

Government Accountability and Transparency Board

A meeting of the Government Accountability and Transparency Board (GAT Board) was held at the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board (Recovery Board) office in Washington, D.C., on Thursday, July 28, 2011, at 8:30 a.m. and continued until 9:40 a.m..

ATTENDEES

GAT Board Members:

Earl E. Devaney, Interim Chairman, GAT Board, and Chairman, Recovery Board
Ashton B. Carter, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, U.S. Department of Defense
Allison C. Lerner, Inspector General, National Science Foundation
Ellen Murray, Assistant Secretary for Financial Resources and Chief Financial Officer, Department of Health and Human Services
Calvin L. Scovel III, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Transportation
Kathleen S. Tighe, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Education
Daniel I. Werfel, Controller, Office of Management and Budget
David C. Williams, Inspector General, U.S. Postal Service
Neal S. Wolin, Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, U.S. Department of the Treasury

Agency Staff:

Ross Bezark, Executive Director, GAT Board, and Chief of Staff, Recovery Board
Jennifer Dure, General Counsel, Recovery Board
Ed Pound, Director, Communications, Recovery Board
Dan Tangherlini, Chief Financial Officer, U.S. Department of the Treasury
Cynthia Williams, Board Secretary, Recovery Board
Michael Wood, Executive Director, Recovery Board

Discussion:

Chairman Devaney opened the meeting by welcoming the members of the GAT Board. He provided an overview of the Recovery Board, including its composition, structure, and method of establishment. Chairman Devaney introduced members of the Recovery Board staff and briefly described their support roles for the GAT Board. The members were informed that Ross Bezark, Chief of Staff of the Recovery Board, would serve as Executive Director to the GAT Board. In this role, Mr. Bezark will be the primary point of contact for the GAT Board members.

Chairman Devaney discussed his role as interim Chairman of the GAT Board and key items regarding the GAT Board's purpose, strategic direction, and its role and responsibilities. The members reviewed the draft bylaws, governance guidelines, and mission statement. There was significant discussion regarding meeting attendance and the role and responsibilities of designated member proxies. Three amendments to the draft bylaws were discussed and adopted. These include the designation of proxies, the selection of a Vice Chair, and the method and process for publicizing meeting minutes.

The members engaged in a discussion of the GAT Board's mission. Chairman Devaney noted that the proposed mission statement was taken from language included in the President's

Executive Order that established the GAT Board. The members agreed to adopt the mission statement as proposed.

There was a discussion of the GAT Board's reporting requirement set forth in the Executive Order. Chairman Devaney discussed several Recovery Board initiatives that could be used as a framework for the report due December 2011. Among these is a feasibility study that would identify ways to harmonize data across the entire federal government and study the impact of those methods on the agencies involved. The members engaged in an in-depth discussion of this item, noting the work underway on the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Do Not Pay Initiative and other parallel projects. Mr. Werfel commented that the remedy for unstructured data may exist in agency data standardization and/or a technology-based solution. He also noted that a key factor may be determining the proper sequencing of the solution. The members reviewed a visual representation of the high-level accountability process flow deployed at the Recovery Board along with a depiction of the current government-wide central support reporting systems. Chairman Devaney proposed that the feasibility study results be presented to the GAT Board at a future meeting.

Mr. Werfel initiated a discussion regarding the lessons learned from Recovery Board pilot projects. He noted the successes of several pilot projects between the Recovery Operations Center and various agencies and Inspector General Offices. There was an in-depth discussion on the best practice for creating an effective platform for government-wide data display and data collection. Chairman Devaney provided the members with a handout identifying the key lessons learned by the Recovery Board, segmented into three categories – data, transparency, and accountability. Most members generally agreed that many of the lessons learned and the practices implemented by the Recovery Board are applicable to the entire federal government. Ms. Tighe commented that the work by the Recovery Board provides a good foundation for a very vibrant solution to government-wide accountability and transparency.

Chairman Devaney informed the members that future meetings will include various briefings on Recovery Board processes and initiatives. He noted that the next meeting will focus on data collection.

The next meeting of the GAT Board is scheduled for 9 a.m. on August 18, 2011.

Cynthia Williams
Secretary