

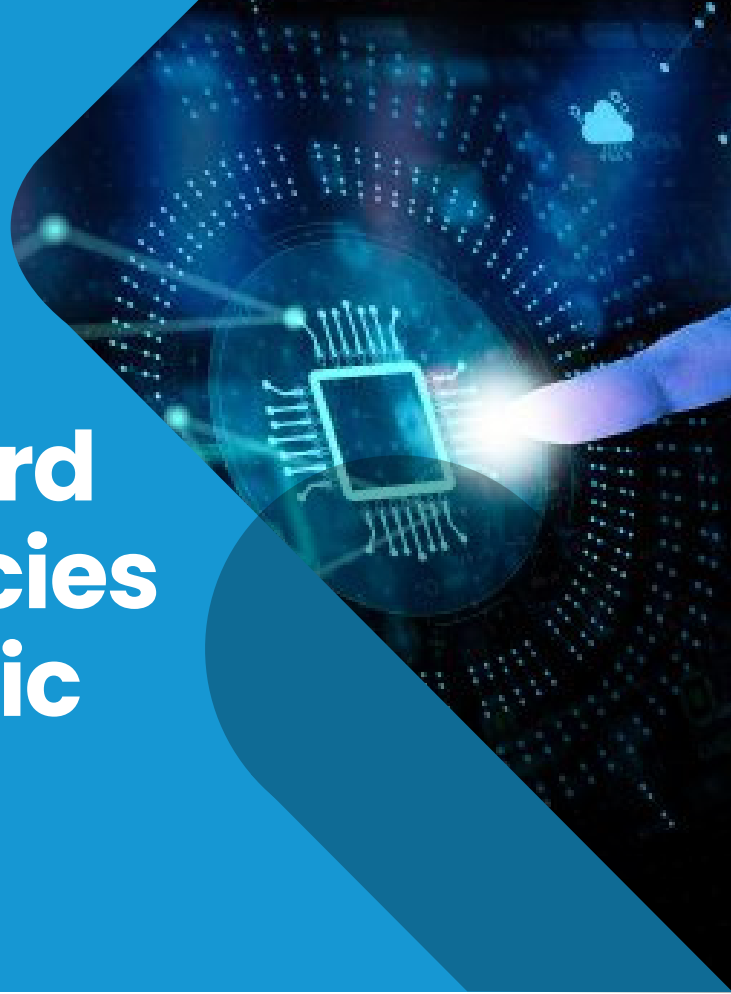
# With the Next FITARA Scorecard Looming, Agencies Look for Strategic Advantages

By: Jenna Sindle, Managing Editor

Every six months the federal government's 23 CFO agencies receive a FITARA scorecard detailing their IT modernization progress. FITARA – the Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act – mandates these assessments. It has become one of the most important pieces of legislation for federal agencies, helping eliminate legacy IT and build an IT infrastructure that's fit-for-mission in the 21st century. With the guidance provided by the half-yearly scorecards federal agencies are now receiving passing grades and are at the point where Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-Va), chairman of the FITARA subcommittee in Congress, noted that it was time to update categories to focus on "how agencies can improve citizen experience, boost

Federal IT workforce skills, and "move to an agile and secure cloud computing environment."

However, each scorecard requires a significant effort on the part of each agency to prepare for the assessments, align requirements, and demonstrate compliance and progress. And now, as the CIO Council looks to move forward with Technology Business Management (TBM) standards reporting is likely to become more onerous with the anticipation of IT cost transparency reporting. The time intensive process required to document each agency's progress against the criteria creates a significant burden and shifts focus away from delivering on the mission.



Some agencies, including the U.S. Army with its decision to transition to Enterprise IT as-a-Service (EITaaS), are able to use the transition to cloud to reduce the burden on their IT workers by implementing solutions that align operations and reporting with FITARA requirements. “Where we’re seeing most progress with this streamlining of business operations is where agencies have embraced the cloud,” shared Rob Davies, Chief Operating Officer at ViON. “What I’m talking about is not just moving workloads to the cloud but building a multi-cloud ecosystem so that each workload is in the right place, bringing in elements of Technology Business Management (TBM) and seeing cloud not just as a technology offering, but as a business and operating model.”

“With the right solution in place it’s easier to collect and consolidate the right data because FITARA reporting requirements are aligned natively, be that for IT infrastructure usage or for spend,” Davies explained. “When a solution is built using internationally recognized best practices – and for FITARA this is ISO 9001 – and when industry partners are committed to maintain their own certification and compliance you have a framework to present information that is always available and always reliable. This means that reporting is no longer an additional task, but something that is part of an agency’s capabilities and one that can be run reliably time after time without that Herculean effort.”

As agencies continue on their FITARA journey, the markers of success will less likely be whether they have moved to the cloud, but whether they’ve improved the overall management of IT and delivery of services to the citizenry and/or missing delivery. “Moving to the cloud is the foundation of this transformative journey,” concluded Davies. “Part of that transformation is being able to introduce applications, process workloads and apply data to meet the mission in tactical ways as we saw during the pandemic, with remote work, for example, but there’s so much more, including having the right tools available through a marketplace that provides visibility and insights alleviating the pressures of managing the cloud and reporting for FITARA. When an agency can demonstrate that it has granular-level insight into not just its IT operations and performance but its budget too, it gives them more latitude to advance the mission at a pace we’ve never seen before.”