



**U.S. AbilityOne Commission
Office of Inspector General**

The AbilityOne Commission's Strategic Plan Could Benefit From Enhancements

OE-2024-01

December 19, 2024

U.S. AbilityOne Commission Office of Inspector General

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**U.S. AbilityOne Commission
Office of Inspector General**

355 E Street SW (OIG Suite 335)
Washington, DC 20024-3243

December 19, 2024

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jeffrey A. Koses
Chairperson
U.S. AbilityOne Commission

Kimberly M. Zeich
Executive Director
U.S. AbilityOne Commission

FROM: Stefania Pozzi Porter *Stefania Pozzi Porter*
Inspector General
U.S. AbilityOne Commission OIG

SUBJECT: Final Report of The AbilityOne Commission's Strategic Plan Could Benefit From Enhancements

We are pleased to provide the following **final** evaluation report on the U.S. AbilityOne Commission's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. The U.S. AbilityOne Commission Office of Inspector General (OIG), Office of Evaluation conducted this review.

We appreciate the Commission's assistance during the course of the evaluation. If you have any questions, please contact me or Laurretta A. L. Joseph, Assistant IG for Evaluation and acting Assistant IG for Audit at 571-329-3419 or at ljoseph@oig.abilityone.gov.

cc: Chai Feldlbun
Vice Chairperson
U.S. AbilityOne Commission

Kelvin Wood
Chief of Staff
U.S. AbilityOne Commission

U.S. AbilityOne Commission Office of Inspector General

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Results in Brief

Evaluation: The AbilityOne Commission's Strategic Plan Could Benefit From Enhancements

Office of Inspector General Report No. OE 2024 01. Report Date: December 19, 2024

Why We Performed This Evaluation

The OIG Evaluation office initiated an evaluation to determine whether the U.S. AbilityOne Commission's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan contained the necessary framework, including specific operational initiatives, objectives, and associated performance measures. This evaluation was conducted to identify elements to consider incorporating in the next iteration of their strategic plan.

What We Evaluated

The evaluation team reviewed and analyzed the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan for the U.S. AbilityOne Commission. We used Government Performance and Results and Modernization Act, the Evidence Act, and OMB Circular A-11 as the criteria for this evaluation. We conducted this evaluation in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation issued by the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency.

What We Found

Overall, the Commission created a thoughtful and attainable approach to developing a new strategic plan to work toward the goal of modernizing the AbilityOne Program. We found that the Commission's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan includes all required strategic plan elements according to federal regulations.

The Commission is a non-Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Act agency, and some statutory elements are not required. As a part of this evaluation, the OIG identified that the inclusion of two additional elements would further enhance the effectiveness of the next iteration of the Commission's strategic plan. Specifically, the Commission potentially missed key learning opportunities for its strategic plan goals, objectives, and measures because it did not conduct evidence building activities or perform its own internal program evaluations. Furthermore, the Commission should incorporate more quantitative measures in the next iteration. Although the Commission has met federal requirements, these additional elements would provide a more comprehensive and evidence-based approach for measuring the progress toward goals and objectives in the AbilityOne program.

What We Recommend

The OIG recommended that the AbilityOne Commission meet with Commission members and stakeholders to determine whether (1) incorporating evidence building and (2) program evaluation into its next strategic planning process would help in identifying key areas of

improvement and improve outcomes. The OIG also recommended that the AbilityOne Commission enhance its ability to track and monitor progress and the successful implementation of agency goals, by establishing and incorporating quantitative measures into the 2026-2030 strategic plan.

Table of Contents

Objectives and Background	1
Scope and Methodology	6
Results	7
Recommendations	9
Appendix	11
Appendix A Management Comments	11

Objectives and Background

Objective

The objective of our evaluation was to determine whether the U.S. AbilityOne Commission's 2022- 2026 Strategic Plan contained the necessary framework, including specific operational initiatives, objectives, and associated performance measures.

Background

Commission – Including Central Nonprofit Agency (CNA) and Nonprofit Agency (NPA) Structure

Enacted in 1938, the Wagner-O'Day Act established the Committee on Purchases of Blind-Made Products to provide employment opportunities for the blind. In 1971, Congress amended and expanded the Wagner-O'Day Act with the Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Act¹ to include persons with significant disabilities. The 1971 amendments also changed the name of the Committee to the Committee for Purchase from People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled to reflect the expanded capabilities of the JWOD Program. The program is currently a source of employment for approximately 37,000 people who are blind or have significant disabilities and are employed by approximately 420 NPAs across all fifty states and U.S. territories.

In 2006, the JWOD Program was renamed the AbilityOne Program, and the Committee took on the branded name of the U.S. AbilityOne Commission (hereinafter referred to as the Commission) in 2011. The Commission is composed of fifteen Presidential appointees: eleven members representing Federal agencies and four members serving as private citizens from the blind and disabled community, bringing their expertise in the field of employment of people who are blind or have significant disabilities. In 2024, the Commission has approximately 34 full-time employees who administer and oversee the AbilityOne Program (hereinafter referred to as the Program), which includes nearly \$4 billion in products and services provided to the Federal government annually.

The Commission maintains and publishes a Procurement List (PL) of specific products and services, which Federal agency purchase agents must buy to help meet the department's mission needs. Under the JWOD Act and its implementing Federal regulations codified in title 41 of the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, chapter 51, the Commission is responsible for establishing the rules, regulations, and policies of the Program. The NPAs² furnish the products and services (including military resale commodities) on the PL to the Federal Government.

¹ United States Code (U.S.C) Title 41, Subtitle IV, Chapter 85, Sections 8501 - 8506

² See 41 U.S.C. § 46 et seq., 41 CFR 51-1.3, and 41 CFR 51-2.8(a).

The Commission delegates certain program management responsibilities to its designated Central Nonprofit Agencies (CNAs). Each NPA is affiliated with a CNA. The CNAs evaluate and recommend NPA initial qualification to the Commission and provide regulatory assistance to the NPAs it represents, to facilitate and support the NPAs in maintaining qualification.³ CNAs recommend which NPA(s) to assign to a particular project, which, if determined to be feasible, becomes a proposed PL addition. The CNAs include:

- National Industries for the Blind (NIB), whose mission is to enhance the personal and economic independence of people who are blind, primarily through creating, sustaining, and improving employment. As of September 30, 2023, NIB had 178 employees and annual revenue of nearly \$35 million.
- SourceAmerica®, whose mission is to increase the employment of people with disabilities by building strong partnerships with the Federal government and engaging a national network of NPAs and experts. As of September 30, 2023, SA had 478 employees and annual revenue of more than \$197 million.

U.S. AbilityOne Commission Office of Inspector General

In 2013, GAO issued a report titled *Employing People with Blindness or Severe Disabilities: Enhanced Oversight of the AbilityOne Program Needed*. This report stated that the AbilityOne Commission does not have procedures to monitor alleged CNA control violations, nor is there an inspector general to provide independent audit and investigation capabilities for the program, including the CNAs. As a result, GAO presented Congress a consideration of establish an inspector general and provided additional recommendations to the Commission to enhance program oversight.

On December 18, 2015, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016 (P.L. 114-113) amended the Inspector General Act of 1978 (IG Act) and created the Office of Inspector General (OIG) at AbilityOne as a designated federal entity IG. The OIG is responsible for conducting audits, evaluations, and investigations, recommending policies and procedures that promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of agency resources and programs, and detecting and preventing fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement. The IG Act requires the IG to keep the Commission and Congress fully and currently informed about problems and deficiencies in the Commission's operations and the need for any corrective action.

Strategic Plan Requirements

The Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010 (GPRAMA) and the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Evidence Act) are the two regulatory documents that outline the requirements for agencies developing a strategic plan. However, non -CFO Act agencies, such as the U.S. AbilityOne Commission, are only

³ See 41 CFR 51-1.3, 51-2.2, 51-3.2, 51-4.2 and 51-4.3.

encouraged to implement these elements. In addition, Office of Management and Budget Circular No. A-11 (OMB A-11) serves as a guidance document for how strategic plans should be constructed. A-11 references GPRAMA and the Evidence Act throughout the document, further enforcing the guiding nature of the document. A-11 provides specific information and examples of what to include in an effective strategic plan.

Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010

GPRAMA⁴ established “important changes to existing requirements and places emphasis on priority-setting, cross organizational collaboration to achieve shared goals, and the use of analysis of goals and measurement to improve outcomes.” GPRAMA “serves as a foundation for engaging leaders in performance improvement and creating a culture where data and empirical evidence play a greater role in policy, budget, and management decisions.” GPRAMA provides the basic requirements that must be included in a strategic plan. All strategic plans must contain the following eight elements:

1. a comprehensive mission statement,
2. goals and objectives, including outcome-oriented goals,
3. a description of how any goals and objectives contribute to the Federal Government priority goals,
4. a description of how the goals and objectives are to be achieved including operational processes, skills and technology, and the human capital, information, and other resources required to achieve those goals and objectives; as well as a description of how the agency is working with other agencies,
5. how the goals and objectives incorporate views and suggestions obtained through congressional consultations,
6. how the performance goals contribute to the general goals and objectives in the strategic plan,
7. identification of those key factors external to the agency, and
8. a description of the program evaluations.⁵

Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018

The Evidence Act⁶ was established by Congress to require agencies to use evidence-based practices when developing their strategic plans. Many federal agency missions, programs, and strategies are statutorily required, and the strategic plan should reflect those elements as

⁴ The GPRAMA was enacted in January 2011 and modernized the Federal Government’s performance management framework, retaining and amplifying some aspects of the GPRA while also addresses some of its weaknesses.

⁵ Section 2

⁶ Per Evaluation.gov, the Evidence Act, signed into law on January 14, 2019, emphasizes collaboration and coordination to advance data and evidence-building functions in the Federal Government by statutorily mandating Federal evidence-building activities, open government data, and confidential information protection and statistical efficiency.

necessary. Some portions of the strategic plan can be more descriptive while other portions can be more long term and forward-looking to reflect other priorities.

The Evidence Act, Section 312 (a) requires CFO Act agencies (non-CFO Act agencies are encouraged⁷) to include in the strategic plan a systemic plan for identifying and addressing policy questions relevant to the programs, policies and regulations of the agency. Specifically, the Evidence Act requires policy-relevant questions that provide evidence for policymaking, a list of the types of data the agency intends to collect, use or acquire to help with policymaking, a list of methods and analytical approaches that may be used, a list of challenges in developing evidence to support policymaking, and how an agency will identify questions and collect data for evidence based policymaking. Further, the Evidence Act states that the agency strategic plans are supported by the inclusion of the agency's Evidence-Building Plan, also known as the Learning Agenda⁸. The Learning Agenda is a "systemic plan for identifying and addressing policy related questions relevant to the programs, policies, and regulations of the agency." It establishes and maps the activities agencies will undertake to answer important short-and long term strategic and operational questions most pressing to achieving the agency's mission.

Additional Guidance

OMB A-11, Section 230.2, notes that an agency's strategic goals and objectives should be used to align resources and guide decision-making to accomplish priorities to improve outcomes. That includes informing agency decision-making about the need for major new acquisitions, information technology, strategic human capital planning, evaluations and other evidence-building and evidence-capacity building investments. Strategic plans can also help agencies invite ideas and stimulate innovation to advance agency goals. The strategic plan should support planning across organizational operating units and describe how agency components are working toward common results. An agency formulates its strategic plan with input from Congress, OMB, the public and the agency's personnel, and stakeholders and makes the plan easily accessible to all.

The Commission's Strategic Plan

In December 2015, Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, Public Law 114- 113, that included certain directives for the Commission, specifically to (1) enter into written agreements with the CNAs to provide auditing, oversight, and reporting requirements; and (2) stand up an Office of Inspector General for the Commission. In 2021, the Commission determined that it wanted to take a strategic direction and work towards changing the narrative and understanding of the AbilityOne Program. The original program was created in 1938 and, according to the Commission's Executive Director, the program has not been significantly modernized or changed since the 1971 Javits amendment and the 1991 regulatory changes.

⁷ OMB Circular A-11, Section 290.01

⁸ A learning agenda is equivalent to the agency evidence-building plan required in Section 101 of the Evidence Act. 5 U.S.C. §312(a).

According to the Executive Director, the two strategic plans prior to 2022 did not substantially change from previous years, and the program's strategic direction was relatively consistent for the last decade prior to 2022. While planning for the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, the Commission's Members decided to update the mission and vision statement, identified core concepts, determined how the strategic plan should be constructed, and solicited feedback from the CNAs, NPAs, and stakeholders. Most of the CNAs and NPAs that we spoke to confirmed that they participated in providing feedback on the strategic plan.

The Commission's Strategic Plan has four overarching objectives:

1. Transform the AbilityOne Program to expand competitive integrated employment for people who are blind or have significant disabilities;
2. Identify, publicize, and support the increase of good jobs and optimal jobs in the AbilityOne Program;
3. Ensure effective governance and results across the AbilityOne Program; and
4. Engage in partnerships to increase employment for people who are blind or have significant disabilities within and beyond the AbilityOne Program.

During the development and implementation of its 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, the Commission focused on having ongoing conversations with Congress and stakeholders to bring more attention to the program. The Commission engaged with CNAs, NPAs, and disability advocacy groups during the development of the Strategic Plan.

With its issuance in 2022, the Commission stated that the Strategic Plan contains the "updated mission and vision statements that reinforce the purpose of the AbilityOne Program". It also included "outcome goals, strategies and performance measures [that] clearly communicate the Commission's direction and resource prioritization."⁹ The Commission also indicated that the strategic plan provides the roadmap for accomplishing the Commission's priorities over the next five years.

When developing measures for the Strategic objectives, the Commission said it considered performance indicators from a practical standpoint. Qualitative and quantitative measures are important in determining successful strategic plan implementation. Qualitative measures explain the "how" and "why", but do not rely on statistical research. Quantitative measures provide baseline data that can be used to track the Commission's implementation of the AbilityOne program and help move the Commission in its new direction. The Commission used mostly qualitative measures it viewed as attainable, based on its resources, as performance metrics. These measures included rulemaking, policy making, conducting outreach, and data collection.

⁹ The Commission's strategic plan: <https://www.abilityone.gov/commission/documents/AbilityOne%20Strategic%20Plan%20FY%202022-2026%20Final.pdf>.

Scope and Methodology

We completed our fieldwork from May 2024 through October 2024. We conducted this evaluation in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation issued by the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency.

The OIG evaluation team reviewed and analyzed the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan of the U.S. AbilityOne Commission. The OIG used GPRAMA, the Evidence Act, and OMB Circular A-11 as the criteria for this evaluation. The OIG interviewed the Commission's Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. The OIG also interviewed the Commission's Executive Director. The OIG team also spoke with leadership of the CNAs, SourceAmerica® and NIB. During those discussions, both the Commission and the CNAs suggested the names of several NPAs that the OIG could speak with for more information. Those NPAs were later contacted for their comments on the Commission's current strategic plan.

Results

The Commission's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan has the necessary framework but would benefit from the inclusion of additional elements and the inclusion of more quantitative measures. The current strategic plan contains all the required strategic plan elements according to federal regulations. However, the OIG found that the next iteration of the strategic plan could be enhanced by including a section on evidence building and internal program evaluation. The Commission potentially missed key learning opportunities when formulating its current strategic plan goals, objectives, and measures because it did not conduct evidence-building activities or perform its own internal program evaluations. Without more quantitative measures and the concrete baseline data that comes with them, the Commission will not have a reliable measure of success for the program.

Some of the required components of an agency strategic plan include mission, goals, and consultations with Congress. Figure 1 highlights the Commission's success in developing a strategic plan with the necessary elements within its framework.

Figure 1: Necessary Elements Included in 2022-2026 Strategic Plan

Strategic Plan Requirements	Included in Commission's Plan*
Mission statement	✓
General goals and objectives	✓
Contribute to the federal government priority goals	✓
How the goals and objectives are achieved	✓
Incorporate views and suggestions from congressional consultations	✓
Performance goals	✓**
Identification of key external factors	✓
Program evaluations	✓

* The Commission also ensured the plan was created by federal employees and covered a four-year period.

** included as a part of the Commission's annual Performance and Accountability Report

Additional Elements Would Strengthen the Strategic Plan

The Commission created a thoughtful and attainable approach to developing a new strategic plan to work toward the goal of modernizing the AbilityOne program. The Commission is a non-Chief Financial Officers (CFO) agency, therefore some elements of the Evidence Act and GPRAMA are not required. While not applicable to the Commission, the OIG identified two elements, that in addition to the required elements noted in Figure 1 above, would further enhance the effectiveness of next iteration of the strategic plan. Although the Commission has met federal requirements, the additional elements of evidence building, and an increase in

program evaluation would provide a more comprehensive and evidence-based approach for measuring the progress toward goals and objectives in the AbilityOne program. The OIG found that other non-CFO agencies have included non-required elements in their strategic plans as a best practice. The OIG found that AmeriCorps another non-CFO agency, included an evidence-building plan with their 2022-2026 strategic plan. The OIG also found that the United States Railroad Retirement Board included a list of program evaluations conducted and the planned schedule for future program evaluations in their strategic plan.

It should be noted that the Commission did have a program evaluation section in its current strategic plan. However, the section was focused on risk-register activities for enterprise risk management and audits conducted by the Office of Inspector General. To gain the benefit of program evaluations, the Commission should consider conducting its own internal program evaluations instead of solely relying on the risk-register activities and audits conducted by the OIG as a part of the OIG's oversight function.

Similarly, under the Evidence Act, CFO Act Agencies have a statutory requirement to develop a Learning Agenda (which encompasses evidence building), however, the guidance to develop Learning Agendas and Annual Evaluation Plans applies to and benefits all agencies. The Evidence Act calls on federal decision-makers to use the best available evidence to determine whether policies and programs are working as intended and to identify potential improvements. When done right, it is an opportunity to highlight the essential work that federal officials do daily. Evidence building can strengthen agency commitment to evidence-based policymaking, enhance a culture of learning and improvement, identify key areas for improvement, and ultimately, improve outcomes. Finally, evidence building could also make a compelling case for greater investments to build and sustain the agency's data, research, and evaluation capacities. Therefore, the Commission may miss key learning or improvement opportunities by not including evidence building and program evaluation in its strategic planning efforts as they move forward. For example, at least one stakeholder stated that the Commission should consider utilizing the learning agenda to "list the highest priority research questions, and ongoing assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of the AbilityOne program on an ongoing basis to fill the gaps in agency knowledge or information.". The OIG also received general feedback from CNAs and NPAs that the reason behind some decisions regarding changes to the strategic plan goals and objectives was not often clear. This issue could be mitigated using evidence building which would allow the Commission to further justify its decision making.

Quantitative Measures Are Needed

The Commission should incorporate more quantitative measures in the next iteration of the strategic plan. Quantitative measures help organizations focus on specific actions needed to achieve their identified goals and track progress towards achieving individual quantitative performance goals related to a strategic objective. OMB A-11 states that agencies should develop a process and approach fitting for the nature of the programs and activities that the

agency operates, which considers multiple perspectives and sources of evidence to understand the progress made on each goal. Progress towards achieving individual quantitative performance goals related to the strategic objective is one important consideration. The lack of quantitative measures in the current strategic plan resulted in a strategic plan that lacks sufficient measurable goals and objectives.

The Commission stated that it did not include quantitative measures in the current strategic plan because it was in the process of changing its strategic direction. The qualitative measures in the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan set forth the new direction of the Commission. However, the use of more quantitative measures would allow it to more concretely track progress on outcomes and goals. For example, Strategic Objective 1 - transform the AbilityOne program to expand competitive integrated employment (CIE) for people who are blind or have significant disabilities, contained one qualitative performance measure. The measure stated that the “Commission has provided constructive information to Congress on using the AbilityOne Program to expand competitive integrated employment and the relevant committees of jurisdiction determined the information was useful.” According to the Commission’s leadership, it has broadly met this measure. If so, updating this from a qualitative measure to a quantitative measure will allow for the establishment of a baseline to better track progress as the Commission moves forward. One NPA stated the Commission’s strategic plan does not “use objective metrics or goals for the Commission. Goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound. As currently written, the Commission’s goals are amorphous and lack any concrete measurable deliverables”. Another NPA stated they encountered “challenges with the plan’s lack of definitive measurements for determining goal attainment.” Without quantitative measures and the concrete baseline data that comes with them, the Commission will not have a reliable measure of success for the program. Establishing quantitative measures will also provide tangible and straightforward data for analysis and comparison to help move the Commission and its program forward in its new direction.

Recommendations

The OIG recommends the AbilityOne Commission

1. Meet with Commission members and stakeholders to determine whether incorporating evidence-building into its next strategic planning process would assist the Commission in identifying key areas for improvement and improve outcomes to ensure a comprehensive and evidence-based approach for measuring the progress toward goals and objectives in the AbilityOne program. This determination should include, but not be limited to, meetings, information sessions, determinations of key learning areas, and how the information will be used in its next strategic planning process.
2. Meet with Commission members and stakeholders to determine whether incorporating internal program evaluations into its next strategic planning process would assist the

Commission in better informing stakeholders about the program's impact and contributions. This determination should include, but not be limited to, meetings, information sessions, determinations of potential program evaluations, and how information from those potential evaluations will be used in its next strategic planning process.

3. Enhance its ability to track and monitor progress and the successful implementation of agency goals by establishing and incorporating quantitative measures into its 2026-2030 strategic plan.

Management's Response and Our Evaluation

The Commission's Executive Director acknowledged the report and generally agreed with Recommendations 1 and 2 but stated that the inclusion of the additional elements will depend on the costs and resources available to the Agency for implementation. The Commission concurred with Recommendation 3. The Commission did not provide specific target dates other than the next iteration of the Strategic Plan. We will work with the Commission to track the progress of any decisions made, and the implementation of the recommendations, as appropriate. After OIG review and analysis of the responses provided by the Commission, we believe the Commission's proposed corrective actions to be responsive to the recommendations.

Specifically,

- The Commission generally agreed with Recommendations 1 and 2 and stated that they will hold meetings to discuss including evidence-building and internal program evaluation into the strategic planning efforts. The Commission said that based on these meetings and resources available, it will determine whether these elements should be included in the next iteration of the strategic plan. The OIG concludes that these actions meet the intent of Recommendations 1 and 2.
- The Commission agreed with Recommendation 3 and proposed corrective actions, to be completed with the next iteration of the Strategic Plan, that meet the intent of the recommendation.

Appendix

Appendix A Management Comments



U.S. ABILITYONE COMMISSION

355 E STREET SW, SUITE 325
WASHINGTON, DC 20024

November 21, 2024

VIA EMAIL

MEMORANDUM FOR THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

FROM: Kimberly M. Zeich, Executive Director

**KIMBERLY
ZEICH**

Digitally signed by
KIMBERLY ZEICH
Date: 2024.11.21 12:55:59
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SUBJECT: Management Response to the Draft Evaluation Report of the Commission's
FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan

On behalf of the U.S. AbilityOne Commission (Commission) and Chairperson Jeffrey A. Koses, thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the draft evaluation report on the U.S. AbilityOne Commission's FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan.

We appreciate the time and resources invested by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) to understand and evaluate the Commission's Strategic Plan in accordance with the statutory and regulatory requirements. The evaluation report noted the Commission's success in developing a strategic plan that includes all of the necessary elements within its framework. As the Commission is preparing to draft the next iteration of its Strategic Plan this fiscal year, the recommendations to consider including additional elements and more quantitative measures are very timely.

In terms of the first two recommendations regarding the use of evidence-building and internal program evaluations, the Commission will hold the meetings suggested in the recommendations. Whether the Commission will adopt these two non-mandatory elements into the planning process for the next Strategic Plan, or in the Strategic Plan itself, will depend on the cost of the activities and the resources available to the agency. Regarding the third recommendation, the Commission expects to incorporate quantitative measures in the Strategic Plan for FY 2026-2030.

Our point of contact for this response is Amy Jensen, Deputy Executive Director (703-593-9411 or ajensen@abilityone.gov).

cc: Jeffrey A. Koses, Chairperson

Attachment: Detailed responses to Evaluation Draft Report – "The AbilityOne Commission's Strategic Plan Could Benefit from Enhancements."



COMMITTEE FOR PURCHASE FROM PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR SEVERELY DISABLED
An Independent Federal Agency



**Detailed Responses to Recommendations for the Commission -
Evaluation of the U.S. AbilityOne Commission FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan:**

Audit Recommendation #1: Meet with Commission members and stakeholders to determine whether incorporating evidence-building into its next strategic planning process would assist the Commission in identifying key areas for improvement and improve outcomes to ensure a comprehensive and evidence-based approach for measuring the progress toward goals and objectives in the AbilityOne program. This determination should include, but not be limited to, meetings, information sessions, determinations of key learning areas, and how the information will be used in its next strategic planning process.

Commission Response:

The Commission will hold a meeting to discuss what incorporating evidence-building into its next strategic planning process would entail. The Executive Director will provide an estimate of the costs of doing so in a manner consistent with OMB guidance. If the Commission determines that it will incorporate evidence-building into the next strategic planning process, the Commission will determine key learning areas and determine how the information will be used in strategic planning to measure progress.

Audit Recommendation #2: Meet with Commission members and stakeholders to determine whether incorporating internal program evaluations into its next strategic planning process would assist the Commission in better informing stakeholders about the program's impact and contributions. This determination should include, but not be limited to, meetings, information sessions, determinations of potential program evaluations, and how information from those potential evaluations will be used in its next strategic planning process.

Commission Response:

The Commission will hold a meeting to discuss what incorporating internal program evaluations into its next strategic planning process would entail. The Executive Director will provide an estimate of the costs of doing so in a manner consistent with OMB guidance. If the Commission determines that it will incorporate internal program evaluations into the next strategic planning process, the Commission will then determine the potential program evaluations and how the information from those potential evaluations will be used in strategic planning to measure progress.

Audit Recommendation #3: Enhance its ability to track and monitor progress and the successful implementation of agency goals by establishing and incorporating quantitative measures into its 2026-2030 strategic plan.

Commission Response:

The Commission supports this recommendation and will include quantitative measures in its FY2026-2031 Strategic Plan.



COMMITTEE FOR PURCHASE FROM PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR SEVERELY DISABLED
An Independent Federal Agency

