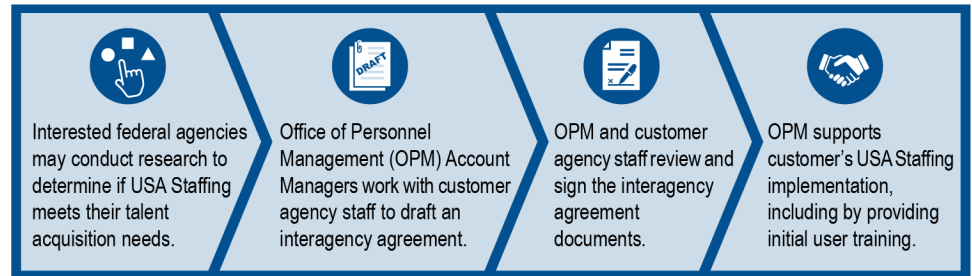
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Why GAO Did This Study

USA Staffing provides talent acquisition services that assist with federal hiring efforts. The federal hiring process is a key element of strategic human capital management, which has been on GAO's High Risk List since 2001.

GAO was asked to review OPM's USA Staffing program. This report examines 1) selected agencies' experiences with selecting and implementing USA Staffing, 2) OPM's cybersecurity risk assessment processes, and 3) OPM's processes and procedures for managing USA Staffing.

GAO interviewed officials from Treasury, Interior, NASA, IRS, and NPS about their experiences selecting and using USA Staffing and related training resources. GAO selected these agencies based on the total dollar value of their interagency agreements for fiscal year 2022—the most recent data available—and their organizational structures. GAO analyzed data and documents from OPM and interviewed agency officials.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that IRS and NPS each solicit, analyze, and use feedback on their USA Staffing training to address human capital professionals' needs. IRS and Interior, on behalf of NPS, agreed with the recommendations. GAO is making three recommendations to OPM, including that OPM improve its guidance for managing interagency agreement data. OPM agreed with the three recommendations.

View GAO-24-105738. For more information, contact Dawn G. Locke at (202) 512-6806 or LockeD@gao.gov or Jennifer R. Franks at (404) 679-1831 or FranksJ@gao.gov.

What GAO Found

The Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) USA Staffing system is one of several talent acquisition systems available to federal agencies. USA Staffing assists with recruitment, assessment, and evaluation of potential job candidates and is designed to accommodate a range of federal hiring flexibilities, authorities, and agency and office processes. Agencies that choose to use USA Staffing enter into an interagency agreement with OPM.

Interagency Agreement Process for Federal Agencies Selecting USA Staffing

| Interested federal agencies may conduct research to determine if USA Staffing meets their talent acquisition needs. | Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Account Managers work with customer agency staff to draft an interagency agreement. | OPM and customer agency staff review and sign the interagency agreement documents. | OPM supports customer's USA Staffing implementation, including by providing initial user training. |

Source: GAO analysis of OPM documents; GAO (icons). | GAO-24-105738

The Department of the Treasury (Treasury), the Department of the Interior (Interior), and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) chose USA Staffing as their talent acquisition service for a variety of reasons. Interior and Treasury found that USA Staffing offered the best value for their agency, and NASA citing expanded features. These agencies have practices in place to help them assess USA Staffing's performance to ensure it meets their hiring needs and reported general satisfaction with its functionalities. However, the National Park Service (NPS) and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) do not routinely solicit feedback on the USA Staffing training they provide to staff. Staff feedback could enhance NPS's and IRS's understanding of training participants' experiences, help identify problems, and improve training resources.

While OPM generally implemented cybersecurity risk assessments for USA Staffing in accordance with federal guidance, it did not fully identify control weaknesses. Specifically, some agreements with agencies connecting systems to USA Staffing had expired. As a result, OPM was unaware of the security state of those systems connected with USA Staffing. GAO alerted OPM to this discrepancy and OPM took steps to assess this risk and implemented new monitoring processes to help ensure the timely renewal of agreements.

OPM provides a variety of support to customers, including account management services and a help desk feature. OPM also collects feedback through surveys and its system enhancement process. However, OPM has not documented its process for updating its manual records, including the roles, responsibilities, and procedures for conducting certain quality control tasks for managing interagency agreement data. This would help OPM ensure it is sharing quality information with those responsible for making decisions regarding USA Staffing.

United States Government Accountability Office

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Abbreviations

FISMA	Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014
FY	fiscal year
IAA	Interagency Agreement
IRS	Internal Revenue Service
Interior	Department of the Interior
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NIST	National Institute of Standards and Technology
NPS	National Park Service
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
Treasury	Department of the Treasury
USAS	USA Staffing

February 6, 2024

The Honorable James Comer
Chairman
The Honorable Jamie Raskin
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Accountability
House of Representatives

The Honorable Mark E. Green, M.D.
Chairman
The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security
House of Representatives

Federal agencies' ability to address the nation's social, economic, and security challenges relies upon a workforce that can respond effectively to executive policy priorities and ensure service delivery to the public. Hiring individuals who have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to address both long-standing and emerging issues is critical to helping agencies achieve their missions and can also better serve the public interest.

The federal hiring process is a key element in the broader landscape of strategic human capital management across the federal government. Since 2001, GAO's High Risk List has highlighted strategic human capital management as an area requiring careful attention.[1] An important component to help agencies acquire the talent they need is their use of a talent acquisition system. Such a system can assist and support a variety of hiring tasks, such as posting job announcements, identifying qualified applicants, and tracking various data and information used by agency and office hiring managers. In addition, talent acquisition systems can promote efficiencies through electronic record keeping, automation, and user accessibility. As such, it is important for hiring managers to have tools that are user friendly, adaptable to agency and office-specific needs, and consistent with statutory requirements.

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[1]GAO, *High-Risk Series: Efforts Made to Achieve Progress Need to Be Maintained and Expanded to Fully Address All Areas,* GAO-23-106203 (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 20, 2023).

Federal agencies have options when selecting a talent acquisition system. Agencies may create their own system, contract with a private vendor, or enter into an Interagency Agreement (IAA) with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for USA Staffing services. OPM designed USA Staffing to accommodate a range of federal hiring flexibilities, authorities, and specific agency and office processes.[2]

Information systems, including talent acquisition systems such as USA Staffing, are subject to serious threats that can have adverse effects on an organization's operations and job applicants, and on other agencies that rely on the systems. Federal law requires agencies, and contractors acting on their behalf, to manage the risk of harm that could result from the unauthorized access, use, disclosure, or disruption of all IT systems. Cybersecurity risk assessments are an important tool for effectively managing the risks associated with operating information systems. We and OPM's Office of the Inspector General have previously reported on shortcomings with OPM's information system security.[3]

You asked us to review federal agencies' experiences with, and OPM's management of, USA Staffing, including its cybersecurity risk assessment processes. This report (1) examines selected agencies' experiences with selecting and implementing USA Staffing and their use of it in fiscal year (FY) 2022, (2) evaluates OPM's cybersecurity risk assessment processes, and (3) examines OPM's processes and procedures for managing USA Staffing.

To address the first objective, we selected three agencies as case illustrations—the Department of the Interior (Interior), Department of the Treasury (Treasury), and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Our selection was based on our analysis of the list of federal agencies that had an IAA with OPM in FY 2022 for USA Staffing services, as of May 2022.[4] We sorted the agencies by the total

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[2]USA Staffing is integrated with USAJOBS—an OPM-operated website where agencies can post job announcements.

[3]GAO, *Priority Open Recommendations: Office of Personnel Management*, GAO-23-106370 (Washington, D.C.: May 16, 2023). Office of Personnel Management Office of the Inspector General, *Federal Information Security Modernization Act Audit – Fiscal Year 2022*, Report Number 2022-ISAG-0017 (Washington, D.C.: Nov 15, 2022).

[4]At the time of our sampling, the list included 26 agencies. After our sampling was complete, OPM signed an IAA with the Department of Labor for FY 2022 USA Staffing services. As such, we did not consider the Department of Labor as part of our selection. For a list of agencies that signed an IAA with OPM for FY 2022, see appendix I.

dollar value of their IAA, and identified those whose totals were greater than $1 million. Of the agencies whose IAAs were greater than $1 million, Interior and Treasury represented the highest combined total dollar value among the IAAs. Furthermore, Interior's and Treasury's IAAs included their own and other federal agencies' and offices' payments for USA Staffing services.

To obtain the perspective of a relatively smaller sized agency, we selected NASA because it had the largest IAA value under the $1 million threshold. Additionally, unlike Interior and Treasury, NASA did not have multiple sub-agencies that used USA Staffing. Although these agencies do not represent the experiences of all agencies government-wide, they provide illustrative examples of the experiences agencies have had selecting and using USA Staffing as their talent acquisition system. For each of the selected agencies, we reviewed documentation and interviewed senior human capital officials about their agency's process to select USA Staffing, general use of the system, and interactions with OPM representatives.[5]

In addition, we selected the National Park Service (NPS) and Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as sub-agencies for Interior and Treasury, respectively. We selected these sub-agencies as each purchased the most USA Staffing licenses in FY 2022, employed human capital professionals with varying tenure using the system, and hired for a variety of positions.[6] We reviewed documentation and interviewed human capital professionals' supervisors to obtain their views and learn about their experiences using USA Staffing. NPS, IRS, and NASA also provided us virtual demonstrations on how each agency used USA Staffing in conjunction with their broader human capital systems.

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[5]For the purposes of this review, our analysis of agencies' selection process is descriptive. We did not evaluate the effectiveness of their selection process, nor did we compare the federal government's IAA process for obtaining goods and services from agencies to the federal government's competitive procurement process for obtaining goods and services from private vendors.

[6]For the purposes of this review, we use the term human capital professionals to include agency employees who, in part, frequently use USA Staffing to, for example, create job announcements and review applications.

Furthermore, we conducted five discussion groups with a sample of NPS, IRS, and NASA human capital professionals who use USA Staffing daily.[7] During the discussion groups, we asked them questions about their overall experiences using the system, including training. We identified common themes that capture a broad understanding of their experiences. The perspectives obtained through these discussion groups are not generalizable to all USA Staffing users but provide illustrative examples of their experiences.

To address the second objective, we examined OPM's cybersecurity documentation, such as security plans, assessments, and a system interconnection tracker, which documents OPM's connection agreements with other agencies. We evaluated the effectiveness of the USA Staffing risk assessment per requirements of the Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 and National Institute of Standards and Technology guidance.[8] We also reviewed a supporting information system that provided information security controls to USA Staffing. To supplement our examinations, we interviewed relevant OPM staff including information system security officials and project managers.

For the third objective, we reviewed OPM documents for USA Staffing management and customer service. These documents included flow charts for processing federal agencies' payments for USA Staffing, customer service expectations for USA Staffing personnel, and the December 2021 USA Staffing Implementation Guide. We reviewed OPM's three repositories of FY 2022 USA Staffing IAA data for consistency and accuracy. We consulted OPM officials about their processes and procedures (documented steps for completing tasks) to maintain and update these repositories and to ensure accurate records. We determined that OPM's April 2023 USA Staffing Delphi data were reliable to ascertain the total number of USA Staffing IAAs and approximate the total value of USA Staffing services provided through them for FY 2022. We also interviewed relevant OPM USA Staffing

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[7]We conducted two discussion groups each with NPS and IRS human capital professionals and one with NASA. Our selection of human capital professionals was based on the type of user access they had to USA Staffing, job responsibilities, tenure using the system, and the geographic locations of their assigned regional offices.

[8]The *Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014* (FISMA 2014), Pub. L. No. 113-283, 128 Stat. 3073 (Dec. 18, 2014), largely superseded the *Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002* (FISMA 2002), Title III of Pub. L. No. 107-347, 116 Stat. 2899, 2946 (Dec. 17, 2002). National Institute of Standards and Technology, *Guide for Conducting Risk Assessments,* Special Publication 800-30 (Gaithersburg, MD: September 2012).

program officials and staff to discuss their experiences administering the program, assisting federal agencies that use USA Staffing, and the execution of established policies, procedures, and processes.

We conducted this performance audit from February 2022 to February 2024 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.
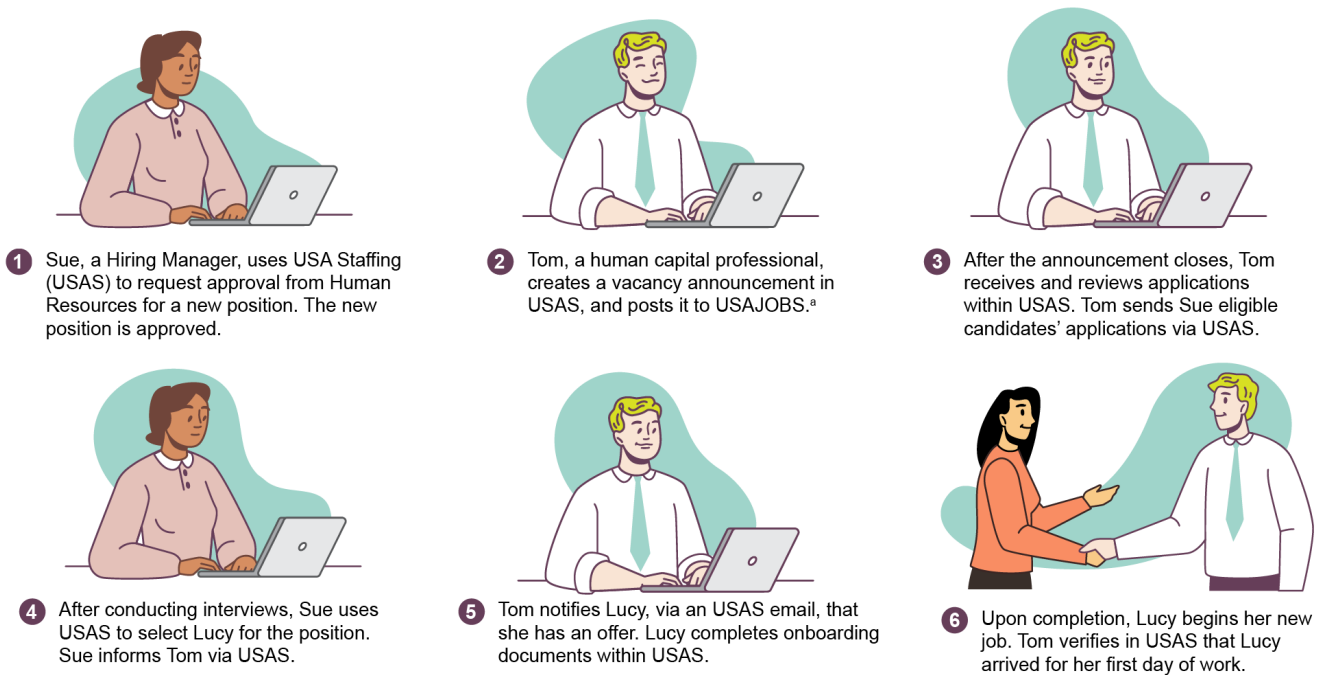
Background

OPM's Federal Staffing Center, within the Human Resources Solutions Group, administers and operates USA Staffing, one of several talent acquisition systems available to federal agencies.[9] Such a system provides federal agencies a variety of services to implement their hiring processes. For example, some systems are designed to assist with the recruitment, assessment, and evaluation of potential job candidates. USA Staffing supports these services and is designed to accommodate the full range of federal hiring flexibilities, authorities, and unique agency and office processes. OPM has provided federal agencies access to talent acquisition systems since 1995.[10] As shown in figure 1, hiring managers and human capital professionals use USA Staffing for several tasks when hiring a new employee.

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[9]A variety of federal entities use USA Staffing, including various administrations, authorities, boards, bureaus, and commissions. For the purposes of this report, we refer to these types of federal entities as "agencies."

[10]OPM offered the web-based USA Staffing program to federal agencies beginning in 2000.

Figure 1: Selected USA Staffing Tasks that Federal Agencies Perform When Hiring a New Employee

1. Sue, a Hiring Manager, uses USA Staffing (USAS) to request approval from Human Resources for a new position. The new position is approved.

2. Tom, a human capital professional, creates a vacancy announcement in USAS, and posts it to USAJOBS.[a]

3. After the announcement closes, Tom receives and reviews applications within USAS. Tom sends Sue eligible candidates' applications via USAS.

4. After conducting interviews, Sue uses USAS to select Lucy for the position. Sue informs Tom via USAS.

5. Tom notifies Lucy, via an USAS email, that she has an offer. Lucy completes onboarding documents within USAS.

6. Upon completion, Lucy begins her new job. Tom verifies in USAS that Lucy arrived for her first day of work.

Source: GAO review of USA Staffing user guides; Sensvector/stock.adobe.com; (illustration). | GAO-24-105738

[a]www.usajobs.gov, a website managed by the Office of Personnel Management and integrated with USA Staffing, is the primary source for information about federal jobs and employment opportunities.

Federal agencies that are interested in using a talent acquisition service may conduct their own research to determine if USA Staffing, or another service, would best meet their needs. If an agency selects USA Staffing, that agency enters into an IAA with OPM.[11] OPM manages this process.[12] In 1996, Congress and the President authorized OPM to maintain an intragovernmental revolving fund for personnel management services,

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[11]Typically, USA Staffing IAAs include 1) the General Terms and Conditions of the IAA (FS Form 7600A), 2) an Order Form (FS Form 7600B), and 3) a Statement of Service.

[12]The purpose of IAAs is to manage reimbursable intragovernmental transactions, which occur where one agency purchases goods or services from another.

allowing OPM to collect payment for reimbursable services from other federal agencies.[13]
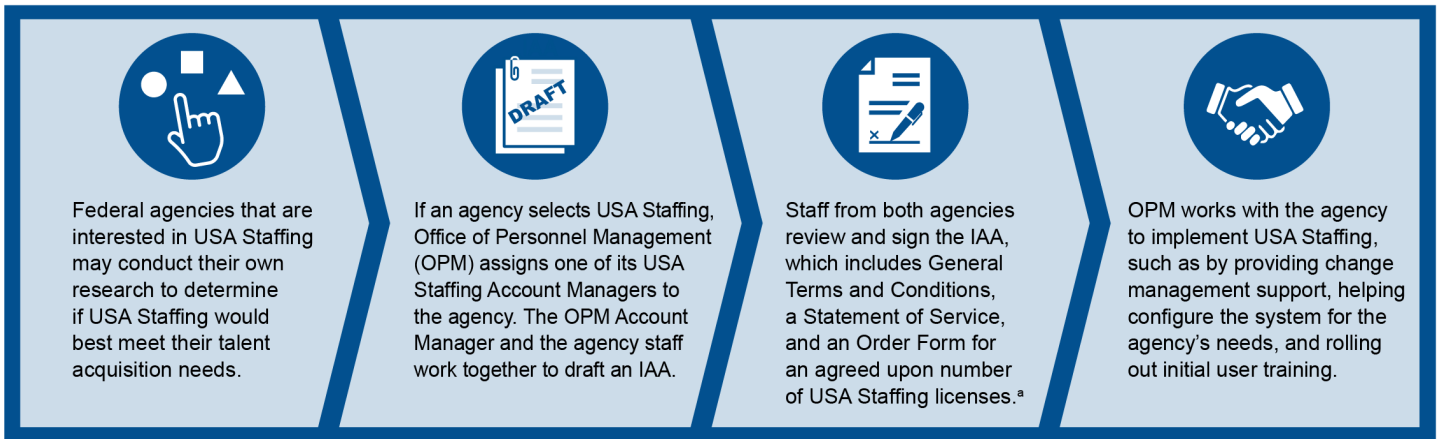
Federal agencies and OPM discuss the agencies' needs and draft the IAA documents based on those requirements. For example, agencies discuss the number of USA Staffing licenses needed and an appropriate period of performance.[14] OPM assigns an account manager to each of its USA Staffing customer agencies and offices. Account managers assist customers with a variety of tasks, such as drafting IAA documents. See figure 2 for a depiction of the process for agencies selecting USA Staffing.

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[13]5 U.S.C. § 1304(e). Intragovernmental revolving funds are primarily used to conduct business-like activities within and between federal agencies. In FY 2022, according to OPM's records, OPM provided USA Staffing services to more than 140 agencies and offices, valued at more than $50 million.

[14]Agency and office employees who create job announcements, develop assessments, and review applications, need a paid license. USA Staffing IAAs typically cover a 12-month period of performance that begins at the start of each fiscal year. While the period of performance of most USA Staffing IAAs is October 1st through September 30th, some agencies have alternative periods of performance based on their needs. For example, Department of the Interior's Interior Business Center has two IAAs–one with a period of performance beginning on August 1st, and the other with a period of performance beginning October 1st. OPM officials told us this arrangement allows the agency to adjust to changes or lapses in funding.

Figure 2: Interagency Agreement (IAA) Process for Federal Agencies Selecting USA Staffing

Federal agencies that are interested in USA Staffing may conduct their own research to determine if USA Staffing would best meet their talent acquisition needs.

If an agency selects USA Staffing, Office of Personnel Management (OPM) assigns one of its USA Staffing Account Managers to the agency. The OPM Account Manager and the agency staff work together to draft an IAA.

Staff from both agencies review and sign the IAA, which includes General Terms and Conditions, a Statement of Service, and an Order Form for an agreed upon number of USA Staffing licenses.[a]

OPM works with the agency to implement USA Staffing, such as by providing change management support, helping configure the system for the agency's needs, and rolling out initial user training.

Source: GAO analysis of OPM documents; GAO (icons). | GAO-24-105738

[a]The Statement of Service and Order Form implement the General Terms and Conditions for a given IAA. Statements of Service outline the details of how OPM will provide USA Staffing services to agencies, such as through account management. Each Order Form captures specific financial information about an intragovernmental transaction between OPM and an agency, such as period of performance, accounting codes for each agency, and the dollar value of licenses purchased.

Many federal agencies and offices that use USA Staffing do not have their own individual IAA with OPM, but instead receive these services through their Cabinet-level Department. Additionally, other federal agencies and offices rely on either Interior or Treasury to provide USA Staffing licenses.[15] For example, while OPM had 27 FY 2022 IAAs for USA Staffing, OPM data list more than 140 agencies and offices as customers in FY 2022. See appendix I for a complete list of agencies and offices that used USA Staffing in FY 2022.

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[15]Through their respective IAAs, Treasury and Interior each purchase USA Staffing licenses on behalf of their own bureaus and offices and on behalf of other agencies and offices outside of their department. For example, NPS (an Interior agency) and the National Credit Union Administration (which is not organized under Interior) both purchase USA Staffing licenses through Interior and receive USA Staffing services from OPM. In FY 2022, Treasury and Interior assisted 11 and 29 federal agencies and offices, respectively. Both Treasury and Interior incorporate the number of licenses for these external federal agencies and offices into their IAA total number of licenses.

In addition to drafting IAA documents, OPM account managers serve as the primary point of contact with federal agencies and offices. Account managers assist with implementing USA Staffing, arranging user training, and providing ongoing support. Customers also have access to a variety of support services through OPM, including participating in working groups and receiving help desk support.

Information and systems, such as USA Staffing, are subject to serious cybersecurity threats. It is imperative for agency leaders and managers at all levels to manage the risks associated with their information systems and systems operated on their behalf by contractors. Federal laws and policies establish the following requirements for protecting federal systems and managing cybersecurity risks:

- The Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 (FISMA) requires each agency to develop and implement an agency-wide risk-based information security program.[16] FISMA also applies to systems used or operated by a contractor or other organization on behalf of the agency, such as IT resources provided via cloud services.[17]

- The Office of Management and Budget requires that agencies and contractors operating systems on their behalf follow National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) cybersecurity guidelines to manage cybersecurity risk.[18] Among other things, NIST guidance specifically recommends that risk assessments be conducted for each information system.[19]

While also managing USA Staffing customer service and cybersecurity, OPM collects and manages IAA data in three repositories. These data include each IAA's period of performance, the names of agencies and offices that use USA Staffing, the number of licenses they purchase, and

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[16]44 U.S.C. § 3554(a)(3)(B).

[17]The Office of Management and Budget established and provides guidance for the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP), a framework for authorizing cloud services. FedRAMP information security requirements are aligned with FISMA and NIST guidance. See FedRAMP Authorization Act, Pub. L. No. 117-263, tit. LIX, subtit. C, § 5921, 136 Stat. 2395, 3449 (2022).

[18]Office of Management and Budget, *Managing Information as a Strategic Resources*, Circular A-130 (Washington, D.C.: July 2016).

[19]National Institute of Standards and Technology, *Risk Management Framework for Federal Information Systems and Organizations: A System Life Cycle Approach for Security and Privacy*, Special Publication 800-37, Revision 2 (Gaithersburg, MD: December 2018).

the total cost. OPM uses these data to make decisions about its USA Staffing program, such as the cost of USA Staffing licenses for the upcoming year.

Selected Agencies Chose USA Staffing for Various Reasons but Some Do Not Routinely Solicit Feedback to Improve Training Resources

Interior, Treasury, and NASA chose USA Staffing for their talent acquisition system and cited various reasons for their decisions, including that USA Staffing provided the best value or system functionalities. Additionally, these agencies have practices in place to help them assess whether USA Staffing continues to address their talent acquisition needs over time. While human capital professionals and their supervisors at these agencies expressed general satisfaction with the system, some human capital professionals' supervisors we spoke to do not routinely solicit feedback from their staff on related agency training resources, such as in-house training and user guides.[20]

Selected Agencies Chose USA Staffing for Various Reasons and Assess Performance to Ensure Talent Acquisition Needs Are Met

Interior, Treasury, and NASA chose USA Staffing after conducting internal studies and market research.[21] As part of this process, the agencies examined the costs and functionalities of a number of talent acquisition systems developed by other agencies and private commercial vendors. The agencies also assessed how each system could best address their needs. At the completion of this review, each agency selected USA Staffing.

Interior, Treasury, and NASA reported various reasons for selecting USA Staffing. For example, both Interior and Treasury cited USA Staffing as offering the best value for their respective agency. Interior identified that if it implemented USA Staffing department-wide, including its sub-agencies, there would be cost savings and efficiencies through standardizing business processes.[22] Treasury identified that USA Staffing could provide cost savings because all system functionalities and improvements, along with user training, were included in the yearly license price. Additionally, like Interior, all of Treasury's sub-agencies could use USA Staffing and

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[20]For purposes of this report, human capital supervisors are IRS, NPS, and NASA officials responsible for overseeing their respective agency's use of USA Staffing as well as their staff. Human capital professionals are those staff who frequently work with USA Staffing.

[21]Interior implemented USA Staffing in FY 2020, NASA in FY 2021, and Treasury in FY 2022.

[22]Prior to selecting USA Staffing as its department-wide talent acquisition system, Interior's sub-agencies and offices used either USA Staffing or a private commercial vendor. Treasury used a private commercial vendor for its previous talent acquisition system. NASA internally operated and administered its own system before using USA Staffing.

thereby operate on a single standardized system. At NASA, an official said that USA Staffing offered expanded features in comparison to its prior system. These expanded features included candidate assessment tools, certain reporting capabilities, and new employee onboarding.

After selecting USA Staffing, Treasury and NASA officials said that OPM's USA Staffing program officials and account managers assisted their agencies with implementation of the new system. Some of the assistance OPM provided included sample project plans, training, and customer assistance. Further information on OPM's customer assistance is discussed in a later section of this report.

Interior, Treasury, and NASA have practices in place to assess whether USA Staffing continues to address their agencies' talent acquisition needs. For example, Interior officials said that they monitor performance measures such as time-to-hire, review customer satisfaction surveys, and have representatives provide feedback to Interior and OPM officials. At Treasury, an official said that the agency works closely with their OPM account manager and holds regular meetings to identify and resolve any USA Staffing issues. A NASA official said that the agency conducts internal reviews, monitors time-to-hire metrics, and assesses its reporting capability as well as access to USA Staffing talent acquisition data.

Selected Agencies Support USA Staffing Users, but Some Do Not Routinely Solicit Feedback to Improve Training Resources

Interior's and Treasury's sub-agencies, NPS and IRS respectively, along with NASA described their use of certain USA Staffing functionalities. For example, human capital supervisors reported using USA Staffing to create and post job announcements, evaluate candidates, and onboard new employees. They also described the support they provide to human capital professionals who regularly use USA Staffing. This support includes addressing user feedback on the system and offering access to a variety of OPM and agency-specific training resources. However, two agencies—IRS and NPS—did not routinely solicit human capital professionals' feedback to improve related agency training resources.

Agencies Address User Feedback on USA Staffing Functionality

In discussion groups and interviews, some human capital professionals and their supervisors at NPS, IRS, and NASA expressed general satisfaction with USA Staffing functionality. For example, the supervisors we spoke with said that USA Staffing sends automatic alerts informing users which hiring tasks need to be completed. Additionally, the system provides hiring metric reports and office specific onboarding forms. Similarly, in discussion groups, some human capital professionals said USA Staffing has eliminated the need for paper forms, standardized and

simplified hiring processes, and permitted new employees to electronically complete essential onboarding tasks.

However, during the discussion groups, some human capital professionals also shared challenges they experienced using USA Staffing. For example, some human capital professionals in the discussion groups expressed frustration with periodic challenges accessing the system as well as intermittent system downtime. Additionally, other human capital professionals cited user interface limitations such as difficulty uploading documents and character limits for certain information fields.

The NPS, IRS, and NASA human capital supervisors we spoke to said they have established processes for human capital professionals to submit USA Staffing performance feedback on challenges they may encounter. For example, at NPS and NASA, human capital professionals can use an electronic messaging system to contact an internal USA Staffing point of contact. Supervisors also said that user feedback on interface limitations is provided to OPM. IRS supervisors said that human capital professionals submit feedback to an internal IRS office, which either addresses the feedback or submits it to OPM. IRS officials also said that OPM's USA Staffing program office can then determine if the issues identified in the feedback could be implemented as a system enhancement.

Agencies Provide Users with Various Training Resources

NPS, IRS, and NASA provided various USA Staffing training resources to human capital professionals. As shown in figure 3, the training resources included OPM-provided training, agency-specific training, and agency-specific user guidance.

Figure 3: Available USA Staffing Training to Selected Federal Agencies' Human Capital Professionals

Office of Personnel Management (OPM)-Training	Agency-Specific Training	Agency-Specific User Guidance

Source: GAO review of OPM, Internal Revenue Service, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and National Park Service training. Rudzhan/iconicbestiary/stock.adobe.com; (illustrations). | GAO-24-105738

OPM-Provided Training. NPS, IRS, and NASA human capital professionals have access to OPM training to learn how to operate the system and use various functionalities. OPM provides this training to all federal agencies that use USA Staffing. The training is offered through online training modules, as well as virtual and classroom trainings. OPM also has a training platform within USA Staffing, which allows human capital professionals to try out new USA Staffing features before they are fully active in the system. [23]

The NPS human capital professional supervisor we spoke to said that while human capital professionals have access to OPM training, they are not required to take this training before receiving their USA Staffing license. For example, during our discussion groups, some NPS human capital professionals said that they did not receive any formal training on USA Staffing and others said they received training on a previous system version. The IRS supervisors we spoke to said that new human capital professionals complete the online training modules and may also access the training platform. A NASA supervisor said that new human capital

[23]According to USA Staffing program officials an agency has the discretion to identify which employees have access to the platform.

professionals complete an OPM online training module, but those who have previously used USA Staffing at another federal agency do not need to repeat this training.

Agency-Specific Training. Agency-specific training, such as in-person or virtual training, varied among the agencies. For example, a NPS supervisor said the agency does not have agency-specific USA Staffing training because of the decentralized nature of the regional offices. The supervisor added that regional offices offer on-the-job training or mentoring programs. IRS supervisors we spoke with said the agency offers specific in-person and virtual classroom training focused on IRS's hiring policies and procedures. While waiting to attend this training, human capital professionals receive on-the-job training. At NASA, one supervisor said that new human capital professionals' training includes broad new employee training and on-the-job USA Staffing training from more senior NASA human capital professionals. At the completion of this training, new employees are expected to complete a survey, which NASA management reviews and then incorporates feedback into its user guides.

Agency-Specific User Guidance. Two of the selected agencies developed agency-specific guidance, including standard operating procedures and user guides. For example, NASA has developed agency specific USA Staffing user guides that incorporate NASA's hiring procedures. IRS has also established USA Staffing user guides and other standard operating procedures that cover additional elements of IRS's hiring processes. IRS officials said that the guides are updated regularly to incorporate changes in business processes, the integration of new functionality, or user feedback.

NPS does not have agency-specific guidance because of the decentralization of its regional offices, according to the human capital supervisor we spoke with. The supervisor said that NPS is considering implementation of agency-specific USA Staffing training and standard operating procedures in FY 2024 as part of an office reorganization.

IRS and NPS Did Not Routinely Solicit Feedback to Improve Training Resources

While each of the selected agencies has a variety of methods to train human capital professionals on USA Staffing, IRS and NPS have not established a routine process to solicit and analyze feedback on training

resources.[24] For example, while there are avenues at IRS for staff to submit feedback—such as via email or during monthly learning sessions—IRS has not routinely solicited training feedback.[25] IRS officials said that during the monthly learning sessions, participants are invited to provide feedback, which is reviewed and may be incorporated where appropriate. IRS did not provide documentation conveying how or when employee feedback has been incorporated into its USA Staffing training resources. As a result, IRS is missing an opportunity to receive valuable information from its human capital professionals regarding whether they were satisfied with the provided training. For example, some IRS human capital professionals expressed dissatisfaction with the timing of agency-specific training and said that internal user guides did not include all the hiring scenarios they may encounter. Additionally, at NPS, the regional offices that offered training did not identify and solicit employee feedback according to a NPS supervisor.

Our past work has underscored the importance of viewing training and development efforts as a continual, ongoing effort rather than a static, after-the-fact requirement.[26] Specifically, our *Guide for Assessing Strategic Training and Development Efforts in the Federal Government* highlights the value of agencies incorporating feedback and perspectives, including those of managers and staff, when evaluating their training efforts. For example, agencies can use feedback to identify problems and improve training and development programs, either by making incremental changes or redesigning the entire training effort to incorporate broader changes.[27] Moreover, training participants can provide valuable information on whether they were satisfied with the training, learned from the effort, and used these new skills and competencies on their jobs to improve results. Among the ways such

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[24]Unlike IRS and NPS, NASA has established a routine process to solicit and analyze feedback on training resources. As part of this process, new employees are expected to complete a survey, which NASA management reviews and incorporates any feedback into user guides.

[25]According to IRS, when the agency's USA Staffing office receives unsolicited questions or feedback on USA training resources—such as training classes or training guides—the office will provide a response, update the guides, or elevate issues to Treasury or OPM.

[26]GAO, *Human Capital: A Guide for Assessing Strategic Training and Development Efforts in the Federal Government*, GAO-04-546G (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 1, 2004).

[27]GAO-04-546G

GAO-24-105738 Federal Hiring

information could be gathered is through questionnaires of employees, supervisors, or managers, as well as focus group meetings with staff.

By routinely soliciting and analyzing relevant training feedback, IRS and NPS would enhance their understanding of training participants' experiences and be better positioned to identify problems and improve training resources to address human capital professionals' needs.

OPM Assessed Cybersecurity Risks, but Did Not Identify Potential Risks from Expired Interconnection Agreements

OPM generally implemented cybersecurity risk assessments for USA Staffing in accordance with guidance from NIST.[28] For example, OPM implemented the key steps of identifying threats and most vulnerabilities, such as security control weaknesses; determining the likelihoods and impacts associated with those threats and control weaknesses; and determining risks based on likelihood and impact.[29] However, OPM did not fully identify control weaknesses. Specifically, OPM did not identify potential weaknesses and risks associated with expired interconnection agreements with seven agencies.[30] For example, the interconnection agreement for a Department of Defense system and USA Staffing had expired in July 2019 and had not been renewed as of November 2022.[31] Similarly, interconnection agreements with the Departments of Health and Human Services and Veterans Affairs had been expired since July 2020 and February 2021 respectively. Because these seven agreements had

[28]National Institute of Standards and Technology, *Risk Management Framework for Federal Information Systems and Organizations*, Special Publication 800-37, Revision 2 (Gaithersburg, MD: December 2018). NIST provides guidance to determine risk through five key steps: 1) identify potential threats (and associated events) to the organization and its information systems; 2) identify vulnerabilities in its systems; 3) determine the likelihood that a particular threat may exploit vulnerabilities; 4) assess the resulting impact on the organization's mission, including the effect on sensitive and critical systems and data; and 5) determine the risk that threats may exploit vulnerabilities. National Institute of Standards and Technology, *Guide for Conducting Risk Assessments*, Special Publication 800-30 (Gaithersburg, MD: September 2012).

[29]Security controls are the safeguards or countermeasures prescribed for an information system to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of the system and its information. Interconnection agreements allow organizations to consider the risks when their systems exchange information with other systems that may have different security and privacy requirements.

[30]The agreements between OPM and connecting agencies and offices are generally valid for 3 years. As of June 2022, OPM managed 35 ongoing or pending system interconnections and the associated agreements specific to USA Staffing.

[31]OPM had expired interconnection agreements with three components from the Department of Defense as well as with the Departments of Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Justice, and Veterans Affairs.

expired, the connections were not authorized and lacked oversight. As a result, OPM was not aware of the relevant security issues related to other agencies' systems that would form a basis for interconnection agreements.

OPM information security and program management officials said that they did not fully identify the expired interconnection agreements as a control weakness. The officials said they were aware of the expired connection agreements but did not consider them significant risks.

In addition, OPM security control assessors—reviewers who evaluate information system controls for implementation and effectiveness—did not identify the control weakness. For example, during an assessment in 2020, assessors did not identify control weaknesses associated with the Department of Defense interconnection agreement that expired in 2019. Similarly, a subsequent 2022 assessment did not identify control weakness associated with expired Departments of Defense, Health and Human Services, and Veterans Affairs interconnection agreements.

After we alerted OPM officials to the discrepancy in August 2022, they took action to address it. As shown in figure 4, OPM adhered to the key steps to identify and assess the control weakness in its risk assessment. As a result of our alert, OPM also established a plan of action and milestones to mitigate the potential of harm from the expired interconnection agreements.

Figure 4: NIST Assessment Steps Implemented by the Office of Personnel Management for USA Staffing as of April 2023

Step 1	Identify threats	✓
Step 2	Identify vulnerabilities	✓
Step 3	Determine likelihood of threat event resulting in adverse impact	✓
Step 4	Determine magnitude of impact	✓
Step 5	Determine the risks [as a combination of likelihood and impact]	✓

✓ Steps and activities fully implemented

Source: GAO analysis of National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) guidance. | GAO-24-105738

As of April 2023, OPM had implemented its plan and the interconnection agreements with the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, as well as two other agencies had been renewed. OPM terminated system interconnections with the remaining three agencies, including the Department of Health and Human Services; thus the interconnections no longer required agreements. OPM also implemented monitoring processes to supplement its interconnection tracker, such as monthly review meetings, to ensure renewal of agreements before their expiration. As a result of OPM's efforts, the agency has addressed control weaknesses and decreased the risk that other agencies' system vulnerabilities could have potentially caused a disruption of USA Staffing operations or a data breach resulting in the loss of user confidentiality.

OPM's USA Staffing Management Includes Customer Support but Lacks Certain Documented Procedures for Managing Interagency Agreement Data

OPM's USA Staffing program office manages the talent acquisition system, in part, by providing a variety of resources to customer agencies and offices, including guides and individualized assistance through an account manager. Additionally, the USA Staffing program office is responsible for managing the quality of IAA data. We identified a lack of clearly documented procedures at OPM to manage its USA Staffing IAA data and some instances where the data for FY 2022 were inconsistent.

OPM Supports Customers with a Variety of Resources and Communication Methods

OPM develops and provides a variety of text-based resources; peer-to-peer resources (such as account managers and venues for collaborative communication); and feedback to customer agencies and offices that use USA Staffing, as detailed below.

- **Text-Based Resources.** OPM provides agencies with an implementation guide, sample agency and office training plans, and user guides on the system's functionalities. As of August 2023, OPM's online resources page for USA Staffing included guides for system users—such as human capital supervisors and human capital professionals—on topics such as assessing job applicants, conducting a structured resume review, and remote work.

- **Account Management.** OPM assigns an account manager to work directly with each customer's human capital supervisors. The account manager answers questions, provides project management support, conducts system demonstrations and training, helps draft requests for system improvements, and provides technical guidance.

- **Collaborative Communication.** OPM organizes various ways for system users to communicate with the USA Staffing program office and each other. For example, the USA Staffing program office conducts regular touch-point meetings and topic-focused working groups with customer agency and office staff. OPM also provides ad hoc communications to address current issues. In July 2022, OPM held a working group meeting on USA Staffing reporting and analytics functions. This working group meeting covered progress on a system enhancement related to these functions along with upcoming training opportunities, discussed results from a recent customer satisfaction survey, and provided a demonstration of USA Staffing functionalities.

- **Help Desk.** OPM operates a USA Staffing help desk, which addresses user problems, and, according to OPM, provides summaries via email to system users about system changes and updates. OPM is also responsible for notifying agencies and offices of scheduled maintenance along with unplanned system downtime greater than two hours.

- **Feedback.** USA Staffing program leadership said that customers provide feedback on USA Staffing and OPM's customer service at multiple points during the year, such as through semiannual customer satisfaction surveys, and the enhancement process for system improvements, as discussed below.

  - In the spring 2022 survey, NPS, IRS, and NASA answered customer survey questions about whether USA Staffing was helpful in achieving their human capital objectives, whether it offered innovative solutions, and whether it contributed to improving effectiveness. The survey also asked customer agencies about the quality of customer service they received from account managers and Help Desk staff.

  - OPM also responds to customer feedback on USA Staffing through its enhancement process. Customer agencies and offices may work with their account manager to request system improvements, known as enhancements, to USA Staffing. OPM program staff determine whether the requested enhancement is feasible and could benefit other customer agencies. If the enhancement meets these and other conditions, OPM adds it to the USA Staffing production schedule.

    For example, one NPS official told us that they worked with their account manager and OPM staff to develop a tracker that easily displays the progress of individual vacancies through an agency's or office's hiring process. According to this NPS official, the enhancement has been well received among the agency's USA Staffing users, including hiring managers. According to NASA and IRS documentation, OPM has completed more than 20 enhancement requests submitted by these agencies between 2020 and 2022.

OPM Does Not Have Certain Documented Procedures to Manage Interagency Agreement Data Quality

OPM collects a variety of USA Staffing IAA data as part of its program management responsibilities but does not have documented procedures for certain steps and tasks related to managing these IAA data and ensuring their quality. OPM maintains three repositories of IAA data associated with its USA Staffing intragovernmental transactions and the supporting IAAs. These include 1) signed USA Staffing IAA documents,

including the order(s) for USA Staffing licenses, 2) OPM program staff's manual records on USA Staffing transactions, and 3) official accounting records in the Delphi system.[32] See figure 5 for an overview of OPM's USA Staffing IAA data collection and management.

Figure 5: Overview of the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) USA Staffing Interagency Agreement (IAA) Data Collection and Management
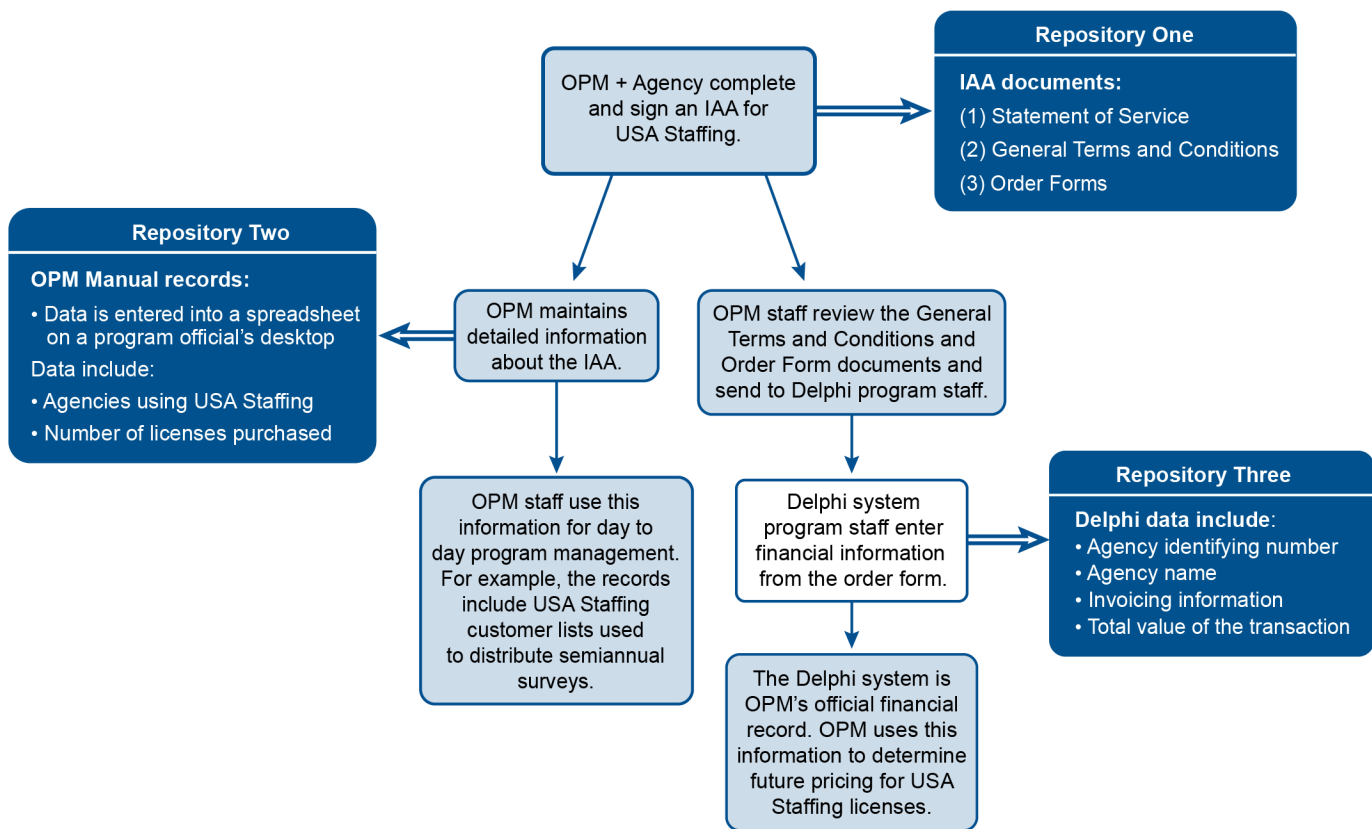
Source: GAO analysis of OPM documents; GAO (icons). | GAO-24-105738

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[32]The Delphi system serves as OPM's core financial management system. It supports OPM's financial functions, including compliance with budgetary accounting and financial reporting requirements. OPM officials told us that they use USA Staffing IAA data from Delphi to develop the program's budget for the next fiscal year and determine pricing for each USA Staffing license. According to OPM officials, the information in each order is incorporated into Delphi and into USA Staffing program office's manual records. As a result, the dollar value on the order form should be consistent in Delphi and in the manual records. According to OPM officials this process of comparison, as they update their manual records, is their quality control process for the IAA data.

We reviewed the processes and procedures OPM takes to manage these IAA data repositories and identified issues. We found that OPM does not have documented roles and responsibilities for ensuring all IAA data are updated, and that certain IAA data appeared not to be updated in a timely or consistent manner. The Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government broadly stress the importance of quality information, and state that federal agencies should document the following:[33]

- **Who is responsible for the internal control activities.** Documentation should include the roles and responsibilities of staff involved in internal control activities, such as who is responsible for updating information in USA Staffing repositories to ensure quality IAA data. While OPM specifies which staff are involved in updating Delphi, OPM has not documented equivalent guidance on who is responsible for updating its manual records. Internal controls also stipulate that documentation provides a means to retain organizational knowledge and mitigates the risk of having that knowledge limited to a few personnel. Accordingly, as staff change over in the USA Staffing program office, it is important that new staff are aware of which internal control activities they are responsible for completing. Documenting roles and responsibilities of key personnel in charge of IAA data management for USA Staffing manual records—similar to the documented roles and responsibilities established for Delphi data management—would better position OPM to ensure appropriate staff are managing quality IAA data across all USA Staffing repositories. OPM staff agreed that this guidance would be beneficial.

- **Timeframes for when control activities occur.** Documentation of the internal control system should include timeframes for recording and maintaining complete and accurate information—such as timeframes for updating OPM's USA Staffing repositories so they are relevant and of value to decision makers.[34] However, OPM's timeframes for updating Delphi records are unclear and its procedures for the manual records do not include timeframes for when updates should be completed.

  During our review, OPM staff told us that IAA orders should be entered into Delphi within 30 days of being signed. However, this

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[33]GAO, *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*, GAO-14-704G (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 10, 2014).

[34]The Standards for Internal Control also suggest that agencies ensure transactions— such as financial transactions recorded in Delphi—are promptly recorded to maintain their relevance and value to management in making decisions. GAO-14-704G.

timeframe is not explicitly stated in OPM's Account Manager Interagency Guide. [35] We found that, according to IAA data OPM provided, nine of 50 FY 2022 IAA transactions were entered into Delphi more than 30 days after the IAA was signed. These orders are valued at more than $6 million. Because OPM's data showed that these transactions were entered into Delphi more than 30 days after they were signed, it appeared that OPM was violating its own policy.

OPM was not aware that some IAAs appeared to be entered outside the 30-day window when we brought it to their attention. After investigating this, OPM staff stated these instances stemmed from technical issues due to financial system changes. OPM officials said these issues were outside of OPM's control or created only the appearance of a delay. Nevertheless, OPM could better identify and manage future instances of internal IAA processing delays by documenting timeframes for its quality assurance checks and clarifying timeframes in its existing guidance on processing IAAs. OPM staff agreed they could improve the existing guidance by making these timeframes clearer. By having documented procedures that clearly lay out the timeframes for recording updates in USA Staffing repositories, OPM will be better positioned to ensure it has quality, timely records and that OPM decision makers have the most updated information.

- **Procedures for identifying inconsistencies.** Management should have documented procedures for ensuring the IAA data in its three USA Staffing repositories are consistent. According to OPM officials, they have a process for ensuring IAA data are consistent across the three repositories. Specifically, as they update data on USA Staffing IAAs in their manual records, they compare those data to Delphi records. OPM staff refer to this as a quality control process. However, this process is ad hoc and not formalized in documented procedures with specific steps for staff to identify inconsistencies between the IAA documents, manual records, and the official accounting record for each IAA.[36] OPM has not formalized this process because, according to OPM officials, they felt it was neither high risk nor complicated. However, by documenting clear procedures for ensuring IAA data are

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[35]In OPM's Account Manager Interagency Guide, there is reference to a 30-day timeframe in the frequently asked questions section, but the guidance does not clearly state how this timeframe applies to the task of entering IAA data into the Delphi system.

[36]According to the Treasury Financial Manual, agencies must consistently account for their intergovernmental transactions. U.S. Department of the Treasury, *Overall Intra-Governmental Transactions (IGT) Processes and General Information*, Treasury Financial Manual, Vol 1, Part 2, Chapter 4700, Appendix 5 (Washington, D.C., November 2023).

consistent, OPM can better eliminate the risk of decision makers using inaccurate information. After sharing our findings with OPM staff, they agreed that guidance to identify inconsistencies would be beneficial.

Having these documented procedures would help current and incoming staff understand their duties for managing quality IAA data, including making certain that such data are updated in a timely manner and are consistent across the three repositories. This would also help OPM ensure it is sharing quality information with those responsible for making decisions regarding USA Staffing.

Conclusions

Across the federal government, the hiring process is a long-standing human capital challenge. One way that agencies and offices can address this challenge is to use a talent acquisition system such as USA Staffing. For example, Interior, Treasury, and NASA each selected USA Staffing because they determined it could best meet their talent acquisition needs. At Treasury's IRS, Interior's NPS, and NASA human capital professionals and their supervisors reported overall satisfaction with the system. Additionally, supervisors supported USA Staffing users by addressing their feedback on the system and providing USA Staffing training resources. However, IRS and NPS did not routinely solicit human capital professionals' feedback on their USA Staffing training resources. By doing so, IRS and NPS would enhance their understanding of training participants' experiences and be better positioned to identify problems and improve training resources.

To support these agencies and offices, OPM is responsible for the administration and program management of USA Staffing. In its role, OPM ensures that personal information and data within the USA Staffing system is secure, provide customer support, and maintain the quality of USA Staffing IAA data. While our past work has identified some challenges OPM has had with fully implementing an effective information security program, OPM took steps to rectify weaknesses we identified during our audit and fully conducted a cybersecurity risk assessment for USA Staffing. However, while the USA Staffing program office provides customers with a variety of resources to support them, OPM does not have certain documented procedures to help its staff manage the quality of USA Staffing IAA data. Documented procedures would help current and incoming staff understand their duties for managing quality IAA data and help OPM ensure it is sharing quality information with those responsible for making decisions regarding USA Staffing.

Recommendations for Executive Action

We are making a total of five recommendations, including one to NPS, one to IRS, and three to OPM. Specifically:

The Secretary of the Interior should direct the Director of NPS to ensure that USA Staffing Program Managers at their agency routinely solicit and analyze training feedback from human capital professionals and use such information to improve training resources that address human capital professionals' needs. (Recommendation 1)

The Commissioner of Internal Revenue should direct the Human Capital Officer at IRS to ensure that USA Staffing Program Managers at their agency routinely solicit and analyze training feedback from human capital professionals and use such information to improve training resources that address human capital professionals' needs. (Recommendation 2)

The Director of OPM should ensure the Associate Director of OPM's Human Resources Solutions promotes the quality of USA Staffing IAA data by documenting roles and responsibilities of key personnel responsible for IAA data management in USA Staffing manual records. (Recommendation 3)

The Director of OPM should ensure the Associate Director of OPM's Human Resources Solutions promotes the quality of USA Staffing IAA data by documenting timeframes for recording IAA data in OPM's Delphi system and manual records. (Recommendation 4)

The Director of OPM should ensure the Associate Director of OPM's Human Resources Solutions promotes the quality of USA Staffing IAA data by documenting procedures to ensure IAA data housed in different repositories are consistent. (Recommendation 5)

Agency Comments

We provided a draft of this report to Interior, Treasury, NASA, and OPM for review and comment. We received written responses from Interior and OPM. In their written comments, reproduced in appendices II and III respectively, the agencies agreed with our recommendations and described actions they plan to take to implement them. OPM also provided technical comments, which we incorporated as appropriate. Treasury provided written comments via email and agreed with our recommendation. NASA had no comments.

We are sending copies of this report to the appropriate congressional committees, the Director of OPM, the Secretaries of the Interior and the Treasury, the Administrator of NASA, the Director of the NPS, and the Commissioner of the IRS. In addition, the report is available at no charge on the GAO website at https://www.gao.gov.

If you or your staff have any questions about this report, please contact Dawn G. Locke, (202) 512-6806 or LockeD@gao.gov for human capital issues and Jennifer R. Franks at (404) 679-1831 or FranksJ@gao.gov for cybersecurity issues. Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of our report. GAO staff who made key contributors to this report are listed in appendix IV.

Dawn G. Locke
Director, Strategic Issues

Jennifer R. Franks
Director, Information Technology and Cybersecurity

Table 1: USA Staffing Interagency Agreements during Fiscal Year 2022 and Customer Agencies and Offices

Agency with Fiscal Year 2022 USA Staffing Interagency Agreements	Agencies[a] and offices receiving USA Staffing through the Interagency Agreement
AmeriCorps	AmeriCorps
Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts	Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts
Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency	Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency
U.S. Department of Agriculture	Office of Human Resources Management
	Farm Production and Conservation Business Center
	Food and Nutrition Service
	Food Safety and Inspection Service
	Foreign Agricultural Service
	Marketing and Regulatory Programs
	Office of the General Counsel
	Office of Inspector General
	Office of the Chief Financial Officer
	Research, Education, and Economics
	Rural Development
	Forest Service
U.S. Department of Defense	Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service – Enterprise Agreement Oversight
	Defense Education Activity
	Defense Finance and Accounting Service
	Defense Logistics Agency
	Department of Air Force
	Department of Air Force Non-Appropriated Funds
	Department of the Army
	Department of the Army Non-Appropriated Funds
	Department of the Navy
	Department of the Navy Non-Appropriated Funds
	National Guard Bureau
	Washington Headquarters Service
U.S. Department of Energy	Bonneville Power Administration
	National Nuclear Security Administration
	Naval Reactors
	Oak Ridge Human Resources Shared Service Center
	Office of Corporate Executive Management
	Office of Inspector General
	Power Marketing Administration Shared Service Center

Agency with Fiscal Year 2022 USA Staffing Interagency Agreements	Agencies[a] and offices receiving USA Staffing through the Interagency Agreement
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
	Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
	Food and Drug Administration
	Health Resources and Services Administration
	Health and Human Services Administration
	Indian Health Service
	National Institutes of Health
	Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals
	Office of the Inspector General
	Staffing Recruitment and Operations Center
U.S. Department of Homeland Security	Citizenship and Immigration Services
	Customs and Border Protection
	Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency
	Cybersecurity Talent Management System
	Immigration and Customs Enforcement
	Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Office of the Principal Legal Advisor
	Joint Duty Program Office
	Office of Human Capital – Enterprise Agreement Oversight
	Office of Inspector General
	Transportation Security Administration

Agency with Fiscal Year 2022 USA Staffing Interagency Agreements	Agencies[a] and offices receiving USA Staffing through the Interagency Agreement
U.S. Department of the Interior	American Battle Monuments Commission[1]
	Bureau of Indian Affairs
	Bureau of Indian Education
	Bureau of Land Management
	Bureau of Reclamation
	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement
	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission[1]
	Export-Import Bank of the United States[1]
	Federal Election Commission[1]
	Federal Housing Finance Agency[1]
	Federal Labor Relations Authority[1]
	Federal Maritime Commission[1]
	Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service[1]
	Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board[1]
	Federal Trade Commission[1]
	Fish and Wildlife Service
	Institute of Museum and Library Services[1]
	Interior Business Center
	International Boundary and Water Commission[1]
	Millennium Challenge Corporation[1]
	National Archives and Records Administration[1]
	National Credit Union Administration[1]
	National Endowment for the Humanities[1]
	National Park Service
	National Transportation Safety Board[1]
	Office of Human Capital
	Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement
	U.S. Department of the Interior Office of the Inspector General
	Postal Regulatory Commission[1]
	Railroad Retirement Board[1]
	Small Business Administration[1]
	Small Business Administration, Disaster Assistance[1]
	Social Security Administration[1]
	Social Security Administration Office of Inspector General[1]
	Securities and Exchange Commission[1]
	Selective Service System[1]
	Supreme Court of the United States[1]
	Surface Transportation Board[1]
	U.S. International Development Finance Corporation[1]
	United States International Trade Commission[1]
	United States Geological Survey

Agency with Fiscal Year 2022 USA Staffing Interagency Agreements	Agencies[a] and offices receiving USA Staffing through the Interagency Agreement
U.S. Department of Justice	Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives
	Anti-Trust Division
	Criminal Division
	Drug Enforcement Administration
	Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys
	Federal Bureau of Investigation
	Headquarters Divisions (Executive Office for Immigration Review, Civil Rights Division, Civil Division, Tax Division, Office of the Inspector General, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Trustee Program, and Environment and Natural Resources Division)
	Justice Management Division – Enterprise Agreement Oversight
	U.S. Marshals Service
U.S. Department of Labor	U.S. Department of Labor
U.S. Department of the Treasury	Bureau of the Fiscal Service
	Financial Crimes Enforcement Network
	Housing and Urban Development Executive Resources[2]
	Internal Revenue Service
	National Institute of Standards and Technology[2]
	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration[2]
	Office of the Comptroller of the Currency
	Peace Corps[2]
	Special Inspector General for Pandemic Recovery
	U.S. Census Bureau[2]
	U.S. Department of Commerce Office of Inspector General[2]
	U.S. Department of the Treasury Departmental Offices
	U.S. Department of the Treasury Office of the Inspector General
	U.S. Department of Commerce Enterprise Services[2]
	U.S. Department of Commerce Executive Resources[2]
	U.S. Government Accountability Office[2]
	United States Agency for International Development[2]
	United States Patent and Trademark Office[2]
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs	National Cemetery Administration
	Veterans Affairs Central Office – Enterprise Agreement Oversight
	Veterans Benefits Administration
	Veterans Health Administration
Executive Office of the President	Executive Office of the President
Farm Credit Administration	Farm Credit Administration
General Services Administration	General Services Administration
Government Publishing Office	Government Publishing Office
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Agency with Fiscal Year 2022 USA Staffing Interagency Agreements	Agencies[a] and offices receiving USA Staffing through the Interagency Agreement
National Capital Planning Commission	National Capital Planning Commission
National Endowment for the Arts	National Endowment for the Arts
National Mediation Board	National Mediation Board
Office of Personnel Management	Office of Personnel Management
Pretrial Services Agency for the District of Columbia	Pretrial Services Agency for the District of Columbia
U.S. Agency for Global Media	U.S. Agency for Global Media
U.S. Capitol Police	U.S. Capitol Police
U.S. Sentencing Commission	U.S. Sentencing Commission
U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General	U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General

Source: GAO analysis of Office of Personnel Management data. I GAO-24-105738

[a]A variety of federal entities use USA Staffing, including various administrations, authorities, boards, bureaus, and commissions. For the purposes of this table, we refer to these types of federal entities as "agencies."

[1]These agencies and offices are not affiliated with the Department of the Interior, but Interior purchases USA Staffing licenses on their behalf.

[2]These agencies and offices are not affiliated with the Department of the Treasury, but Treasury purchases USA Staffing licenses on their behalf.

Appendix II: Comments from the Department of the Interior

United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

Ms. Dawn Locke
Director, Strategic Issues
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Director Locke:

Thank you for providing the Department of the Interior (Department) an opportunity to review and comment on the draft Government Accountability Office (GAO) report titled, "*USA Staffing System Supports Hiring Needs, but Actions Are Needed to Strengthen Program Management and Training*" (GAO-24-105738).

The Department concurs with the recommendation and below is a summary of the actions taken or planned by the Department to implement the recommendation.

Recommendation 1: The Secretary of the Interior should direct the Director of NPS to ensure that USA Staffing Program managers at their agency routinely solicit and analyze training feedback from human capital professionals and use such information to improve training resources that addresses human capital professionals' needs.

Response: Concur. The National Park Service (NPS) completed the initial stage of its Servicewide Human Resources (HR) consolidation on December 17, 2023. This HR consolidation realigned the seven Regional HR offices and the one Headquarters HR office into one HR Division. The HR Division will incorporate GAO's recommendation to "routinely solicit and analyze training feedback" on USAStaffing Training to ensure we are meeting HR Professional and USAStaffing Program Manager needs.

In fiscal year 2024, the HR Division is standing up its first ever internal HR Training team that will focus on providing training to NPS HR professionals on a wide array of topics that includes USAStaffing and Onboarding as well as USAStaffing Reporting. These trainings will be delivered using USAStaffing developed courses coupled with training developed by NPS Staffing Subject Matter Experts.

While the NPS is working to stand up its internal HR Training team, HR Professionals will continue to use available tools and training provided by USAStaffing. Supervisory HR staff will collaborate with HR Leadership to develop a mandatory training curriculum for all HR Professionals, a mechanism to update and record training taken, and a feedback tool designed to routinely solicit feedback that will be used to make enhancements to HR Staffing processes.

Responsible Official: Associate Director, Workforce and Inclusion, NPS

Target Date: September 2024

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Vera Washington, NPS Audit Liaison Officer, at vera_washington@nps.gov.

Sincerely,

Date: 2024.01.04
10:22:12 -05'00'

Shannon A. Estenoz
Assistant Secretary
 for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

Leah Nash
Assistant Director
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20548

Ms. Nash:

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to respond to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) draft report, "USA Staffing System Supports Hiring Needs, but Actions are Needed to Strengthen Program Management and Training," GAO-24-106738, #1185195.

Responses to your recommendations are provided below. In addition, our technical comments addressing the title of the report and its findings are provided as an attachment.

Recommendation #3: The Director of OPM should ensure that the Associate Director of OPM's Human Resources Solutions promotes the quality of USA Staffing IAA data by documenting roles and responsibilities of key personnel responsible for IAA data management in USA Staffing manual records.

Management Response:

We concur. HRS will ensure that USA Staffing's Standard Operating Procedures for managing Inter-Agency Agreements are updated to specify the role of the branch manager in updating the master spreadsheet.

Recommendation #4: The Director of OPM should ensure that the Associate Director of OPM's Human Resources Solutions promotes the quality of USA Staffing IAA data by documenting timeframes for recording IAA data in OPM's Delphi system and manual records.

Management Response:

We concur. HRS will ensure that USA Staffing's Standard Operating Procedures for managing Inter-Agency Agreements are updated to add timeframes.

Recommendation #5: The Director of OPM should ensure that the Associate Director of OPM's Human Resources Solutions promotes the quality of USA Staffing IAA data by documenting procedures to ensure IAA data housed in different repositories are consistent.

Management Response:

We concur. HRS will ensure that USA Staffing's Standard Operating Procedures for managing Inter-Agency Agreements are updated to specify the steps Account

Leah Nash   Page 2

Management Branch Managers should take to ensure IAA data housed in different
repositories are consistent.

I appreciate the opportunity to respond to this draft report. If you have any questions regarding
our response, please contact Dianna Saxman, 202-369-2955, and Dianna.Saxman@opm.gov.

Sincerely,

DIANNA
SAXMAN

Digitally signed by DIANNA
SAXMAN
Date: 2024.01.10 15:32:29
-05'00'

Dianna Saxman
Associate Director
HR Solutions
US Office of Personnel Management

Attachment: Technical Comments

Appendix IV: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contacts	Dawn G. Locke, (202) 512-6806 or LockeD@gao.gov; Jennifer R. Franks, (404) 679-1831 or FranksJ@gao.gov.
Staff Acknowledgments	In addition to the contacts named above, Jeffrey Knott (Assistant Director), Leah Q. Nash (Assistant Director), Regina Morrison (Analyst-in-Charge), Alexander Anderegg, Brandon Sanders, and Leanne V. Sullivan made key contributions to this report. Also contributing to this report were Michael Bechetti, Gina Hoover, Amy Konstas, Tyler Spunaugle, Ahsan Nasar, and Peter Verchinski.