

VA Office of Inspector General

OFFICE OF AUDITS AND EVALUATIONS



# Department of Veterans Affairs

*Review of Alleged  
System Duplication in the  
Virtual Office of Acquisition  
Software Development Project*

September 18, 2013  
12-02708-301

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

eCMS	Electronic Contract Management System
IT	Information Technology
OALC	Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OIT	Office of Information and Technology
PMAS	Project Management Accountability System
TAC	Technology Acquisition Center
VA	Veterans Affairs
VOA	Virtual Office of Acquisition

**To Report Suspected Wrongdoing in VA Programs and Operations:**

**Telephone: 1-800-488-8244**

**Email: [vaoighotline@va.gov](mailto:vaoighotline@va.gov)**

**(Hotline Information: [www.va.gov/oig/hotline](http://www.va.gov/oig/hotline))**



# Report Highlights: Review of Alleged System Duplication in VA's VOA Software Development Project

## Why We Did This Review

In February 2012, we received an anonymous Hotline allegation that the Virtual Office of Acquisition (VOA) software development project was not managed under VA's Project Management Accountability System (PMAS) control and oversight. The complainant also alleged the VOA project was unnecessary because VA already owned a system that met 95 percent of VOA's requirements. We conducted this review to assess the merits of the allegations.

## What We Found

We substantiated the allegation that the VOA software development project was not managed under PMAS. Technology Acquisition Center (TAC) officials believed that because the Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction (OALC) was managing VOA development, the project did not need PMAS oversight provided by VA's Office of Information and Technology (OIT). As such, the software development project was not centrally evaluated to ensure it would support the best mix of projects to minimize duplication and maximize VA's investment in information technology.

We partially substantiated the allegation that VOA development was unnecessary. We found VA owned the Electronic Contact Management System (eCMS) OALC's mandatory contract management system, which VOA functionality partially duplicated. The TAC did not develop a business case, as required under PMAS.

Submitting a business case under PMAS could have minimized duplication and maximized VA's investment. By developing duplicative eCMS functionality, VA potentially incurred unnecessary costs of approximately \$13 million.

## What We Recommended

We recommended the Principal Executive Director for OALC implement controls to ensure that all future software developments fall under PMAS control and require the TAC to submit a business case justifying how the costs associated with duplicative system requirements and future system maintenance will be managed moving forward.

## Agency Comments

The Principal Executive Director for OALC concurred with our recommendations and provided acceptable corrective action plans. However, he disagreed with our allegation findings. We now consider our recommendations closed.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda A. Halliday".

LINDA A. HALLIDAY  
Assistant Inspector General  
for Audits and Evaluations

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Results and Recommendations .....	2
Allegation 1    VOA Software Development Was Not Managed Under PMAS .....	2
Recommendation.....	3
Allegation 2    The Need for VOA Software Was Questionable .....	4
Recommendation.....	6
Appendix A    Background .....	7
Appendix B    Scope and Methodology.....	9
Appendix C    Potential Monetary Benefits in Accordance With Inspector General Act Amendments .....	10
Appendix D    Principal Executive Director for the Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction Comments .....	11
Appendix E    Office of Inspector General Contact and Staff Acknowledgments.....	16
Appendix F    Report Distribution .....	17

## INTRODUCTION

### **Objective**

On February 6, 2012, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) received an anonymous allegation that the Virtual Office of Acquisition (VOA) software development project was not being managed under the Project Management Accountability System (PMAS). The complainant also alleged the VOA project was unnecessary because VA already owned a system that met 95 percent of VOA's requirements. We conducted this review to assess the merits of the allegations.

### **Background**

VOA is a suite of electronic contracting applications designed to support users with the procurement process. It is a Web-based portal that hosts a variety of acquisition life-cycle applications needed to fill gaps in existing business processes, facilitate customer development of requirements packages, reduce acquisition life-cycle time, support complex and high-dollar acquisitions, and improve the quality of procurements through collaboration and oversight. VOA has been deployed and is in the sustainment phase. Ongoing development is focused on enhancing system capabilities.

The anonymous complainant alleged that VOA duplicated functionality of the Electronic Contract Management System (eCMS)—VA's enterprise system of record for contract management. eCMS is a Web-based enterprise contract writing and management system that supports contracting officers in the contract acquisition process. Information Letter 049-07-06, June 15, 2007, implemented and mandated use of eCMS VA-wide. Further, the Procurement Policy Memorandum, *Mandatory Usage of VA's Electronic Contract Management System*, June 15, 2012, clarified the Information Letter and mandated eCMS use for managing all VA procurements valued above the micro-purchase threshold of \$3,000.

VA's Office of Information Technology (OIT) developed PMAS—a project management discipline—to increase the success rate of information technology (IT) development projects at VA. OIT designed PMAS to reduce risks; to ensure monitoring, controlling, and reporting; and to establish accountability in system development. In June 2009, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs mandated the use of PMAS for all IT development projects VA-wide.

### **Other Information**

- Appendix A provides background information.
- Appendix B provides details on our scope and methodology.
- Appendix C provides details on potential monetary benefits.
- Appendix D provides management comments on this report.

## RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Allegation 1 VOA Software Development Was Not Managed Under PMAS

We substantiated the allegation that the VOA software development project was not managed under PMAS. Technology Acquisition Center (TAC) officials believed that because the Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction (OALC) was managing VOA development, the project did not need PMAS oversight provided by VA's Office of Information and Technology (OIT). As such, the software development project was not centrally evaluated to ensure it would support the best mix of projects to minimize duplication and maximize VA's investment in information technology.

#### **PMAS Requirements**

OIT's *PMAS Guide* states that all VA IT projects introducing new functionality or enhancing existing system capabilities are product delivery projects. Consequently, all development projects and those infrastructure projects that provide new capability fall under the management discipline of PMAS. In June 2009, the Secretary of VA mandated the use of PMAS for all VA IT development projects VA-wide. The Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary also stated that TAC officials should have managed VOA under PMAS because it provided new capability.

To clarify this issue, VA published VA Directive 6071, *Project Management Accountability System*, on February 20, 2013. The directive requires the use of PMAS for all IT development projects with total life-cycle costs greater than \$250,000, whether funded by the IT appropriation or any other appropriation. According to OALC's FY 2011-13 Initiative Operating Plan, life cycle costs for VOA were estimated at \$8 million for FY 2011 through FY 2015.

#### **PMAS Oversight Deemed Unnecessary**

Despite these requirements, TAC officials told us that they believed the *PMAS Guide* allowed for exceptions by stating that OIT qualifying projects must follow PMAS procedures. TAC officials developed VOA using the Supply Fund. The Supply Fund supports VA's mission by the operation and maintenance of a supply system, including procurement of supplies, equipment, and personal services and repair and reclamation of used, spent, or excess personal property. Using the Supply Fund, two contracts—dated October 2009 and April 2012, and associated task orders—dated as recently as May of 2013—were awarded for VOA development with a total contract value of approximately \$13 million. TAC officials further stated that because OALC managed VOA development, it was not subject to PMAS.

#### **Conclusion**

Based on PMAS criteria and the direction of the VA Secretary, the reasons TAC officials cited for not managing VOA development under PMAS were

incorrect. By not managing VOA under PMAS, OIT officials could not fully evaluate the feasibility, cost, and capabilities associated with modifying eCMS to meet requirements TAC elected to fulfill through VOA. In addition, the system was not subject to the disciplines that PMAS was designed to provide—risk management, monitoring, oversight and control, reporting, and accountability.

## Recommendation

1. We recommended the Principal Executive Director for the Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction implement controls to ensure the Virtual Office of Acquisition project and all future information technology development fall within the control and oversight of the Project Management Accountability System.

### Management Comments

The Principal Executive Director for OALC concurred with our recommendation but not with our finding for Allegation 1. The Principal Executive Director asserted that our characterization of PMAS as an actionable framework for IT project management contradicted findings in our prior report, *Audit of VA's Project Management Accountability System Implementation*, Report No. 10-03162-262, August 29, 2011. He also said that the applicability of PMAS to non-IT funds was not clarified in PMAS guidance until VOA development was nearing completion. It was OALC's position that at the time of initial development, VOA was not subject to PMAS because the project was not paid for using IT funds. The Principal Executive Director stated that with promulgation of the clarifying guidance, OALC is now actively participating in the PMAS process.

### OIG Response

We disagree with the Principal Executive Director's comments and continue in our position that all VA IT projects introducing new functionality have been subject to the management discipline of PMAS since its inception, regardless of how the projects were funded. VA did not publish VA Directive 6071, *Project Management Accountability System*, until February 20, 2013. However, the Secretary of VA mandated the use of PMAS for all VA IT development projects Department-wide in June 2009.

Further, our August 2011 report does not provide a basis for not using PMAS to manage IT development projects. Rather, the report was intended to provide an evaluation of PMAS effectiveness and offer recommendations for strengthening its project management capabilities. Despite our differing perspectives, we appreciate the Principal Executive Director's concurrence with our recommendation and find the corrective action plan acceptable. We now consider this recommendation closed.

## **Allegation 2 The Need for VOA Software Was Questionable**

We partially substantiated the allegation that VOA development was unnecessary. We found VA owned the Electronic Contract Management System (eCMS) OALC's mandatory contract management system, which VOA functionality partially duplicated. The TAC did not develop a business case as required under PMAS. Instead TAC officials briefed the Principal Executive Director and subsequently included VOA in OALC's FY 2011-13 Initiative Operating Plan. Submitting a business case and following the PMAS process could have minimized duplication and maximized VA's investment. We determined that by developing duplicative eCMS functionality, VA potentially incurred unnecessary costs of approximately \$13 million.

### ***Duplication Between VOA and eCMS***

Duplication exists between eCMS and VOA. For example:

- The eCMS Vendor Portal and the VOA Proposal Dashboard provide vendors with a similar vehicle for uploading their proposals. Further, in both eCMS and VOA, officials can provide geographically disbursed evaluation teams with access to the information they need to evaluate acquisition proposals.
- Both eCMS and VOA have modules where customers enter acquisition requirements. The Planning Module for eCMS and the Customer Acquisition Portal for VOA provide similar functionality. However, in comparison with VOA, eCMS has limited capabilities related to pre-award tracking and traceability, uploading documents, collecting data elements required by TAC, and providing a vehicle for customers and contracting officials to review and revise requirements documents.
- The VOA Customer Acquisition Portal provides customers and acquisition professionals with the ability to generate, capture, review, revise, track, and manage acquisition requirement packages. Customers and acquisition professionals have instant access to data and status on each requirement package by logging onto this portal. TAC acquisition professionals can also provide additional feedback to customers through a requirement review tab on the portal. Officials at eCMS are currently working to enhance the eCMS Planning Module to include some of these features. They plan to deploy the enhanced module during the first quarter of FY 2014.
- The eCMS Vendor Portal and VOA's Acquisition Task Order Management System both support restricted solicitations for multiple award indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity contracts and submission of vendor responses. However, according to TAC officials, eCMS currently does not provide all of the functionality they require. While both

programs have the ability to post solicitations to select vendors, only VOA's Acquisition Task Order Management System provides vendors and contracting officers with comprehensive information grouped by indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity contracts.

We identified some VOA requirements that eCMS did not address. For example, TAC developed the Major Initiative Tracker, a module of VOA, to be the authoritative data source for tracking all acquisitions under VA's 16 major initiatives. The Tracker provides VA's senior leaders with 25 customized reports on major initiatives. Currently, eCMS lacks the ability to track VA's 16 major initiatives. The eCMS also does not have the capability to allow users to group all contracts under major initiatives or to view information on each initiative.

**PMAS  
Oversight  
Could Have  
Avoided  
Duplication**

If VOA had been managed under PMAS, VA could have determined if all of its functionality might have been included, or provided at a lower cost, by modifying eCMS to meet the mission need. This would have precluded pursuing a separate and duplicative VOA system at additional expense. Under PMAS, the business sponsor or customer identifies high-level project requirements and makes the business case for a project to exist.

According to the *PMAS Guide*, OIT initially establishes its IT programs and projects during the annual multi-year programming and budget formulation process. OIT creates its Budget Operating Plan by working closely with the administrations and staff offices to establish business and IT priorities. OIT applies funding and staff resources to the projects from the highest to the lowest priority in the Budget Operating Plan. Following this process allows OIT, the administrations, and staff offices to ensure that VA's portfolio of IT projects provides the best mix of projects for minimizing duplication and maximizing VA's investment in IT.

**Conclusion**

We partially substantiated the allegation that VOA development was unnecessary. VA owns eCMS, a VA Secretary-mandated system, which VOA functionality duplicated. Moving forward, VA is incurring sustainment costs for two similar contract management systems.

Because VOA development was managed under OALC and independent from PMAS, VA was unable to benefit from the role PMAS could play in helping to identify business requirements and priorities and how best to meet them through IT investments that minimize duplication. We determined VA potentially incurred unnecessary costs of approximately \$13 million by independently developing VOA with duplicative eCMS functionality and by not managing the effort under PMAS.

## Recommendation

2. We recommended the Principal Executive Director for the Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction ensure the Technology Acquisition Center submits a business case to the Office of Information and Technology justifying how the costs associated with duplicative system requirements and future system maintenance will be managed moving forward.

### **Management Comments**

The Principal Executive Director for OALC concurred with our recommendation but not with our finding for Allegation 2. The Principal Executive Director indicated that VOA and eCMS serve different purposes and, as such, have different functionalities. In addition, he stated that while some functions are duplicative, they were put into VOA to offset significant weaknesses in eCMS. The Principal Executive Director nonetheless indicated that OALC will comply with all PMAS policies. He concluded that with VOA transitioning to sustainment, the system was moving beyond the scope of PMAS, which focuses on new software development projects. Further, the Principal Executive Director has commissioned a more thorough review of the VOA to identify if opportunities exist to integrate its capabilities into other existing systems.

### **OIG Response**

We stand by our conclusion that had OALC managed VOA under PMAS, VA would have been in a better position to determine whether it was more advantageous to develop VOA separately, or modify existing eCMS functionality. Further, in the absence of a business case, neither OALC nor the OIG can clearly substantiate the need for VOA as a separate software development initiative. Determining how best to meet VA requirements and priorities, through an optimal mix of IT investments, is one of the critical roles PMAS plays. Despite our differing viewpoints, we appreciate the Principal Executive Director's concurrence with our recommendation and find the corrective action plan acceptable. We now consider this recommendation closed.

## Appendix A Background

### VOA

VOA is a suite of electronic contracting applications designed to support the procurement process. VOA is a Web-based portal that hosts a variety of acquisition life-cycle applications developed to fill gaps in existing business processes, facilitate customer development of requirements packages, reduce acquisition life-cycle time, support complex and high-dollar acquisitions, and improve the quality of procurements through collaboration and oversight. The following VA organizations use VOA:

- Acquisition Service—Frederick, MD and Washington, DC
- Technology Acquisition Center—Eatontown, NJ and Austin, TX
- Strategic Acquisition Center—Fredericksburg, VA

### eCMS

VA's eCMS is a Web-based enterprise contract writing and management system of record for contract management that contracting officers use to:

- Create solicitations and transmit electronic postings to the Federal Business Opportunities Web site.
- Create contract and task order documents.
- Store solicitations, vendor responses, and contract and task order documentation in a centralized electronic repository.

eCMS electronically centralizes VA's contract management information and official contract files to support oversight, accountability, and management responsibilities for acquisition business processes across VA's entire acquisition life cycle. It also supports Federal Acquisition Regulation requirements, including planning, pre-award, award, and post-award requirements.

VA Information Letter *Implementation and Mandated use of VA's Electronic Contract Management System* (IL 049-07-06, June 15, 2007) implemented and mandated the use of eCMS across VA. For those who have been trained and received eCMS production documents, all actions pertaining to procurements over \$25,000 are required to be created and maintained within eCMS, using the document generation feature and other capabilities available within the system. All other actions in the amount of \$25,000 and above are required to be recorded in eCMS. Procurement Policy Memorandum, *Mandatory Usage of VA's Electronic Contract Management System*, June 15, 2012, clarified the Information Letter and mandated the use of eCMS to manage all VA procurements valued above the micro-purchase threshold of \$3,000.

### PMAS

OIT developed PMAS—a project management discipline—to increase the success rate of IT development projects at VA. PMAS was designed to

reduce risks; to ensure monitoring, controlling, and reporting; and to establish accountability in system development. In June 2009, the Secretary of VA mandated the use of PMAS for all VA IT development projects VA-wide.

## Appendix B Scope and Methodology

We conducted our review work from April 2012 to January 2013. To assess whether TAC should have managed the development of VOA under PMAS, we interviewed the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Information and Technology and senior TAC officials. In addition, we reviewed VA guidance concerning the applicability of PMAS.

To evaluate whether TAC's requirements for VOA already existed in eCMS, we met with VA acquisition officials who provided us with a demonstration of eCMS and its capabilities at the VA Acquisition Academy in Frederick, MD. We received a similar demonstration of VOA and its capabilities from TAC officials in Eatontown, NJ. We also interviewed both TAC and eCMS officials concerning eCMS and VOA capabilities and reviewed additional documentation such as software users' manuals to identify areas of duplication.

### **Data Reliability**

We did not rely on computer-processed data to address our review objective. Accordingly, we did not assess the reliability of computer-processed data.

### **Government Standards**

We conducted our review in accordance with the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency's *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation*.

**Appendix C Potential Monetary Benefits in Accordance With Inspector General Act Amendments**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Explanation of Benefits</b>	<b>Better Use of Funds in Millions of Dollars</b>	<b>Questioned Costs in Millions of Dollars</b>
2	VA potentially incurred unnecessary costs by independently developing VOA with duplicative eCMS functionality and by not managing the effort under PMAS.	\$13	\$0
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$13</b>	<b>\$0</b>

*Note: The actual amount awarded for the VOA development effort was \$12,973,195.50, which we rounded to \$13 million.*

## Appendix D Principal Executive Director for the Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction Comments

### Department of Veterans Affairs

### Memorandum

**Date:** August 30, 2013

**From:** Principal Executive Director, Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction (003)

**Subj:** Draft Report, Review of Management of the Virtual Office of Acquisition Software Development Project, Project No. 2012-02708-R6-0161 (VAIQ 7385558)

**To:** Assistant Inspector General for Audits and Evaluations (52)

1. The Office of Acquisitions, Logistics, and Construction (OALC) appreciates the opportunity to review the subject draft report. OALC does not concur with the allegation findings and provides detailed comments in the attachment.
2. Generally, OALC has concerns with the information presented which characterized PMAS as a mature, accepted, actionable framework. As indicated in OIG report 10-03162-262, Audit of the Project Management System Implementation, published August 29, 2011, at the time the Secretary of VA announces VOA, PMAS was a "vision" rather than a fully developed methodology for managing IT development projects. As the PMAS policy has been formally promulgated, OALC has, and will continue, to actively participate as required and as demonstrated by our current participation in the process.
3. OALC does, however, concur with the report's resulting recommendations, and provides the following responses.

**Recommendation 1:** We recommend the Principal Executive Director for the Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction implement controls to ensure the Virtual Office of Acquisition project and all future information technology development fall within the control and oversight of the Project Management Accountability System.

**OALC Response:** Concur. As PMAS policy has been formally promulgated, OALC has and will continue to actively participate in the PMAS process as demonstrated by successful evaluation and approval to proceed of another OALC IT development project (e.g., TRIRIGA, a commercial construction project management software product). OALC believes that existing controls are adequate.

OALC requests closure of this recommendation.

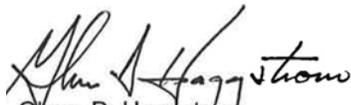
**Recommendation 2:** We recommend the Principal Executive Director for the Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction ensure the Technology Acquisition Center submits a business case to the Office of Information and Technology justifying how the costs associated with duplicative system requirements and future system maintenance will be managed moving forward.

**OALC Response:** Concur. OALC has followed and will comply with all applicable PMAS policies. At this time, with VOA transitioning to sustainment, the system falls out of the scope of the PMAS framework, which focuses on new IT projects. OALC will continue to coordinate with OIT as required moving forward.

OALC requests closure of this recommendation.

Lastly, while OALC does not believe that the findings in the report regarding “duplicity” and “unnecessary costs” are substantiated, OALC takes these claims seriously. Although not recommended by the OIG, I have directed a more thorough review of the system to identify if viable opportunities exist to integrate VOA capabilities into other existing systems.

Should you have questions regarding this submission, please contact Andrew Salunga at (202) 632-5337, or at [andrew.salunga@va.gov](mailto:andrew.salunga@va.gov).

  
Glenn D. Haggstrom

Attachment

**Attachment**

**OALC Comments on Findings of Allegations 1 and 2, OIG Draft Report, Review of Management of the Virtual Office of Acquisition Software Development Project, Project No. 2012-02708-R6-0161 (VAIQ 7385558)**

**Allegation 1: The VOA software development project was not managed under PMAS.**

**OIG Findings:** The OIG findings for Allegation 1 indicated OIG believed that they substantiated that VOA's software development and the TAC's management thereof, was not managed under PMAS. OIG findings stated that "We substantiated the allegation that TAC officials did not manage the VOA software development project under PMAS." Further OIG findings stated, "As such, the software development project was not centrally evaluated to ensure it would support the best mix of projects to minimize duplication and maximize VA's investment in information technology."

**OALC Response:** OALC does not concur with the OIG assessment of those findings. OIG supported their findings on the assertion that "In June 2009, the Secretary of VA mandated the use of PMAS for all VA IT development projects VA-wide." However, this contradicts the findings, as stated in OIG's report 10-03162-262, *Audit of VA's Project Management Accountability System Implementation*, dated Aug 2011: "When the Secretary of Veterans Affairs announced PMAS on June 19, 2009, it was in the preliminary stages of development. It was primarily the Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology's vision rather than a fully developed methodology for managing IT development projects." Further, the OIG report substantiated that OIT did not publish an initial implementation guide until March 29, 2010.

Based on OALC's review of the PMAS Guide in place at the time that VOA was initiated and discussion with Office of Information and Technology (OIT) PMAS subject matter experts, the guide was silent with regards to management of IT projects using non-IT funds, in addition to OIT's practice to not accept non-IT funded actions under PMAS governance. The applicability of PMAS to non-IT funded actions was not clarified until the release of the PMAS Guide Version 4.0, dated November 7, 2012, at which point the development phase of VOA was approaching completion. Further, OIT staff had indicated that currently the PMAS governance structure for non-IT funded actions is only now being stood up and is not yet fully in place. Based on the timeline of the PMAS policy implementation, 2 years after the VOA started, and the fact that VOA is a non-IT funded project, it is OALC's position that at the time of its initial development, VOA was not subject to PMAS.

However, the fact that PMAS was not available for management/oversight of the VOA development does not mean that VOA did not have appropriate oversight. OALC's Office of Acquisition Operations followed a rigorous process to receive the OALC approval and management of the VOA project, with processes and deliverables similar to PMAS guidelines, such as 6-month incremental releases, risk management assessments, associated development and management artifacts, and monthly progress status reports. Under PMAS, customer-facing capabilities/functionality must be delivered in 6-month increments. VOA functionality was delivered with faster results than PMAS requires. The average period of performance per task order was 174 days, with the average time for the first deliverable was 34 days, and the average

time for the last delivery from date of award was 95 days. This clearly demonstrates that VOA development far exceeded PMAS delivery expectations.

OALC fully documented its management oversight from 2008 through 2013 and obtained approvals from the Office of Acquisition and Logistics (OAL), and OIT senior leadership regarding the initiation and progress of VOA implementation through sustainment. In addition, OALC, OAL, and OIT recently granted approval to OAO for sustainment and enhancements of VOA in fiscal year (FY) 2013.

**Allegation 2: VOA development was unnecessary.**

**OIG Findings:** The OIG findings for Allegation 2 partially substantiated that the need for VOA software was questionable. OIG's findings stated that "We partially substantiated the allegation that VOA development was unnecessary."

**OALC Response:** VOA and the Electronic Contract Management System (eCMS) serve different purposes and as such, have different functionalities. While some functions are now duplicative, the functions were put into VOA to offset significant weaknesses in eCMS. In general, the eCMS is a contract management system whose primary function is to generate federal contract documents based on requirements documents added by the customer. The VOA is a requirements submission, refinement, tracking, and reporting system that provides essential collaboration capabilities to the customer and the contracting team to help track and refine requirements documents prior to them being ready for submission to eCMS. While some basic capabilities are common as noted above, VOA was developed as a complementary system to the eCMS, to help develop and finalize customer requirements and track items in the early stages. The VOA serves as a "feeder" system to eCMS. Further, the VOA fulfills many of the pre-solicitation and reporting needs eCMS was not designed to meet.

OALC provided a significant amount of data during the investigation regarding the individual functionality of VOA, in comparison to CMS. While the report concluded that the systems were functionally similar, the report does not provide specific capability mapping of the two systems to identify quantifiable duplication. Without providing specifics as to the actual duplication of functionality at the time of VOA development, it is unclear how the report could substantiate that the need for VOA was unnecessary.

Instead of providing a comparison of functionality, the report showed four high-level examples of similar capabilities. While OALC agrees that these examples indicate similar system capabilities, they do not support the allegation that VOA development was unnecessary. In fact, three of them speak to the fact the eCMS does not provide adequate functionality. Of more concern as to the assessment VOA duplicated eCMS functionality is the fact that one example states VOA has functionality which eCMS is currently seeking to duplicate: "Officials at eCMS are currently working to enhance the eCMS Planning Module function to include some of these features." Another example in the report implies that eCMS will be modified to create functionality currently in the VOA: "However...eCMS currently does not provide all the functionality" required by the TAC."

The report also fails to address the major functionality gaps in eCMS that existed at the time VOA was approved, funded, and, developed.

Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction

August 2013

## **Appendix E Office of Inspector General Contact and Staff Acknowledgments**

---

OIG Contact	For more information about this report, please contact the Office of Inspector General at (202) 461-4720.
-------------	---

---

Acknowledgments	Mario M. Carbone, Director Jehri Lawson Theresa Lospinoso Kristin Nichols
-----------------	--

## **Appendix F Report Distribution**

### **VA Distribution**

Office of the Secretary  
Veterans Health Administration  
Veterans Benefits Administration  
National Cemetery Administration  
Assistant Secretaries  
Office of General Counsel

### **Non-VA Distribution**

House Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans  
Affairs, and Related Agencies  
House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform  
Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans  
Affairs, and Related Agencies  
Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
National Veterans Service Organizations  
Government Accountability Office  
Office of Management and Budget

This report is available on our Web site at [www.va.gov/oig](http://www.va.gov/oig).