

February 21, 2008

By Email

Honorable Henry A. Waxman
Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-6143

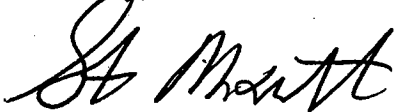
Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing you in response to your request for answers to specific questions relevant to the Committee's investigation relating to whether the Executive Office of the President has complied with federal laws requiring the preservation of preservation and federal records.

I have provided my responses to your questions to Mr. Emmet Flood, Special Counsel to the President and to M. Elizabeth Medaglia, Office of Administration General Counsel. In recent weeks they have expressed to me their concerns about potential disclosures of deliberative discussions involving the participation of Office of the Chief Information Officer management, Office of Administration General Counsel, White House Counsel's Office and White House management. To address these concerns, I have provided my responses to them for their review. They have committed to me that they will review and identify any responses or other specific information that they wish to be redacted from my response prior to submission to the Committee. Any items they choose to redact should be addressed to them.

I realize that there are many complex issues related to this topic. If you or your staff have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me via email at [REDACTED], or via telephone anytime at [REDACTED]. Thank you for your time and attention in this matter.

Sincerely,



Steven McDevitt

Responses from Steven McDevitt (Part 1 of 2)
February 21, 2008

General Background

1. During what time period did you work at the White House?

I was employed in the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) in the Office of Administration (OA) in the Executive Office of the President (EOP) from September 2002 through October 2006.

2. What position or positions did you hold at the White House? To whom did you report?

From September 2002 through July 2003, I was an Information Technology Specialist – Project Manager (GS-2210-14) in the Concepts, Requirements and Systems Engineering Directorate (CR&SE) in the OCIO. During this period I reported to Mr. Layton Clay, the Director of CR&SE.

In July 2003, the OCIO was reorganized and the Architecture and Engineering (A&E) Directorate was created. I was promoted to the position of Director of the A&E as a Supervisor Information Technology Specialist (GS-2210-15).

From July, 2003 through January 2005, I reported to Mr. Carlos Solari, the Chief Information Officer (CIO).

From January 2005 through May 2006, I reported to Mr. John Straub, the Director of the Office of Administration and acting CIO.

From May 2006 through the end of my tenure in the OCIO, I reported to Ms. Theresa Payton.

3. What were your primary job responsibilities? If they changed over time, please describe your responsibilities over time.

As an Information Technology Specialist – Project Manager (GS-2210-14), from September 2002 through July 2003, I was responsible for managing various systems development and systems implementation projects. During this period, the majority of my efforts were focused on the implementation of a new records management system for the White House Office of Records Management. The primary purpose of this system was to manage the paper records and document of the President and his staff.

During this time, I was also assign to begin the process of implementing an electronic records management system to manage the email and other electronic communications records throughout the EOP.

When I was promoted to the new position of Director of A&E my areas of responsibility increased significantly. The primary responsibilities of A&E includes:

- Systems Engineering and Integration – Responsible for the development and implementation of numerous custom developed applications and the implementation of commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) based solutions.
- Business Applications Support – Provided day-to-day management and support for a wide variety of applications that supported the mission of the components of the EOP. There were approximately sixty-five applications that support the critical business needs of the EOP.
- Website Management and Support – The primary focus of this support was for whitehouse.gov. This included a team of web content management staff, web designers and technology specialists. Support for other websites was also provided. Including omb.gov, results.gov, wmd.gov and other White House related sites.
- Enterprise Architecture – A&E was responsible for the development and maintenance of the Enterprise Architecture (EA) of the EOP.

4. Did you have any staff who reported to you? If so, please describe the size and role of your staff.

As Director of A&E, I had between 8 and 13 staff reporting to me. The staff was a mix of project manager, technical specialists, enterprise architect and web specialists. All were Information Technology Specialists or Supervisory Information Technology Specialists (GS-2210) grades 9 through 15.

5. There were various contractors that worked with staff in the Office of the Chief Information Officer. Which contractors did you work with, and what was their role?

The contractors that supported the mission of A&E included:

- Boeing – Enterprise architecture support for the development and maintenance of the EOP EA.
- Booz Allen Hamilton – Was awarded the contract for the implementation of the White House Office of Records Management, records Management system (RMS). They were also awarded the contract for the initial requirements analysis and solution selection for the Electronic Communications Records Management System (ECRMS)
- Lockheed-Martin – Support the for IntranetQuorum system used by the Office of Correspondence.
- MZM – Provided support for the implementation systems related to the email infrastructure.
- Systems Management and Engineering Inc. – Enterprise architecture support for the development and maintenance of the EOP EA.
- TKC Communications – Provided systems engineering and technical assistance support on a wide variety of systems development and systems implementation projects.
- Unisys – Provided systems analysis and systems implementation support. These were specific tasks under the larger multi-year information technology support contract that provided enterprise-wide services to the EOP. Unisys was tasked with the implementation and integration of the ECRMS system.

E-mail Systems and Archiving

6. The Committee understands that, at some point in 2002, the White House began a migration of e-mail systems, switching from Lotus Notes to a Microsoft Exchange system. Do you know when the decision was made to make this migration? What was the rationale for the change? When did the migration begin and when was it completed?

There were multiple reasons for the desire to migrate from Notes to Exchange.

- Senior White House staff had a desire to migrate to Microsoft Outlook and Exchange because that is what they were used to on the campaign.
- The Outlook platform was widely used in commercial enterprises and provided better integration with the Microsoft Office suite of applications that was the standard within the EOP.
- Also, there were a number of features of Outlook that were not available in the Notes Mail environment.

The project to evaluate the migration to Outlook / Exchange began prior to the beginning of my employment with the EOP in 2002.

The migration for part of the Office of Administration occurred as early as September 2002. The reason I know this for certain is that when I began my employment, I was not provided a Notes Mail account, I was provided an Outlook/Exchange account.

7. Was there any particular order dictating how the migration proceeded? Was the migration done component by component or on a more individual basis?

With about two thousand people to migrate from Notes to Exchange, there was a formal process that was put in place to support the migration. As a general rule, the migration was done on a component by component basis with groups of individuals migrated at a time. The migration needed to be coordinated with the management of each component as it impacted email of each user.

I personally had no direct operational responsibility for this process. Detailed plans were created to support this migration. The OCIO should have detailed documentation on when each user or groups of users were migrated.

Those responsible for the planning and execution of the migration included Bruce O'Dell, the Deputy CIO during this period, Bart Hill, the Director of Information Systems & Technology and the OCIO email support team that provided operational support for the email systems.

8. With the Lotus Notes e-mail system, the White House used an archiving system known as ARMS to preserve e-mails sent and received by White House staff. Are you familiar with this system? Were you aware of any concerns about the adequacy of the ARMS program? If so, please describe those concerns.

I was not involved in the implementation of the ARMS system as it was implemented in 1994, prior to my employment with the EOP. My knowledge of the ARMS system was the result of the analysis that I performed in 2002 as part of the project to implement a long-term solution to support the email records management of the EOP.

The ARMS system is really a set of systems that were developed in 1994 to meet a court mandated need to preserve E-mail records. At the time these systems were implemented, no commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) system to support email records management existed in the marketplace.

The ARMS system was implemented using the staff, contractors, resources and technologies that were present-at-hand within the EOP at that time. The system used simple operating system utilities for the data management, access, search and retrieval of data and the file system for the storage and access control of the data.

During the Clinton administration there were a number of significant problems with ARMS and the associated supporting systems. These problems or anomalies (Mail 2, Letter D and Multi-Host) resulted in situations where E-mail was not appropriately archived by ARMS. These issues were corrected and various projects were completed to recover the email that was not archived. The GAO has produced reports documenting these issues and the resolution and corrective actions that were taken.

During my analysis of the ARMS system, a number of operational and non-functional risks and limitations were identified. These were documented in the Concept of Operations (CONOPS) document that I created in 2002. This document was reviewed by OCIO staff, OA Records Management, OA Counsel, the White House Office of Records Management and White House Counsel. This document was the basis for the project to implement a COTS solution to support the email records management of the EOP.

To reduce or eliminate these risks, the ECRMS CONOPS outlined the need to implement a system that utilized current commercially trusted technologies to support the email records management needs of the EOP.

It is also important to note that by 2002 there were a number of COTS products that provided effective email records management solutions that were designed to support seamless integration with the Microsoft Exchange platform.

9. What was your role in planning how e-mails would be archived and preserved in the new system? Who else was involved with this and what were their roles?

My role was to lead the effort to perform the analysis, selection a solution and implement the solution to support the effective records management of EOP emails. This project is referred to in various documents and presentations as ECRMS. For a period of time, the project had the name EARS. These two names refer to the same project.

In 2002, there were two other projects that This project began in late 2002 when it was recognized that the first two attempts to use the ARMS system to support the Microsoft Exchange environment could not be the long term solution to support the records management of EOP emails.

Prior to the initiation of the ECRMS project there were two attempts to continue to use the ARMS solution.

The first project was an attempt to modify Windows XP and Microsoft Outlook interface to support integration with ARMS. There were numerous technical issues that prevented this approach from being successful. The OCIO should have documentation on this project.

The second project was an attempt to use an email integration solution to manage and archive email messages using the ARMS environment. The approach was to use Legato EmailXtender solution to provide a mechanism for all Outlook / Exchange E-mails to be managed in ARMS. The project was abandoned as the poor performance of the solution prevented it from supporting day-to-day email message volume requirements.

I believe that Mr. Howard Sparks was responsible for both of these projects.

10. How were e-mails sent to and from Microsoft Exchange accounts archived and preserved? Please describe the various steps involved and the individuals responsible for each step, including the process through which e-mails stored in journals were saved in .pst files.

I was not directly involved in the management decision to proceed with the implementation of Outlook / Exchange. I also did not have any operational responsibility for the archiving of email in either the Notes or Exchange environments.

The initial email retention process involved a manual process of copying messages from the Exchange journals to .pst files for storage and retention. This process was to be performed on a regular basis.

At some point, this process was partially automated using a utility designed for this purpose. The Mail Attender utility was used to automatically copy email message from the journals to the .pst files on a regular basis.

The details regarding the standard operating procedures should be obtained from the IS&T Directorate within the OCIO.

Mr. Steven McDevitt - February 21, 2008 – Page 6 of 10

This document contains sensitive network information of the Executive Office of the President. Please treat it as sensitive and confidential.

11. As the migration took place, did you have any concerns about how e-mails were being archived and preserved under Microsoft Exchange? What were those concerns? Did you express them to anyone? When did you do this and with whom did you share your concerns?

There was a great deal of concern about proceeding with the migration to Outlook / Exchange without having an adequate email records management solution in place. By early 2003, an entire year had been spent trying to identify a solution that would support the email records management requirements of the EOP. There were four types of risk that were discussed on a number of occasions within the management ranks of the OCIO and OA. This risks included:

- **Incomplete Data** – The process by which email was being collected and retained was primitive and the risk that data would be lost was high. In addition to this being a manual process, the risk was compounded by the fact that there was no mechanism to reconcile the messages that were retained in the .pst files and the messages that had been processed by the Exchange system. The potential impact: The system does not contain all required data.
- **Data Reconciliation** – The use of .pst files for warehousing email records does not provide a mechanism to reconcile against what was originally retained by the system. This is there is no way to guarantee that all records are retained in their complete and unmodified state. The potential impact: It cannot be demonstrated that the data in the system is complete.
- **Public Perception** – Given the issues that occurred during the prior administration, it should warrant extra caution on the part of the EOP before making any changes to the email retention process. Additional system problems would create a public perception that the EOP was unwilling or unable retain records that were required under current law. The potential impact: Increase scrutiny of the EOP and significant additional expense to correct any problems that might occur.
- **User Accountability** – The approach of simply storing email message in .pst files provides no mechanism or audit trail that tracks changes to data files or the activities performed by users or system administrators. The integrity of the data could be called into question because it was not possible to ensure the inappropriate action, either intentional or unintentional, could not occur. Or, if they did occur, the actions would be logged and the user who performed those actions could be identified. The potential impact: No verification that data retained has not been modified or what activities have been performed by system users or administrators.