

“To innovate, deliver, and service world-class IT products and services that meet customer requirements and exceed customer expectations.”

Annual Report

ITS FY 2012

United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Chief Information Officer

International Technology Services

Contents

<u>A MESSAGE FROM THE ACIO</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>ABOUT ITS</u>	<u>3</u>
MISSION AND VISION.....	3
ORGANIZATION AND FOCUS.....	4
OUR MOTTO	5
<u>INNOVATION</u>	<u>6</u>
DEPARTMENTAL AND MODERNIZATION INITIATIVES	6
NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND SERVICES.....	9
<u>DELIVERY</u>	<u>12</u>
BUSINESS SERVICES	12
PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS	13
TECHNICAL UPGRADES	16
<u>SERVICE</u>	<u>19</u>
DIRECT SUPPORT INFORMATION	19
COMMUNICATIONS	20
<u>MOVING FORWARD</u>	<u>22</u>
NEW SERVICES AND PROGRAMS	22
A NEW CUSTOMER – THE NATIONAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CENTER (NITC).....	24
SUMMARY.....	25
<u>GLOSSARY</u>	<u>26</u>

A Message from the ACIO

When I look back on FY 2012, I recall my transition from the Marine Corps to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and International Technology Services (ITS). Shortly after my arrival, I was quick to realize just how impressive the Department of Agriculture is, and in particular, our primary customers and the ITS professionals that strive to support them day in and day out. It's remarkable how diverse the USDA mission is and how critical the link is between the success of this Department and the welfare of our Nation. The primary target audience for this annual report is you, the ITS customer. In FY 2013 our horizon expands to include new customers, such as the National Information Technology Center (NITC). Our hope is that the information found in this annual report will raise customer awareness about ITS actions and initiatives, stimulate discussion, and improve communications; so essential to the successful delivery of our products and services.

I have been exposed to many leading Information Technology (IT) services organizations during my 30-plus year career, and I believe ITS is among that select group of leaders. ITS has a prominent role in the Department's achievement of significant strategic and operational results through the use of technology. ITS and our customers' collective efforts have been based on a culture of working collaboratively to develop technology strategies and solutions that address enterprise, organizational, regional, and local business challenges first.

Collaboration with our customers has never been more important, as there are a number of multi-year initiatives outlined in this report that remain in progress. We strive to complete many of these initiatives in order for customers and the Department to begin reaping the benefits of these investments. My staff and I are committed to continuing our efforts to improve – placing an emphasis on addressing needed capabilities and solving critical problems – while incorporating measures and metrics to validate progress. We will execute the Department's Blueprint for Stronger Service, through the direction of the Department CIO, and through recognition of and responsiveness to your respective goals and objectives. We will continue to use our performance focus areas of Innovation, Delivery, and Service as a baseline to provide solutions and services that meet business requirements.

At your convenience, please take the time to review this report. I encourage you to share it with your respective organizations and staff members. We value your comments, your suggestions, and your critique of just how well we support you. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Regards,

Clint Swett, Acting Associate CIO for
International Technology Services
January 25, 2013

Executive Summary

In an unprecedented year of growth, challenge and change, International Technology Services (ITS) continued its mission by providing quality information technology products and services to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Enterprise service delivery initiatives provided opportunities to expand horizons. Fiscal challenges and funding reduction targets were met, allowing ITS to provide services more efficiently. Changes in organizational structure and leadership at many levels provided new ideas and new direction. Some of the highlights include:

Customer Service

- Responded to a 15% increase in transactions from FY11; 314,868 Incidents and 126,998 Change Requests were submitted by our customers
- Implemented the Consolidated Help Desk contract to provide 24/7/365 Tier I support
- Assessed 120 performance metrics that were used to complete a full year of Service Level Agreement (SLA) Performance Metric Reporting

Departmental and Modernization Initiatives

- Enterprise Active Directory – ITS offering Departmental authentication and group policy services
- Managed Print Services – ITS offering fully-managed printing utilization, repair and replacement services
- Fax2Mail – ITS replaced analog data lines and single-purpose machines with an email-based system
- Optimized Computing Environment (OCE) – ITS focused on mobility and network enhancements to support agency modernization efforts; foundation for application modernization
- Mobile Device Management – ITS implemented the USDA-wide infrastructure for the security and configuration of smartphones and tablets

Infrastructure Support and Technical Improvements

- Completed upgrades to network efficiency for 2,761 field sites in less than 90 working days
- Complied with and researched 4,300 security policies, 400 legislative regulations, orders and memos
- Windows 7 – conducting deployment, configuration and installation; includes new changes
- Deployed 660 Dell T610 servers, improving shared drive resource availability

Fiscal Responsibility

- ITS FY12 expenditures totaled \$272,592,280, including \$30 million for OCE
- ITS and customer agency management collaborated to achieve overall savings of \$14M for FY13
- More than 4,000 pieces of equipment were donated to local schools

For additional details on these efforts, and the wide range of other activities and benefits ITS performed for customers this year, please explore the [Innovation](#), [Delivery](#) and [Service](#) sections of the Report.

About ITS

ITS is a government fee-for-service based IT service provider created in 2004 from several existing IT service organizations. ITS has over 800 highly skilled IT specialists providing service to approximately 46,000 customers in more than 3,500 field, state, and headquarters offices located across the United States and in U.S. territories and protectorates across the globe.

Mission and Vision

Our mission is to improve readiness and operational capability by delivering efficient and effective information technology solutions, products, and services. By way of our stated vision, ITS aims to innovate, deliver, and service world-class IT products and services that meet customer requirements and exceed customer expectations.

ITS' strategic vision is based on the following outcomes:

- Customer-centric: Develop partnerships with our customers, that makes it easy to do business with ITS, in order to meet their tactical and strategic needs
- People-oriented: Create a culture in which our employees are challenged, motivated, skilled, productive, and creative
- Standards-based: Leverage and continuously improve our processes and technology standards to ensure that our solutions are scalable, available, cost-effective, and secure
- Results-focused: Link information management products and services to mission achievement and regularly measure progress
- Solutions-focused: Focus on the creation of world-class solutions that meet customer requirements and exceed customer expectations. Innovate to improve overall efficiency and to enable strategic investments.

Organization and Focus

ITS is organized into five divisions that address the needs of the organization, aligned with Information Technology Service Management (ITSM) principles, along four general concepts:

Governing Technology

Governance Services Division (GSD) is responsible for leading ITS process improvement initiatives, ensuring security compliance for ITS systems to meet all applicable laws, regulations and standards, providing project management services, facilitating information management best practices; providing management of vendor services, including acquisitions of products and services for ITS and its customers; managing upgrades and new releases to the Remedy tool set; formulating customer agreements, metrics, and the service catalog and implementing ITSM based on the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) best practices. GSD is also focused on providing disaster recovery and contingency planning for ITS.

Operating Technology Efficiently and Effectively

Infrastructure Operations Division (IOD) is responsible for the operations and maintenance of the back-office infrastructure, which includes telecommunications, infrastructure architecture, operations security, infrastructure and software deployment, and the operations and maintenance of customer business applications.

Supporting Users of Technology

Technical Support Division (TSD) and National Office Support Division (NOSD) are responsible for providing end user support. They have support staff staged throughout the United States to help deliver IT services to field and large office personnel. If a problem cannot be corrected remotely, a support staff member will provide on-site support.

Ensuring Fiscal Responsibility

Business Services Division (BSD) provides the products and services that keep ITS running from an administrative perspective. Financial Execution, Asset and Financial Management, and Employee Assistance are instrumental to managing a large organization with a geographically disbursed customer base.

Our Motto

Innovation, Delivery and Service are not simply words on our graphic. They form the basis by which we meet our Mission statement and ensure our Vision is delivered to our customers.

Innovation

Innovation is about matching known or anticipated needs with solutions. ITS enlists the deep experience of staff and customers to develop technology solutions that can effectively serve USDA now and in the future. We focus on innovation during our design and engineering activities to tailor solutions for our customers.

In this report, our [Innovation](#) section describes the myriad of efforts ITS is involved in to improve the customer experience and fundamentally change the way the USDA operates. There are a tremendous number of activities and initiatives in-progress; many of the most significant are being directed by ITS personnel. We are certainly looking forward.

Delivery

ITS delivers new technology and services to customers on a continuous basis. Service delivery supports complex enterprise-wide initiatives, software and hardware requests received from customers, and routine updates to existing software and security. Whether a result of our own innovation or another organization's design, ITS has a strong track record of delivering on time and within budget.

To find out how ITS met this goal, review the [Delivery](#) Section. Process improvement, fiscal responsibility and delivery improvements are all described within. Meeting the challenges of government operations in the current climate requires ingenuity and commitment. We can certainly deliver.

Service

ITS is an advocate of ITSM based on the ITIL process standards. We leverage a rigorous Activity-Based Cost Management (ABC/M) cost model and industry benchmarking to ensure our products and services are competitive. With more than 3,500 locations spanning 11 time zones, the level of commitment must be high.

More information on how we serve almost 46,000 customers can be found in the [Service](#) section. The work we put into keeping the business of Agriculture running is worth a look. We are certainly committed to serve.

Innovation

Departmental and Modernization Initiatives

Optimized Computing Environment & Virtualization

During FY12, ITS completed the first year of the Optimized Computing Environment (OCE) program. The focus of the first year was mobility and network enhancements to support agency modernization efforts. The agencies have been moving toward using mobility to provide a business application platform to the remote workforce, and ITS needed to provide the infrastructure needed to meet these goals. In order to deliver applications securely to mobile devices, ITS researched the best tool to meet the current and future needs. The network infrastructure was strengthened to support planned modernization efforts. These updates and additions were slated for the first year in order to lay the foundation needed for application modernization.

- OCE FY12 Goals Accomplished
 - Improve Mobility Functionality
 - Secure Agency Mobile Application Platform
 - Accelerate Network Performance
 - Modernize Technology
 - Right-Size Systems to Meet Business Requirements
 - Minimize Business Service Outages with improved End-to-End Network Monitoring
 - Maximize ROI and Minimize Recurring Cost

The FY12 activities were broken down into the following tasks:

- Late in FY12, with the feedback of mobility requirements from the SCAs, ITS issued an RFP and procured the next generation enterprise mobility solution to expand beyond just mobile device management to include solutions allowing agencies to host custom applications through a private apps store, and enabling agency users to use personal devices for retrieving government data securely (BYOD). The three solutions to modernize ITS mobility offering are:
 - **Mobile Device Management (MDM)** – Enhanced current device management with additional settings and security rules allowing ITS to meet the department security mandate on security features such as dual factor authentication and device auditing
 - **Mobile Application Management (MAM)** – Provides USDA custom apps store for agency to host and blacklist/whitelist apps to control the downloadable apps on GFE devices. In addition, the new solution will help agency to analytical report allowing agency to troubleshoot or review the behavior of the custom applications such as number of downloads, usage of the apps, etc.)
 - **Secure Container** – Containerizes government data and application into a single application for deployment on GFE or serving as secure isolated container for BYOD usage. The application can be secure with FIPS 140-3 and data in transit can be protected with AES 256 encryption

- Network Upgrades:
 - **Head End Upgrade** – Provides infrastructure for enhanced End User services, Citrix, VDI, SharePoint; the core architecture for current supported applications and future initiatives
 - **Head End & Field Service Center Optimization** – Optimizes the network connection to/from the field offices and data center to make processes run faster (data, transport, and application)
 - **Quality of Service (QoS) Configuration** – Provides better service for priority business network traffic (e.g. video and teleconferencing) using USDA standards
 - **Improved End-to-End Network Monitoring** – Improves the current monitoring to meet the needs of the advanced network. This task included: increasing availability, expanding functionality, and expanding use
 - **Field Service Center Network Hardware Modernization** – Replaced all field office hardware (routers and switches) for standardized and modernized technology. Having a standardized technology at the same point of its life-cycle maintenance supports modernization efforts and Departmental initiatives (e.g., Wireless, Unified Communications with Voice over IP)
 - **Alternate Bandwidth Engineering Analysis** – Evaluated the evolving industry services available to provide cost-effective access to the USDA network

- Finalized the project management approach to ensure the project went smoothly and all Capital Planning and oversight requirements were met, including support to the Contractor for installations, troubleshooting and year-end Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) purchases

- Quick Facts
 - All 2,761 field sites with network connections were upgraded in less than 90 working days
 - Average downtime for a standard small field office install was approximately 24 minutes
 - Average downtime for a standard medium field office install was approximately 66 minutes

FSA Modernization

Project Management support was provided to FSA for MIDAS project. ITS worked through third party organizational boundaries to establish connectivity to National Finance Center (NFC) and National Information Technology Center (NITC).

During the course of the year, ITS and FSA performed a number of collaborative tasks to ensure forward movement:

- Developer workstation images were customized
- Network bandwidth needs were accommodated
- Project Management support was crucial to the success of these efforts and continues to be important to the success of the MIDAS effort, and the build out of Production infrastructure to support Go-Live activities

- Built out 4 Integration, 2 Certification, 1 Stress, and 1 Training environments to provide the testing grounds needed for full support of MIDAS application development. This consisted of 150+ virtual and physical servers
- Worked with FSA to update the GIS application to 10.0 and enhance the Citrix virtualization technologies
- Worked with MIDAS Project Management to develop and implement a nation-wide training plan which included working with National, State, and Local leadership
- ITS facilitated daily technical meetings across FSA/DBMO, FSA/GIS, FSA/TCO, FSA/IPUSO, NITC, and NFC to address immediate/urgent customer requests. ITS remained flexible & responsive addressing multiple new requests every week
- ITS worked with FSA to upgrade GIS application a second time to 10.1 with hotfix across Integrations, Certifications, Stress, Training, and Production environments with a reduced timeframe for implementation

NRCS Conservation Delivery Streamlining Initiative (CDSI)

In conjunction with NRCS resources, ITS planned and executed integration of the deployment environment for CDSI development through LabManager supporting up to 60 hosted servers in four different application stacks. This enabled acceptance and test of contractor delivered code in a structured fashion and reduced the overall cost of ownership for this development process to the customer.

Researched, planned and developed requirements for implementation of additional servers from inventory and through procurement of memory, reducing additional expenditures of hardware needed to meet the initial requirement. In addition, by providing the expanded LabManager architecture, ITS enabled NRCS to rapidly stand up development stacks, re-deploy test beds within the LabManager construct and use self-provisioning.

ITS implemented, documented and recorded the deployment of three new templates to support the CDSI platform requirements in this environment and worked cross functionally with NRCS and NOB resources to ensure requirements were met through provisioning over 13 specifically scoped RFCs (including emergency provisioning on several) for certificates and load balancers to enable testing. This ensured alignment with SCA deliverables and to guarantee delivery while CDSI development was under way.

In coordination with the NRCS development and production teams, ITS provisioned and supported network load balancing, certificates and ensured supportability for Deployment Readiness Testing (DRT) activities including the completion of the initial DRT stack and initiation of a second stack for further testing. Ten additional production servers were built for testing in Fort Collins and were decommissioned once completed.

Comprehensive Loan Program

ITS has been playing both the infrastructure and integration roles helping to modernize RD development delivery systems through CLP initiative. We have been working closely with RD development community to design and integrate not just the new solution but upgrading existing feeder systems to support the initiative. To date, following are solutions ITS helped to implement under this initiative:

- Data Warehouses successfully converted/migrated to Oracle
- Oracle Client IO Lab Approved and made available to RD users
- GUS database successfully upgraded in December. Alleviates issues relating to GUS user experiences and expands its capabilities for future users as well
- GLS Modernization - Eliminated GLS Cash Processing in PLAS
- Implemented/Converted Rural Electric and Telephone into the RD RULSS System

New Technologies and Services

Enterprise Active Directory (EAD)

- Project management support helped coordinate the activities of vendors, ITS teams, customer input, procurement and pricing teams to bring EAD into live operational service
- The EAD will consolidate duplicative systems and ultimately reduce the costs of providing directory services. At the same time, it should help enhance security while providing “connect anywhere” capabilities across the department. Due to standardization across USDA, future economies of scale will be made easier to achieve
- **Built 22 virtual servers** into a new network for EAD development. An **additional 27 virtual servers are being built** for the EAD production environment

Enterprise Fax-2-Mail

ITS has a 5 year contract with Tactical Digital to provide electronic fax service. The service is called Fax2Mail, provided by Easylink Corp, and is available for use by all USDA agencies. When implemented the Fax2Mail service will increase efficiency by allowing USDA staff to securely send and receive fax messages as pdf documents from any location, including telework locations.

- The Fax2Mail service will reduce costs by disconnecting analog fax lines, removing fax machines, consolidating fax accounts across multiple locations and users, and reducing print costs for fax messages that don't need to be printed
- The contract has 6 volume pricing tiers where the combined usage of all USDA agencies results in lower pricing for individual agencies. Consolidating USDA fax usage into one contract will reduce the costs for all agencies by reaching the best pricing volume tier

- By the end of FY12, ITS **disconnected 29 analog fax lines and decommissioned 25 fax machines** for the Service Center Agencies (NRCS, FSA, RD), as a result of implementing Fax2Mail. The FY13 annual **reduction in telecommunication costs is \$17,000** as a result of disconnecting 29 analog lines in FY12

Enterprise Management for Managed Print Services (MPS)

MPS is a USDA Enterprise-wide initiative. It is a modern, eco-friendly, cost effective way to print, copy, fax and scan. ITS has a 5 year contact with Lexmark to provide managed print service. MPS is a vendor delivered service which will provide increased productivity, confidentiality, cost savings and environmental/green improvements. The contract has a 6 volume pricing tiers where the combined usage of all USDA agencies results in lower pricing for individual agencies.

- A planned fleet of smart devices owned and managed by Lexmark. USDA is not purchasing nor leasing the unit under MPS
- Automatic replenishment of consumables is provided under MPS at no additional cost
 - Improved service benefits are received from real time devices alert and priority event onsite service visits
 - Increased savings and efficiency due to Print Less Solutions
 - More access, flexibility and security with LincPass Card Access Integration
 - Precise and accurate billing, charging you only for what you actually use

Enterprise VPN (EVPN)

- The Enterprise Virtual Private Network (EVPN) provides a secure connection for users to access their agency and individual resources remotely. Through validation of the user and device, the EVPN system protects the integrity of the USDA network
- During FY12, USDA agency adoption for the EVPN increased. ITS continues to work with the Department to expand usage
- The EVPN system uses two-factor authentication to provide secure access to the USDA network and user resources. In FY12, ITS developed additional two-factor authentication options to fully meet organizational business needs and ensure full coverage of remote users

Virtual Access Platform

ITS improved the entire Virtual Access Platform line release with enhancements to our PC-on-a-Stick device and Thin Client operating systems, which improved the user experience by resolving limitations reported by early adopters.

- Thin Client supports video teleconferencing outside the Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) session
- Integrated Bring Your Own Computer (BYOC) OS to support Thin Clients/Legacy Hardware
- Customized a 3rd party BYOC solution to improve compatibility and Macintosh support

Working with vendors and customers in-parallel, ITS is working to provide an improved roster of thin-client devices and additional features through the course of the coming year.

Whole Disk Encryption to BitLocker Transition

Transition from Whole Disk Encryption (WDE) to BitLocker for Windows 7 resulted in a reduction in the number of licenses paid for (to NITC). **In FY12, we were billed for 26,701 end-points; this has been reduced to 16,487 end-points in FY13. Total estimated cost savings is \$161,790 for FY13.**

CommVault Back-up Solution

ITS completed the migration of backups for 621 SCA Field Offices to the CommVault solution, reducing costs of backup tapes and safe deposit boxes for their storage and centralizing the backup management. The CommVault solution has also been successfully deployed to protect the recently transferred NITC user file share data in Kansas City, and the SCA Active Directory environment within ONE Forest.

The CommVault solution is used to manage over 3,000 jobs nightly that analyze, deduplicate and remotely protect the 621 currently supported sites to provide an integrated data protection solution with a multi-level recovery model. In total, the solution currently protects greater than 213 terabytes of data nationally. Additionally, ITS has developed methods using the suite that would allow the CommVault backup solution to expand and include an additional 40 Field Offices, as well as integrated SharePoint backups.

ITS Ensures Defensible Preservation Process

ITS faced the challenge of successfully migrating users that were subject to litigation holds to the new Windows 7 Operating System (OS). To ensure the requirement for a defensible litigation hold of electronic data was not hindered by potential data spoliation, ITS deployed Harvester Software by Pinpoint Labs to complement the OS migration. The application allows the ITS migration team to move and copy user-identified files while retaining the file timestamps, metadata and hash values of each file, thus making the whole process forensically sound and defensible in a court of law. A chain-of-custody file containing details for each item moved is produced. In the end, the deployment of Harvester allowed ITS to maintain the Windows 7 migration timeline and the integrity of users electronic data for Litigation Hold purposes, thus these data will remain defensible in a court of law even after the OS upgrade.

Redesigned Audit Logging Storage

ITS identified an opportunity to resolve a long standing problem regarding the capture of all required audit log files from infrastructure servers in the web farm and end user computing. ITS corrected this operational deficiency by utilizing the storage arrays previously used by the legacy EMS system. ITS successfully redirected those assets and the issue was closed at virtually no cost, and ITS' logging capabilities are significantly improved.

Delivery

Business Services

ITS FY12 Expenditures

ITS FY12 **expenditures totaled \$272,592,280 representing 106.63%** of its original Planned Allowance of \$255,635,120. Additional execution above the FY12 Planned Allowance resulted from ITS receiving **additional funding totaling \$30M** related to the Optimized Computing Environment (OCE) initiative.

Budget Reductions

In the last quarter of the fiscal year, ITS management collaborated to achieve significant budgetary reductions in an effort to reduce customer costs moving into FY13. ITS led this effort, and re-drafted annual budget models based on the reduction scenarios, calculated adjusted chargeback rates and customer projections, and prepared multiple presentations and briefings to management and customers on the impacts of the reductions to achieve consensus and prepare agreements for the next year. **ITS achieved an overall savings of \$14M for FY13.**

Quarterly True-up Process

In response to customer requests to implement a more consumption-based model, ITS introduced a quarterly true-up process wherein monthly volumes are gathered for each customer chargeback metric, averaged, and compared to the original budget projection for review and adjustment.

SCA Office Closures

ITS Managers worked closely with SCAs to provide the agencies with information they needed from a cost and security stand point where it related to decisions on how to utilize space after an office closing when one or more agencies remained.

End-User Services Line of Business

ITS consolidated three lines of business into a single End-User Services line to promote efficiency in reporting, and to strengthen the alignment of accounting with the ITS Strategic Plan. Additionally, ITS consolidated multiple legacy service activities and accounting codes to a more streamlined model, further driving efficiency, as well as accuracy, through ITS expense reporting and forecasting capabilities.

Blanket Purchase Agreements

ITS continued to provide competitive pricing for ITS Customers through establishing multiple Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPA) resulting in cost reductions and improved ordering processes and expedited deliveries (for example, Adobe and Enterprise Servers).

Process Improvements

Lean Six Sigma Methodology Utilized

Used Lean Six Sigma methodology to redesign the ITS acquisition process flow to streamline efforts and expedite purchasing performed for customers and for internal ITS needs.

Directed a Lean Six Sigma review of internal certification processes. The review highlighted areas for potential efficiency gain. After a thorough examination and testing of the improvements, ITS was able to improve its process maturity. As a result, ITS **reduced average certification times to less than 30 days and improved SLA performance to 100%** since January 2012.

Financial/Administration Improvements

- Workload Distribution analysis conducted by ITS Technical Support Division (TSD) management; identified areas where staff could be physically located that would result in less travel time, and customers would receive service in a faster and more efficient manner
- Continued to work with managers to find ways to reduce the hiring timeframe. New processing guidelines were developed and distributed which targeted major areas of concern and provided guidance on improving the hiring process, and ensuring the hiring of highly qualified employees within the shortest possible timeframe
- Developed and issued an Employee Onboarding and Exit Guidelines; Merit Promotion Regulation; and Highest Previous Rate Regulation
- Drafted and issued the following memorandums for Leave; Employee Awards and Recognition; Reasonable Accommodation; Delegations of Administrative Authority; Hazardous Weather; Payment of Just Financial Obligations; Jury Duty; and other administrative and management topics
- Improved processes by realigning Device Deployment Services Branch (DDSB) and the Windows Administration Team (WAT) into TSD to streamline solution development. This alignment has improved organization and operational efficiency by streamlining administration and allowing for a cohesive ITS organization. The new alignment streamlined communications between customers, field support personnel and DDSB, resulting in an ability to provide a higher level of service to our customers
- **Demonstrated superior financial reporting performance throughout FY12.** As a result, ITS is the only USDA WCF to move to quarterly rather than monthly status briefings during FY13

Streamline Telecommunications Processes/Programs

ITS continued to streamline telecom processes and programs for cost savings:

- Completed the Intelliverse (remote voice messaging service) Inventory Project resulted in savings of approximately **\$77,000/year** in cancellation of unused remote voice mail services. ITS is continuing with a Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) Inventory Project to identify unused DSL services and are currently disconnecting unneeded services

- A Toll Free Number Inventory Project was completed by ITS to reconcile inventory and charges while disconnecting those numbers no longer needed. This project is nearly complete and will result in better accuracy to the application of number charges. In addition, the disconnect of approximately 14 unneeded toll free numbers will result in yearly savings for all ITS customers as a whole although that figure varies due to the variance created by usage-based charges
- GSA Networx Contract Transition

The long-planned replacement of the GSA Federal Telecommunications Service contract (FTS, FTS 2001) and various associated temporary and bridge contracts, culminated in FY12 with ITS changing the long distance service associated with every land line phone number of all our customers, ordering more than 2,000 audio conferencing accounts from the new vendor and distributing them to agency customers, validating all the customer toll free numbers and data circuit information, and many other activities. This often required research on legacy services that were ordered long prior to the creation of ITS.

Through ITS' diligent attention to these transition details, and contingency planning for the inevitable few issues that did occur, ITS was able to transition all of their customers affected telecommunications services to the new GSA contract, with minimal service outages to our customers. The new contract provides for better pricing and/or features for the customer and the transition process also resulted in a better inventory and understanding our customers' telecommunications needs.

Section 508 Compliance

ITS successfully reviewed, remediated, and published 50 documents representing 100% of the submitted requests resulting in **0 reports of Section 508 violations from ITS employees or our customers.**

Risk Management Team

ITS has matured and formalized its Risk Management (RM) team. Following the Risk Management Framework of NIST 800-61, the ITS RM team is an integral part of ITS' incident handling team, and provides both formal and ad-hoc risk assessments for new and ongoing projects.

Reduce Audit Workload for Customers

Implemented an audit process with the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) that **reduced the audit workload for customers of ITS by 40%**. ITS supported the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Farm Service Agency (FSA), and the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) OIG customer audits. ITS also supported over 50 Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) data calls.

System Security Plan Reviews

To meet the legal requirements for accrediting ITS Systems, ITS completed the annual System Security Plan Reviews for all ITS systems. ITS also completed the annual A-123 and FISMA security controls assessment testing in preparation for continuous monitoring. In support of customer service level agreements, ITS successfully reconciled and implemented security control inheritances for ITS customers. ITS also completed the Federal Managers Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA) Certification Statement and the ITS General Computer Controls (GCC) Summary of Aggregate Deficiencies (SAD) Report.

Security Controls

Annual security control inheritances must be established between ITS and ITS customers. In FY2012, ITS completed security controls inheritance reviews, agreement was received, and a matrix was submitted for ITS customers.

Continuity of Operation, Contingency and Disaster Recovery Planning

ITS provided support to the USDA CIO for National Level Effort (NLE) Continuity of Operation Planning (COOP) exercises, which were part of a series of Congressionally mandated preparedness exercises designed to educate and prepare participants for potential catastrophic events. Numerous exercises were conducted between ITS and SCAs in sites such as: Richmond, Virginia, Kansas City, Missouri, Casper, Wyoming, and Raleigh, North Carolina. Each exercise entailed a different scenario, such as a flood or cyber-attack at both the local and national level, to ensure Continuity of Operations during a disaster.

Unique to the NLE 2012 was an emphasis on the shared responsibility among all levels of government, the private sector and the international community to secure cyberspace and respond together to a significant cyber incident. ITS provided technical support to the agencies and ensured that the agencies could function during an emergency to meet their mission requirements. ITS also participated in multiple local testing events as a member of the Federal Executive Board/FEMA COOP working group.

As part of continuity of operations activities, ITS conducted four (4) quarterly call tree test-exercises using the Emergency Notification System (ENS) and obtained an average response rate of 87% from ITS personnel.

These notification test-exercises were designed to prepare and educate ITS participants for potential disaster events in any ITS-supported facility.

The ITS Contingency Planning (CP) and Disaster Recovery (DR) Project Coordination team published a SCA Disaster Recovery Reference Guide for the Web Farm, which established an effective communication process utilized between ITS, NITC, and the SCAs during the DR fail-over exercise.

ITS updated the ITS Business Continuity Plan (BCP) and coordinated the BCP test with the ACIO and Division Directors. ITS successfully coordinated the annual functional (fail-over) DR exercise in the St. Louis Data Center with participating SCAs (FSA and RD) Web Farms which included the creation/publishing of the SCA DR Exercise Reference Guide for the Web Farm.

Additionally, ITS supported ITS by participating in the first Microsoft hosted DR Tabletop Exercise for Enterprise Messaging Services – Cloud System (EMS-CS).

Policy Research Analysis

ITS provided more than **50 policy research analyses for ITS and ITS customers** throughout the year. This includes extensive research utilizing numerous regulations, legislation and other legally binding authorities. ITS also developed a crosswalk between the Department of Homeland Security, that included reviewing **over 400 total legislative regulations, orders and memos**.

Security Policy Exceptions

ITS **processed a total of 75 security policy exceptions for FY12**. The policy exception process was developed by the ITS Security Compliance team and implemented into the Change Management process. This included writing policy exception procedures. A part of ITS' function is to provide information for regulatory reporting.

FY12 included **answering approximately 25 regulatory requests**. A few examples include: Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) quarterly reports, Financial Manager's Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA) quarterly reports, Executive Dashboard (MITS 65) quarterly reports, and the annual FISMA/FMFIA Certification report for the Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

Streamline Printer Driver Certification Program (SPDCP)

In an effort to meet growing customer demands for a more expedient printer driver approval process, and to better posture ITS to support the rapidly evolving mobile user and Telework communities, ITS implemented the Streamlined Printer Driver Certification Program (SPDCP) and achieved the following results:

- Faster turnaround time for printer approvals
- Reduction of required testing and pilot deployments
- A streamlined process to maintain a driver repository
- Allowed users to have a better selection of devices to suit their needs

Realignment of Hosting Services

ITS led, planned, and integrated baseline documents representing the functional responsibilities of the teams on the NITC and ITS personnel in response to guidance from leadership and ensuring effective transfer of duties and developed requirements for the smooth transition of over 40 personnel between ITS and NITC supporting 49 different general skill groups while maintaining day to day operations and ensuring customer delivery was not impacted during the transition.

ITS implemented, documented, and recorded the necessary procedures and practices necessary to assure continued delivery of critical time sensitive services such as SSL certificates, server builds, database management and recovery from service outages for over 300 task specific roles and assignments.

Ensured alignment of key SCA deliverables and established initial agreements such as OLA, RACI Matrix, and Alignment Documentations between the teams to guarantee delivery while the transition was under way and maintained continuity of project management initiatives to ensure key projects and capabilities within ITS were not impacted by the realignment of personnel, processes or procedures. ITS also worked across organizational boundaries to establish the underlying procedures/handoffs for formalizing the integration of the ITS and NITC components.

Realignment of Account Management to Service Desk Operations

To improve customer service for timely and consistent SCA user account management (Active Directory [AD], e-mail), the Service Desk Operations (SDO) was given full responsibility for this function within TSD. SDO has met the monthly agencies' Service Level Agreement (SLA) since this inception.

Technical Upgrades

Windows 7 Deployment

Assumed a leadership role at the Departmental initiative to implement Windows 7. The number of installations crossed the 10,000 mark and is steadily climbing.

A significant portion of the Windows 7 deployment effort relates to Application Rationalization, which is the process whereby software is reviewed for its compatibility with the Windows 7 32-bit and 64-bit operating system platforms. ITS staff members have been reviewing hundreds of software titles, both commercially

available and internally developed, for compatibility with Windows 7 and the results are used to determine a user's fitness for migration.

Using Enterprise System Administration tools, ITS organized applications by number of installations in the environment and has been working diligently through the list. ITS fully expects to meet the transition timeframe, set by the Federal CIO of April, 2014.

Remedy Upgrades and Improvements

Problem Management Module

- In the continuing service effort of implementing the ITIL framework, Service Desk Operations implemented Phase 1 of ITIL's Problem Management components. Problem Management is structured to address the causes of incidents which pose the greatest risk. Problem Management focuses on the recurring services affecting events; it coordinates to find the root cause and then identifies the temporary work around or permanent fix for every incident that is identified with the problem

Knowledge Management Module

- In conjunction with the Problem Management implementation, ITS implemented a Knowledge Management module that provides a framework for creating, publishing, reviewing, and searching for knowledge based articles. The purpose of this module is to reduce the time from problem identification to resolution by providing a central repository of easy-to-find solutions for users, as well as support staff. This was initially rolled out to ITS and will be expanded

Remedy People Cleanup

- To improve data quality and business value, ITS spent many weeks reviewing the SCAs' people records within ITS' ticketing tool, Remedy. This task validated and normalized the database records with review by the SCAs' Point of Contact (POC) which **generated > 1,600 records which were obsolete and were deleted, taken off-line or access removed**

Incident Management and Change Requests

- ITS implemented a new E-mail Input system that allows for users to create Incident and Change Requests tickets into Remedy directly via e-mail. This significantly enhanced the reporting and tracking of incidents and other change requests within the organization

Server Deployment

Deployed Dell T610 servers to replace obsolete servers that no longer had maintenance agreements and that were at end of life. Servers are now under a maintenance contract rather than purchasing replacement parts/repair.

Centralized Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol

In the original deployment of the Common Computing Environment (CCE) Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) services were deployed on a local server in nearly every ITS supported office. This situation resulted in a very large number of DHCP instances to manage across the agencies and offices, which also increased the number of locations where logs had to be collected and managed. With improvements in the speed and reliability of the ITS network, DHCP services can now be centrally managed from four servers

located in the Kansas City and St. Louis data centers. This effort also helps to standardize the configuration of DHCP across the agencies and removes an additional service from the local offices that required the deployment of a local server.

National Headquarters Storage Infrastructure

Completed a total redesign of the storage and back-up infrastructure for the National Headquarters region, utilizing NX-3100 Storage Area Network devices to provide RAID 6 redundancy protection within each device. The addition of a 30-TB near-line storage solution in 2013 will ensure the staff supporting the Headquarters element will have sufficient storage space for years to come.

VMware ESX

In 2012, ITS completed the VMware ESX consolidation initiative where we analyzed existing clusters of all SCA and consolidated to create a single pool of resources without impacting reserved capacity. The effort restructured how network, VLANs and SAN are reassigned to reduce complexity, re-distributed virtual instances to optimize utilization rates, and decommissioned/repurposed excess hosts to replace end of life hardware.

The outcome of the initiative also allows the SCAs to reuse this excess hardware for other functions. For example, 29 FSA servers were repurposed for MIDAS project eliminating the purchasing of additional servers. NRCS has since taken the excess servers for development usages.

Account Validation Reporting (Auto-Disable Script)

Automated the process of identification of inactive accounts and disabling those accounts. This automation replaced the manual process of reviewing many reports by ITS and customer agencies. By working with the SCAs, re-engineering the process, and implementing automation, ITS reporting resource requirements have been **reduced by ~44% since June 2011**.

Service

Direct Support Information

Service Requests

Responded successfully to a **15% increase** in transactions from FY11. During FY12, **314,868 Incidents** and **126,998 Change Requests** were submitted into Remedy.

Servicing Locations

Supported more than 3,500 locations across the Western Hemisphere from Guam to Puerto Rico, covering 11 time zones.

Customer Satisfaction

ITS enjoys an 87% customer satisfaction rate, but is always looking to improve. This particular report was developed through the responses of more than 900 customers in the selection period. Although the report does show ITS services in a good light, there are a number of areas that ITS will continue to improve on.

Customer experience analysis will be a growing part of the Service activities for ITS. The mechanics of which are already in-development within SharePoint.

Tier One Service Desk Migration

With the ongoing effort to Streamline government, and produce cost savings while improving service, ITS TSD moved their Tier 1 Service Desk functions under an existing Forest Service contract. The contract is designed to decrease the costs of each incident ticket as the volume increases. The additional volume of ITS incidents allows the decreased cost per incident ticket to create a combined Forest Service and ITS cost savings of over a million dollars over the course of the year. In addition, the service to ITS' SCAs increased by **providing 24 hour by 7-day by 365 days support** to include a Service Level of **reaching a live Tier 1 agent within 45 seconds**.

Infrastructure Operations Center

The Infrastructure Operations Center (IOC) is an operation group responsible as the initial entry point for all backend infrastructure requests or incidents. (Note: All end users' support is funneled through SDO.)

- Following are key functions of the IOC:
 - Proactive monitoring of End User Server infrastructure and Enterprise Applications
 - Performing initial triage, troubleshooting and resolution up to 80% of incidents
 - Conducting initial customer fulfillment and incident reporting to customers and OCIO
 - Tracking and maintaining ITS server asset inventory
 - Performing activities that need to be executed after hours (example: backup/restore; review of various jobs running nightly, etc.)

Information Discovery and Litigation Support

ITS **effectively handled nearly 120 Information Discovery and Litigation Support (IDLS) cases** spanning ITS and the SCAs. The organization also developed an automated inventory of IDLS cases and implemented phase 1 of managing the entire IDLS service via Remedy. As a result, ITS can now more easily identify and respond to customer inquiries regarding archived/closed cases and identify trends in the types of cases being received.

ITS Equipment Donation Program

During FY12, ITS donated 4,816 units with an original acquisition cost of \$5,417,187.

Communications

ITS Web Presence Sites Enhanced

ITS improved the Internet **PUBLIC** facing web pages originally developed in 2004. The new site more clearly conveys ITS mission and goals. It also provides information on major ITS projects, products and services. The site is a central location of data that serves as a marketing and educational forum for external (existing and potentially new) customers as well as other interested parties.

ITS redesigned the ITS **EMPLOYEE PORTAL** as a reference point for the internal ITS community. The site provides information on the functions of the various ITS staffs and divisions and internal activities and projects. The pages provide a variety of useful links concerning government - wide, USDA and ITS employee services, communications, policies, and procedures.

ITS established a new **CUSTOMER** SharePoint site to provide information from all divisions of ITS to the customer. The site consists of announcements, tips, information on current technology, guides, notifications, alerts, and links to many useful sites. Customer Notifications, Quick Tips, MPS, OCE and Windows 7 information is provided on the site (<https://its.sc.egov.usda.gov/tsd/default.aspx>). It provides one stop shopping and keeps our customers informed about ITS activities.

The ITS web presence assists in clearly communicating our mission, critical projects, and function areas of ITS. The ITS web presence continues to be reviewed and updated to meet our communication goals.

Performance Metrics

A full year of Service Level Agreement (SLA) Performance Metric Reporting was conducted. Summary charts showing customer negotiated targets and actual performance were created. These showed trends over the year and alerted ITS when there was a need to make adjustments. The tracking of performance also provided managers with a benchmark to work toward continual service improvements. **Over 120 performance metrics were reported each month during FY12.**

Security Awareness

ITS made great leaps this year in the promotion of security practices.

The **Focus on Security Newsletter** has been published to maintain ongoing security awareness among end users in all ITS managed environments by addressing such topics as spear phishing, browsing security, PII, and wireless security.

ITS has also been very active in the creation of [awareness posters](#) for ITS supported end-users. These posters have been distributed across the country and were very well-received.

ITS Business Service Catalog

ITS redesigned the ITS Business Service Catalog with new service definitions to better meet customer needs. Additionally, major content and formatting changes were made to make it a more useful document. The information was included in the OCIO level Service Catalog.

ITS Personnel Development

In an effort to continually develop the expertise of USDA personnel to improve customer service:

- ITS completed an update and automation of employee Competency Profiles in AgLearn. This update better aligned employee profiles with OPM guidance and standards, and aided in the development of Individual Development Plans (IDP) designed to bridge employee skill gaps
- ITS supported USDA's Cultural Transformation Initiative by developing and conducting a learning series entitled, "Building Community", and a series of webinars focused on Diversity and Inclusion
- Enhanced Security Awareness Training: ITS developed AgLearn based Enhanced Security Awareness Training (ESAT). ESAT is a comprehensive end user security training offering available to the entire USDA to promote and instill solid security behaviors and practices. OCIO is using ESAT to satisfy FISMA training requirements for the USDA
- ITS developed an online [Digital Signatures](#) course for AgLearn to educate all employees on the use of LincPass to digitally sign and encrypt email, administrative and business documents, and other correspondence
- ITS completed EAD Training and 508 Awareness Training. These requirements are in addition to all OCIO mandated or required training
- ITS TSD personnel participated in the following training initiatives:
 - [Windows 7](#): Mandatory requirement for all TSD staff to prepare for support of Windows 7
 - [VMware](#): Mandatory requirement for all TSD staff for support of a new service offering by ITS
 - [Customer Service Training](#): Mandatory training for all TSD staff on customer service training. The training was specialized for ITS by SkillPath
 - ESI phone system programming

Remote Computing Capability

Remote Computing Capability provides full architectural support for a mobile workforce. ITS improved integration and access to the Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) and Citrix solutions, which provide virtual desktops and applications to a wide variety of mobile devices when combined with complementary 2 factor solutions such as EVPN and/or RSA tokens. These improvements give end users more options to access their data, while ensuring data is more secure than it has been in the past.

Moving Forward

New Services and Programs

OCE Initiative FY13 and beyond

The OCE initiative is a multi-year, phased effort with a significant amount of work for the coming year:

- FY13 OCE activities will focus on centralizing Field Service Center storage and services. The aging infrastructure will be centralized and incrementally expanded usage of virtual desktops will be leveraged to maintain a close relationship between desktops and the data they access
- The FY13 program will focus on the End User environment and include expansion of VoIP, increased number of WAN Optimization appliances in the field, and modernization of on-site server infrastructure through virtualization to replace end-of-life equipment. *Note all plans are based on FY funding*
- Throughout the remainder of this program ITS will continue the optimization of the SCA computing environment, modernizing infrastructure to meet the current and growing business needs. ITS will continue supporting agency modernization initiatives through the OCE initiative

Wireless Buy-Back Program

ITS is finalizing the Wireless Buy-Back Program, which is estimated to provide **25-50% of the cost of the wireless devices**.

- A program with AT&T is currently in pilot to obtain account credit for turning in old wireless telecommunications devices. This program will reduce E-Waste and will help ITS save the SCAs money. If the pilot is successful, ITS will fully implement the program later this fiscal year
- The program is easy to use and has no cost to the government. AT&T partner vendor, Clover Wireless, provides shipping materials and prepaid shipping labels. ITS will wipe old devices and ship them to Clover Wireless and receive credit on ITS' AT&T account if the devices have any value. If a device has no value, Clover Wireless will recycle and dispose of the device at no cost to the government
- If the program is a success, ITS will work to create similar programs with other wireless vendors such as Verizon and Sprint

Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) Migration

- Enterprise VoIP refers to software that provides Internet telephone capabilities. VoIP creates a system of converged communications and unified messaging, which then can enhance employee productivity. IOD and TSD worked together at the end of the FY12 to focus their attention and monies toward installing VoIP in the field service centers
- Today there are 1,700 phone systems throughout the nation which are extremely old and have been out of warranty for over 10 years. NRCS and FSA provided funding for 120 of their service centers and

ITS funded 274 sites giving 4,375 users VoIP capability. Local TSD staffs designated sites that were in critical need of being replaced. Installations will start in February 2013 with the Concert contractor completing the installations. TSD will provide support as needed and ensure that equipment is on site and legacy equipment removed from sites after successful installations

IPv6 Transition

ITS worked to transition 2012 mandated external customer-facing facilities from Internet Protocol version 4 (IPv4) to Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6).

- Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has mandated that by the end of FY12, U.S. Government Departments and Agencies upgrade public/external facing servers and services (web, email, DNS, and ISP services, etc.) to operationally use native IPv6
- OMB has mandated that by the end of FY14, all internal client applications that communicate with public internet servers and supporting enterprise networks to operationally use native IPv6. The transition for the 2012 mandate occurred at the ITS Web Farm facility located in the Kansas City NITC data center supporting public facing web server environments. This solution will support IPv6 connectivity while maintaining an IPv4 environment for public-facing web sites
- ITS has a secondary objective to transition all ITS customer-facing environments from IPv4 to IPv6 by 2014. This will include policies for all future additions to those environments
- ITS will be working with NITC, AT&T and OCIO teams to insure IPv6 connectivity to our customers external/public facing applications. ITS will receive and deliver all IPv6 requests to and from the external WAN via the ENS CER and AT&T network

Security Infrastructure Improvements

In FY13, ITS is improving its infrastructure in three program areas to replace end of life appliances and introduce new security capabilities:

- Audit Logging

ITS will be replacing its end of life Audit Logging appliances with Splunk servers. The Splunk servers will improve log search speeds, streamline log collection, and increase log source and data storage capacity. The Splunk servers will also improve ITS' security event monitoring capabilities, offering a better view of real-time events and security alerts.

- Intrusion Detection

ITS will be replacing its current Anval and Snort Network Intrusion Detection System (NIDS) with Sourcefire appliances. The Sourcefire appliances will improve the system speed, expand ITS' reporting capabilities, and allow ITS to have better central management of the NIDS solution.

- Vulnerability Scanning

ITS will be expanding its network scanning architecture to include passive vulnerability scanners (PVS). These scanners enhance ITS' current scanning solution by detecting vulnerabilities between scan cycles and providing a real-time view of the network's security state.

These system improvements will help ITS reduce the amount of time it takes to recognize and respond to security abnormalities across ITS supported environments.

DSL Inventory Project

A DSL Inventory reconciliation project is nearly complete. This project was launched to identify and disconnect unneeded DSL services. This project will result in over \$12,000 in yearly savings for all ITS customers as a whole.

Mobile Hotspot Project

ITS is developing a mobile hotspot project which will offer customers the opportunity to replace multiple broadband device connections (broadband card, laptop GOBI card, iPad, etc.) with one broadband connection via the customers' smartphone and WiFi technology. This project is projected to save each participating user approximately \$335 each per year.

Remedy

During FY13, ITS will provide public-facing access to the e-mail interface to allow support staff access through mobile devices.

A New Customer – The National Information Technology Center (NITC)

ITS is extremely excited about our newest customer. NITC is the premier hosting services provider for the Department, and is a valued partner with ITS in providing end-user services to the Department.

- Staff consists of approximately 325 personnel
- Each person receives a new user account and ITS TSD utilized for the first time the Microsoft Exchange Automatic Service Reconnect (ASR) process for moving the BPOS mailbox from the old account to new. With this process the users retain their original e-mail address and contacts without interruption to service
- Each workstation will have been reimaged with the latest OCIO Supported OS, Windows 7
- There are approximately 160 Mobile Smart Phones that all will be re-provisioned at completion of the project
- ITS providing Desktop Support Services to NITC streamlines all end user services to NITC, since NITC currently uses ITS's SharePoint, OCS and VPN services, we have now taken position as a one source full service IT Service Provider

As part of the OCIO Market Alignment strategy, ITS further aligned its organizational structure to focus on End User Delivery to standardize services and eliminated duplicative functions. Starting October 1, 2011, ITS became the single customer of NITC for all hardware and software solutions as they relate to the SCA business web applications. ITS worked closely with NITC to finalize the transition. By allowing ITS to focus on service delivery, ITS can provide more guidance, support, and technical expertise to the customer agencies with applications in the Web Farm. This re-alignment provides the opportunity for high-quality application integration services focused on customer requirements and business needs.

Summary

As part of USDA's administrative transformation initiative aimed to reduce costs without sacrificing customer service, improve processes, and reduce redundancies, ITS will continue to examine end user computing support and IT services. We are committed to improving on our established track record of success. Together we will get the right things done and make great things happen. As previously mentioned, Innovation, Delivery and Service are not simply words on our graphic. They form the basis by which we meet our Mission statement and ensure our Vision is delivered to our customers.

Glossary

Agriculture Security Operations Center (ASOC)

Department-level security organization within the USDA's Office of the CIO that is responsible for Department operational security direction and services.

Business Services Division (BSD)

Providing the products and services to support the administration of ITS, Financial Execution, Asset and Financial Management, and Employee Assistance Branches are instrumental to managing a large organization with a geographically-dispersed customer base.

Enterprise Active Directory (EAD)

EAD is a Department-wide initiative that will consolidate duplicative systems and ultimately reduce the cost of providing directory services.

Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS)

USDA Agency that improves foreign market access for U.S. products, builds new markets, increase competitiveness for U.S. agriculture in the global marketplace, and assistance to developing foreign countries.

Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA)

An act passed as Title III of the E-Government Act (Public Law 107-347) in December 2002. It requires each federal agency to develop, document, and implement an agency-wide program to provide information security for the information and information systems that support the operations and assets of the agency, including those provided or managed by another agency, contractor, or other source.

(From National Institute of Standards and Technology-NIST <http://csrc.nist.gov/groups/SMA/fisma/faqs.html>)

Farm Service Agency (FSA)

FSA is a USDA Agency that administers farm commodity, crop insurance, credit, environmental, conservation, and emergency assistance programs for farmers and ranchers.

Governance Services Division (GSD)

The Division within ITS responsible for leading ITS process improvement initiatives, ensuring ITS security compliance, providing project management services, and implementing ITS ITSM based on the ITIL best practices.

Information Discovery and Litigation Support (IDLS) Directive

A directive that sets the roles and responsibilities for all activities related to the preservation and production of electronic data between ITS and ITS customer agencies for purposes of information discovery and litigation support.

Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL)

ITIL is the most widely adopted framework for IT Service Management in the world. It is a practical, no-nonsense approach to the identification, planning, delivery and support of IT services to the business.

Infrastructure Operations Division (IOD)

The Division within ITS which is responsible for the operations and maintenance of the back-office infrastructure, which includes telecommunications, operations security, infrastructure and software deployment, and the operations and maintenance of customer business applications.

IT Service Management (ITSM)

A discipline for managing information IT systems, philosophically centered on the customer's perspective of IT's contribution to the business. ITSM stands in deliberate contrast to technology-centered approaches to IT management and business interaction.

Lean Six Sigma (LSS)

Lean Six Sigma is a powerful, flexible and proven cost and waste elimination method that focuses on process speed and efficiency. This problem solving methodology includes: Define & Measure, Analyze & Improve, and Control.

MIDAS

A multi-phased program for streamlining FSA business processes and developing modernized long-term IT systems & architecture supporting farm programs.

National Finance Center (NFC)

NFC operates an integrated Payroll/Personnel System and provides all the necessary related support services for the payroll process for more than 140 Federal Agencies.

National Information Technology Center (NITC)

Department-level data center operations organization within the USDA's Office of the CIO.

National Office Support Division (NOSD)

The Division within ITS responsible for providing dedicated end user support to staff in the DC National Headquarters.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

USDA agency that is the primary federal agency that works with private landowners to help them conserve, maintain and improve their natural resources.

Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

OMB oversees and coordinates the Federal procurement policy, performance and personnel management, information technology (e-Government) and financial management. In this capacity, OMB oversees agency management of programs and resources to achieve legislative goals and Administration policy.

Optimized Computing Environment (OCE)

The shared, secure, and centrally managed computing system that supports all ITS customers. It provides both the core set of applications (such as Microsoft Office and Adobe Acrobat) and network access; it also runs applications specific to customer organizations. OCE is a platform that can handle the current generation of tools and support future improvements.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

Any information that can potentially be used to uniquely identify, contact, or locate a single person. Legislation has been enacted to protect PII, because information technology and the internet have made collection easier to be exploited for profitable or criminal use.

Quality of Service (QoS)

Provides better service for priority business network traffic (video, teleconferencing), together with WAN Optimization, this solution provides moderate to dramatic optimization results.

Rural Development (RD)

USDA Agency that creates partnerships with rural communities to fund projects that bring housing, community facilities, utilities and other services to increase rural Americans' economic opportunities and improve their quality of life.

Remedy-ITSM

A term used to describe the ITS implementation of BMC Software's Remedy Service Desk application that is used to establish an IT Service Management based on ITIL best practice IT Service processes.

Service Center Agencies (SCA)

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency (FSA), and Rural Development (RD) with the Agriculture Department are collectively referred to as the SCA.

Service Level Agreement (SLA)

An agreement made with customer organizations, which defines the service requirements.

Technical Support Division (TSD)

TSD is the Division within ITS responsible for providing end user support to all ITS customers throughout the United States and its territories.

Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI)

A framework used to separate a personal computer desktop environment from a physical machine using a client-server model of computing. The model stores the resulting virtualized desktop on a remote central server, instead of on the local storage of a remote client; thus, when users work from their remote desktop client, all of the programs, applications, processes, and data used are kept and run centrally. This scenario allows users to access their desktops on any capable device, such as a traditional personal computer, notebook computer, smart phone, or thin client.

Voice over IP (VoIP)

Voice over IP commonly refers to the [communication protocols](#), technologies, methodologies, and transmission techniques involved in the delivery of [voice communications](#) and [multimedia](#) sessions over [Internet Protocol](#) (IP) networks

Whole Disk Encryption (WDE)

WDE refers to a class of disk encryption software that prevents unauthorized access to data storage independent of the native operating system of the device.

Wide Area Network (WAN)

A Wide Area Network (WAN) is a network that covers a broad area (i.e., any [telecommunications network](#) that links across metropolitan, regional, or national boundaries) using private or [public](#) network transports.