



OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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MEMORANDUM FOR **RICHARD K. DELMAR, DEPUTY INSPECTOR GENERAL**

FROM: Deborah L. Harker, Assistant Inspector General for Audit

SUBJECT: Plan to Establish a Data Literacy Program for the
Department of the Treasury Office of Inspector General
(OIG-CA-23-047)

Introduction

This document outlines a plan for the Department of the Treasury (Treasury) Office of Inspector General (OIG) to establish a Data Literacy Program to promote the agency to a highly data-literate and data-driven organization with the capabilities for robust, strategic, data-based decision-making. The plan will provide a roadmap using five steps that include establishing a definition of data literacy as well as a vision and goal for the program.

Definition: Data literacy is the ability to read, analyze, extract meaningful information from, and communicate using data regardless of individual role, level, or tools used.

A data literate organization is one in which employees can embrace and use data in all that they do. Employees who are data literate can:

- Have meaningful conversations about data, to include asking the right questions of data
- Do their own critical thinking and analyses using data and interpret the findings from the analyses
- Make data-based decisions rather than experience or intuition-based ones
- Use data to communicate ideas and to help take or recommend informed action
- Understand and use data visualizations.

Data Literacy Roadmap



As part of establishing a Data Literacy Program for Treasury OIG, employees will take five steps to achieve data literacy.

1. Envision

Treasury OIG established a vision and goal for data literacy.

Vision: To be a data-driven organization, where employees have access to the data needed to make informed decisions and the ability to understand and use data in their work.

Goal: To embed data and analytics into Treasury OIG products and services and to develop the skills, ability, and willingness to embrace, collaborate with, and understand insights gleaned through data analysis and data science to make decisions and recommendations.

2. Assess

Before Treasury OIG can determine what is needed to complete the journey to being a highly functioning, fully data-literate organization, it must first know the current level of data literacy knowledge, skills, and experience of the existing workforce. In September 2018, a survey was sent to Office of Audit (OA) personnel to create an analytic benchmark for the office, however the workforce has changed considerably since that time. A similar, revised tool will be developed to assess all current employees at Treasury OIG. The results from the tool will be used to determine what areas need improvement or reinforcement and where to focus data literacy efforts.

3. Educate

Once Treasury OIG has a solid understanding of where its workforce stands, training, tools, and other actions will be developed and executed to educate, facilitate, and maximize the level of employee data literacy. These items will take a comprehensive approach to improving the collective experience and proficiency across the agency. For example, not only are formal training courses an avenue towards data literacy, investments in coaching, on-the-job training, and supervisory reinforcement will be instrumental to achieving agency-wide data literacy and the ability to make data-based decisions.

The recent addition of the Data Analytics team was a strong step down the road of data literacy. The team has already instituted and completed a number of in-house training courses, skills workshops, and presentations in the areas of data analytics and data resources. They have also developed a number of tools used by auditors, investigators, and attorneys in performing their job functions. These tools form an excellent foundation and launching pad for the development and prolific use of additional, new tools and techniques. Further, the continued integration of the team into audit and investigative work will continue as they serve as a resource for employees across Treasury OIG.

In addition to the establishment and execution of training and tools, a number of other options will be considered. For example, an OIG-wide data literacy group or committee may be established and convened to oversee and/or direct planning and logistics of various data literacy initiatives. Additionally, the inclusion of data and data analytics efforts will be embedded into work planning cycles such as annual planning. Further, various data literacy initiatives will be considered for inclusion into Senior Executive Service (SES) and others' strategic initiatives and performance plans, thus ensuring employees and leaders are vested in the success of the Program.

4. Evaluate

Each Office will define metrics to measure and evaluate progress towards data literacy objectives. Example metrics include

- Number of instructor-led data literacy and related training courses, brown-bag sessions, or presentations delivered
- Percent of employees that completed instructor-led data literacy and related training courses (internal or external)
- Number or percent of products issued with findings resulting from data analysis or data science techniques
- Number of job aides, best practice guidance documents, or other tools/resources developed
- Amount of traffic, downloads, etc. generated by new, data literacy-related SharePoint sites.

Periodic, interim agency or Office-wide goals will be established and progress towards the goals will be measured, evaluated, and discussed. SES, directors, and managers may establish, measure, and evaluate progress towards individual goals for their employees as well. Similarly the Data Literacy Program will be periodically re-assessed and re-tooled or re-focused as needed.

5. Enable

Treasury OIG is committed to using data and data analytics as a means for increasing transparency/accountability, identifying risks, measuring performance, and expanding oversight capabilities. Treasury OIG leadership shares the data literacy vision and promotes positive growth, process integration, and milestone achievement. Through continued upskilling and reinforcement of existing skills and the creation and use of new tools and products, data literacy will enable Treasury OIG to become a fully functioning, data-driven organization.

As such we are also committed to launching and executing a transformational Data Literacy Program in Fiscal Year 2024 and look forward to the many benefits gained.



Celebrate Data Literacy in Action

Data Literacy Program Framework¹

The following is a framework containing initial components to be developed and/or included in the Data Literacy Program.

- I. Development of vision, goal, and Data Literacy definition
- II. Implementation of an Information Technology (IT) infrastructure to include data governance and the related policies and procedures for information management principles, information sharing techniques, and data management methodologies
- III. Assessment
 - A. Data Literacy Assessment
 - B. Training needs assessment (based on Data Literacy Assessment results)
- IV. Training

¹ Items in gray are already completed/developed as of August 30, 2023.

- A. Instructor-led (formal in-house/no cost)
 - 1. Performing a Data Reliability Assessment²
 - 2. USAspending Overview³
 - 3. Federal Audit Clearinghouse Single Audits⁴
 - 4. Introduction to Data Analysis
 - 5. New tools⁵
 - a. Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) risk model
 - b. Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program dashboard and risk model
 - c. ERA complaint triage app/portal
 - d. Single Audit dashboard
 - e. Media Inquiries app
- B. Brown bag seminars/Coffee Chat sessions⁶
 - 1. ERA complaint triage app
 - 2. Data transformation and preparation
 - 3. Communicating Audit Results Through Visualization
- C. Self-paced/How-To/Micro-training [*Note: placed on Data Analytics SharePoint site*]⁷
 - 1. Links for external training
 - 2. Spreadsheet manipulation
 - 3. Visualization and dashboards
 - 4. Data preparation and analysis
 - 5. General Data Literacy

V. Tools

- A. Data Analytics SharePoint site
 - 1. Data Analytics team-developed tools
 - a. ERA Risk Model
 - b. CRF Risk Model
 - c. Single Audit dashboard
 - 2. Audit resources
 - a. Data reliability

² To describe and understand the principles behind and steps involved in assessing the reliability of data used for audits.

³ To understand the Treasury assistance award prime recipient data posted to USAspending and how to view and download the data for further use.

⁴ To understand how to view and obtain single audit information available on the Federal Audit Clearinghouse (FAC) website, including entity audit reports and the Form SF-SAC Data Collection Form. Also to understand the nuances between the public and secure versions of audit report information available.

⁵ Training to describe, implement, and use tools developed by the Data Analytics team for internal Treasury OIG purposes.

⁶ Virtual/video sessions that are shorter and less formal than instructor-led training sessions and cover a variety of topics of interest to Treasury OIG personnel

⁷ An assortment of links, videos, slides, etc. to train and educate Treasury OIG personnel on various topics on demand, at their own pace.

