



TECHNOLOGY AND THE BUSINESS OF GOVERNMENT

Agencies Insourcing Tech Jobs

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Federal agencies have largely been focusing on the potential for information technology-related work to be insourced back to federal employees, witnesses told a Senate subcommittee on Thursday.

At a hearing before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on the Federal Workforce, several witnesses testified on the progress of guidance issued by the Obama administration in July 2009 that called on agencies to conduct pilot insourcing programs focusing on one job field that potentially overrelies on contractors. More than half of the agencies identified acquisition and information technology organizations for their pilots, said Daniel Gordon, administrator for federal procurement policy at the Office of Management and Budget.

Jeffrey Neal, chief human capital officer at the Homeland Security Department, testified that his agency in April conducted a pilot that analyzed the work functions and examined whether there was sufficient internal workforce capacity in the Office of the Chief Information Officer. He said the analysis identified 158 contractor work-year equivalents to be converted to federal positions in fiscal 2010 and 2011 to ensure that the department maintains control of its mission and operations. Since April 30, the CIO's office has more than doubled its federal workforce from 91 to 208 full-time employees, creating a more balanced staff and a model for other offices and components to emulate, he added.

Chuck Grimes, deputy associate director for employee services at the Office of Personnel Management, testified that OPM has partnered with OMB to provide guidance and training to agency personnel with potential sourcing determinations and subsequent recruiting and hiring needs. One such tool is an online community of practice that responds to agency inquiries and provides appropriate resources, he said. "Effective management of a multi-sector workforce is fundamentally a workforce planning issue that must be carried out at the agency level," he said. "OPM can do - and has done - a great deal to assist and support agencies in developing the capacity to conduct the appropriate analyses on which 'right-sizing' depends."