

Report Summary

Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General

July 2011



Objective

To evaluate the Social Security Administration's (SSA) long-term customer service delivery planning.

Background

In an April 14, 2011 letter, Congressman Sam Johnson asked that we review SSA's long-term customer service delivery planning.

To view the full report, visit <http://www.ssa.gov/oig/ADO/BEPDF/A-07-11-01125.pdf>

Congressional Response Report: The Social Security Administration's Customer Service Delivery Plan (A-07-11-01125)

Our Findings

SSA does not have a long-term (10 years or longer) customer service delivery plan. Instead, SSA uses its Agency Strategic Plan (ASP) to present the incremental steps it must take to reach a greater vision for the Agency. The ASP describes the goals and milestones of mostly short- and mid-range (3 to 5 years) initiatives, but does not prepare SSA for customer service demands in the long term.

On April 27, 2011, the President issued Executive Order 13571 (*Streamlining Service Delivery and Improving Customer Service*). The Executive Order requires that Federal agencies, within 180 days of the Executive Order, develop ". . . a Customer Service Plan to address how the agency will provide services in a manner that seeks to streamline service delivery and improve the experience of its customers." On June 13, 2011, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued guidance to Executive agencies on how to implement the Executive Order. OMB's guidance does not specifically address whether the plan should have a short-term or long-term focus.

SSA must develop a long-term customer service delivery plan that prepares it for increased workloads and service delivery in an electronic environment. The plan must outline what the service delivery environment will be long-term, including what services customers will expect and how they will want services delivered. The plan must be a roadmap that ensures the Agency is technologically and structurally prepared with appropriate staff to operate its programs in the future. In addition, the plan must have timelines and performance metrics to ensure SSA achieves its goals.

We identified issues that SSA should address when developing a long-term customer service delivery plan. We also provided best practices from government and private industry that SSA should consider when developing a long-term plan.

In commenting on our draft report, the Agency agreed that a long-term customer service delivery plan is needed. The Agency further stated that it will develop a long-term plan.