

**DEPARTMENT OF STATE**  
**Testimony of Frontis B. Wiggins**  
**Chief Information Officer**  
**Bureau of Information Resource Management**  
**before the**  
**House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform**  
**Subcommittees on Information Technology and Government Operations**  
**United States House of Representatives**  
**December 6, 2016**

Chairmen Hurd and Meadows, Ranking Members Kelly and Connolly, and distinguished members, thank you for inviting me to testify before the committee about the Department of State's progress on its Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act (FITARA) implementation.

I want to start by expressing my appreciation for the legislation. FITARA reinforces the Department's longstanding efforts to be collaborative, transparent, and forward thinking in how we use and acquire information technology (IT). These focus areas are central to how the Department manages IT as a whole.

Today, I would like to share with you how the Department approaches IT management and some recent successes. We will continue our success with the right processes, people, and tools in place – all of which are well aligned with FITARA's provisions. However, we recognize that more can be done and we will build on these successes and apply lessons learned to overall IT management

Over the past five months in my new role as CIO, I am working to strengthen the established relationships with my peers in Acquisitions, Human Resources, and Budget and Planning. My focus has been on frequent and open communication, collaboration, and transparency. This approach to IT management helps us address the realities we face with fast-moving technology, risks from cyber threats, and the ongoing need to use our funding wisely.

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Like all agencies, we must tailor our IT to best meet our mission needs. We have a distinctive global, foreign affairs mission, which is reflected in the Department's organizational structure. Within this environment, we mapped out an approach to FITARA implementation that works best for us.

We work in a global environment, in places no other civilian agencies operate, including areas with limited access to internet. We maintain hundreds of applications and provide around-the-clock IT services, domestically and abroad. We serve 275 posts worldwide, including 24 federal agencies under Chief of Mission authority. More than 100,000 computers throughout the world are connected to our networks, and 38,000 mobile devices allow on-demand communications for users globally. We drive the Department's IT programs and resources, and maximize value to users who are increasingly mobile.

We also have numerous new federal IT requirements, FITARA being chief among them. I am pleased to talk with you about our implementation efforts today.

**OUR IT STRATEGIC PLAN'S ALIGNMENT WITH FITARA**

We just completed our IT Strategic Plan for fiscal years (FY) 2017 to 2019. We drafted the plan collaboratively – with leaders from throughout the Department. This collaboration is not insignificant. It is the foundation for our approach to IT management.

We structured the strategic plan into three goals, all with close ties to FITARA implementation. The first goal is to deliver advanced capabilities to foster collaboration, knowledge management, and analytics. The second goal is to provide a robust and secure IT infrastructure that supports on-demand access to information. And the third goal is to advance business management practices to transform service delivery. Since approving this strategic plan, we have launched several additional initiatives to help us strengthen our FITARA efforts.

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## **FITARA IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS**

As I mentioned earlier, our achievements in FITARA implementation and overall IT management are propelled by having the right processes, people, and tools in place. Our early progress in FITARA implementation aligns well in those areas. For example, we have increased input during budget formulation, launched a customer-centric and collaborative process for cloud adoption, planned for the future IT workforce, enhanced cybersecurity, and focused on data center optimization.

### ***Processes: IT Management, Acquisitions, and Budgeting***

Our first step to FITARA implementation involved close coordination between the CIO's office and the Bureau of Budget and Planning. We consciously focused on this first because it provides the foundation for budget execution and acquisitions processes.

I am proud to highlight that we have made significant progress in intertwining the budgeting process with IT management, both at a high level and at the working level. We review requested budgets for IT categories, regardless of budget account, and for alignment with established IT goals, architectures, priorities, efficiencies, and performance. As a result of FITARA implementation, my office and the Bureau of Budget and Planning improved visibility into IT spending, and jointly certified the FY 2017 and FY 2018 IT Budget Submission. Additionally, the Bureau of Budget and Planning has become a regular contributor to our internal FITARA working group meetings, and we have partnered with them to strengthen guidance for requesting IT resources.

My office also continues to strengthen its relationship with the Office of Acquisition Management within our Bureau of Administration. I have worked collaboratively with the Chief Acquisition Officer to bring IT management and acquisitions management together through senior-level meetings and through

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collaboration on IT governance. The Chief Acquisition Officer also dedicated staff to personally work with us on IT requests. Together we discuss proposed IT solutions and coordinate with program offices to determine the most appropriate acquisition approaches.

We are also working together to expand our enterprise licensing and strategic sourcing to centralize purchasing and drive down costs. I am pleased to report that several enterprise license agreements are in place, making the acquisition process much more streamlined for our customers and containing costs with data-driven negotiations to get the best value for the Department.

***Processes: Customer-Centric and Collaborative Governance Approach***

Working together does not just involve our leaders. It involves everyone at the Department, particularly those who manage and use IT products and services. With this in mind, we instituted a new customer-centric, service-based approach.

The Department has a strong IT governance framework, which meets federal mandates, through its Electronic-Government (E-Gov) governance boards. These boards support FITARA objectives in areas such as IT concept and business plan reviews, budget execution, acquisition management, human resources management, security reviews, and expenditures as part of the Department's Capital Planning and Investment Control program. We also establish policies and procedures for IT management.

Through the structure of the E-Gov boards, we foster direct and frequent communication and collaboration among senior officials Department-wide, including those mentioned in the FITARA guidance. Our board membership includes the Under Secretary for Management, CIO, Director of Budget and Planning, Comptroller, Chief Acquisition Officer, and others. Of note, we recently added the Chief Human Capital Officer to the membership to strengthen our IT workforce planning efforts. Together, we work at all levels to

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improve management of IT, aligning planning, procurement, and budgeting. Our E-Gov board structure, combined with the implementation of FITARA, helps us make sure our IT spending fits our IT strategic direction and evolving priorities.

I would like to share an example of a new and significant development with roots in FITARA's spirit of collaboration and efficiency. About nine months ago, we stood up a Cloud Computing Governance Board under the E-Gov umbrella. Cloud adoption is a priority here and we want to make sure we do it right, without putting the Department at risk. As a result, we created a collaborative review process to cover all the bases. For each cloud request, senior leaders from information assurance, cybersecurity, privacy, acquisitions, legal, operations, and other offices work together on the review and recommendation. It is true collaboration, and it resulted in strong processes to make sure we're taking advantage of all the benefits cloud use can bring for efficiencies, while balancing any potential risks, and avoiding duplicative purchases.

To prevent IT governance from being purely a compliance exercise, we have adopted a customer-centric approach. We recognize the value in providing our cloud requesters with easy-to-access and understandable information, and direct one-on-one help through the entire approval process. Each request gets a cloud case manager, which reinforces my vision of customer service and transparency.

***People: IT Workforce Planning***

We rely on our IT professionals to manage our programs to ensure they are efficient, effective, and maximizing the taxpayers' investment. Like other agencies and private sector organizations, we face the challenge of recruiting and retaining these high-caliber IT professionals.

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To address this, we have a Strategic Workforce Planning office, which focuses on tackling challenges in recruitment, hiring, training, and development. This office led a recent Foreign Service IT competency study to highlight gaps in professional proficiency. As a result of the study, our Foreign Service Institute's School of Applied Information Technology can provide new training to meet evolving needs. We also launched a program for IT staff to enhance their job experience through rotations with leading private sector technology companies.

We also prioritized key positions. Workforce planning efforts, such as a new enterprise risk officer, have allowed us to bring on, for example, highly skilled cybersecurity experts for our new Cybersecurity Integrity Center that we outlined in our Cybersecurity Strategic Plan.

We are also focusing on improving and hiring talent into the federal government by connecting with the U.S. Digital Service, Presidential Innovation Fellows, General Services Administration's 18F, and expanded hiring authority for all agencies. Building on these efforts, we launched a Smarter IT Fellowship Program to quickly hire and onboard individuals with critical technical skills to advance innovation. Furthermore, we established a Foreign Service IT Fellowship pilot program to provide financial assistance to undergraduate and graduate students who commit to five years of service as Foreign Service IT Specialists. Additionally, we host the Virtual Student Foreign Service program. The State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development, and more than 30 other federal agencies submit projects annually and U.S. college students competitively apply for their top choices.

***Tools: Data Center Optimization***

We are making progress on both consolidating and optimizing our data centers as part of our FITARA implementation. We maintain four enterprise data centers, but are continuing our efforts to close our leased facility with target

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completion in 2018. To facilitate the data center closure, we are consolidating our IT infrastructure into an optimized, geographically dispersed data center. Similarly, modernization efforts are also occurring with the continued installation of modular data center technology, known as MDC. Deployment of MDC allows us to be more flexible with data center resources based on the Department's needs. As we continue to modernize our existing IT infrastructure, we are also maturing our Data Center Optimization Initiative Strategic Plan.

## **CLOSING**

Looking forward, I am committed to building on our successes, applying lessons learned, and enhancing our relationships throughout the Department and with our external partners, in the spirit of FITARA.

Thank you for your time. I am happy to take any questions you may have.

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**Bureau of Information Resource Management**  
**Chief Information Officer**

Frontis B. Wiggins, a member of the Senior Foreign Service with the rank of Minister-Counselor, is currently the Chief Information Officer for the U.S. Department of State. In this capacity, he is responsible for the Department's information resources and technology initiatives which provide core information, knowledge management, and technology (IT) services to the Department of State and its 260 overseas Missions. He is directly responsible for the Information Resource Management (IRM) Bureau's budget of \$569 million, and oversees State's total IT/ knowledge management budget of approximately one billion dollars.

He joined the Foreign Service in 1985 and has served overseas in Cairo, Budapest, Hong Kong, Paris, Information Management Officer Beijing, and Director of Regional Information Management Center (RIMC) Frankfurt. Senior level assignments in D.C. have included the Principal Deputy CIO, Deputy CIO for Foreign Operations, the Dean of the School of Applied Information Technology (SAIT) at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI), and the Director of Information Resource Management's Messaging Systems Office.

Mr. Wiggins holds a Bachelor of Arts in History from the College of William and Mary, a Master's Degree in Information Systems from George Washington University, and is a member of their Honor Society. He is a graduate of the Chief Information Officer's University class of 2006 and has received numerous Meritorious and Superior Honor awards during his career, as well as being the first recipient of AFSA's Tex Harris Award for constructive dissent in 2000. He speaks seven foreign languages with varying degrees of fluency.