

# GAO Management News

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## GAO's Gender Identity and Inclusion Group Hosts Panel on Experience of Transgender People

Statistics presented during the July 25 panel discussion on gender identity offered a sobering assessment of the challenges facing transgender individuals: 40 percent of transgender people have attempted suicide, 24 percent have been victims of assault while in school, and 30 percent have experienced homelessness.

Yet the interactive discussion, sponsored by GAO's Gender Identity and Inclusion Group (GIIG), also underscored how a loving family and a supportive environment can help transgender people live happy, productive lives.

Lem Yutzy, a licensed clinical social worker, discussed gender-identity terminology, the psycho-social reality transgender people experience, and why a supportive environment is important for transgender youth. For example, he noted that 4 percent of transgender youth with supportive parents attempt suicide, compared to 57 percent of those with unsupportive parents.

Elyse Pine, a pediatric endocrinologist, explained the biological basis for gender identity. She described hormonal and surgical options that transgender people may pursue in order to transition—that is to modify their physical expression of gender to better align with their gender identity or internal sense of their gender. Dr. Pine noted, however, that not all transgender people pursue such treatments. A key takeaway was that it is generally not appropriate to ask a transgender person about whether they have had surgery.

The final presenter was Joann, a parent who discussed her son's transition from female to male during his teenage years and shared her own journey of acceptance. Her story offered a powerful and personal example of the importance of acceptance. She detailed how her son suffered terrible depression when he was still living as a girl, but now, as a young man, has found the happiness that eluded him during childhood.

The trio also answered questions from attendees. When asked about proper gender pronoun usage when talking to or about someone who is transgender, the panelists stressed the importance of always using the person's preferred pronouns, even when they are not present. Joann also noted that sharing your own preferred gender pronouns in an appropriate group setting can be a good way to provide clarification and avoid potentially embarrassing confusion or "misgendering" of others.

GIIG formed in 2015 to advise GAO management and educate staff on gender identity issues. Guidance on gender identity and gender transition developed by the group in 2016 is available on the [GAO intranet](#), along with the updated gender-neutral [agency dress policy](#). GIIG has sponsored opportunities for GAO staff to learn about gender identity, such as the March 2017 presentation, Building Knowledge about Gender Identity, available on [GAOTV](#). The July 25 event was not recorded, due to privacy reasons.

For more information about GIIG, contact [John Townes](#), HCO.

## Who Is in My Circle?

By Charles Michael Johnson Jr.

Like many in GAO, I feel honored to work in an organization that is considered among the best places to work in the federal government and a leader with respect to equal employment opportunity and diversity issues. We, however, still have work to do to enhance the inclusiveness part of our Diversity and Inclusion goals.

I recently attended a diversity and inclusion session that asked participants the question: **Who is in my circle?** While this is an important topic, I flipped the focus and instead asked IAT staff and managers to reflect and focus on the more important question of **“Who is not in my circle?”**

Sometimes individuals tend to seek out those with similar mindsets or prefer to only engage with a small selected group of people. This may work against accomplishing our mission at GAO which is heavily reliant on teamwork and input from a diverse set of stakeholders. Broadening our circles to include other individuals who might **“Think Different”** cannot only enrich our own lives but also enable us to expand our thinking and skill sets, and maximize the contributions of all GAO colleagues on our engagements.

Consistent with our focus in IAT on ensuring that everyone is **valued, respected, and treated fairly (VRTF)**; I requested that each member of IAT take the time to reflect on their individual efforts to include others in their circle: **“Who is not in my circle?”** I asked if they find this is an area that they can expand on or further enhance, they may want to consider some action items. They could include: being open to working with others they have rarely worked with, taking the time to simply say hello to a colleague, or inviting a peer to join them or their small circle for lunch.

If we all work to expand our small circle, we will one day have a fully-inclusive working environment that invites all individuals to share ideas and add value. So let’s all plan to open up our circles. Consider crashing the Bistro at least one day out of the month, attending another engagement team’s gate meeting, and inviting a peer that you don’t normally engage with to lunch. **Let’s be inclusive.**

For another perspective on the importance of inclusion, I recommend to you this article from the May 19, 2017 Washington Post: [We’ve gotten better at diversity. Now the challenge is inclusion.](#)



Charles Michael Johnson Jr., IAT  
Managing Director

## Fast Facts Meet GAO Audiences' Needs

One year ago, the Office of Public Affairs (OPA) and the five mission teams ASM, HC, IAT, NRE, and SI embarked on a pilot program to provide GAO's online audience with bottom-line information about their reports.

At the time, analytics showed that most website users came to GAO.gov through the online Highlights pages of reports, but that 60% of those users "bounced" (quickly left without engaging further with the report or the website). The goal of the Fast Facts pilot was to improve the user experience on report pages—enticing users to stay on the site.

To that end, Fast Facts provides 650 characters and an image, designed to engage busy online readers. The pilot teams took Fast Facts training through the Learning Center and worked collaboratively with OPA to learn this new way to engage online readers.

The screenshot shows the GAO website interface. At the top is the GAO logo and navigation menu. The main content area features a report titled "CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION: Improved Planning Needed to Strengthen Trade Enforcement". Below the title is a "FAST FACTS" section with a summary and an image of counterfeit drugs. To the right of the summary are links for "Additional Materials" and "Contact" information.

**FAST FACTS**

Customs and Border Protection enforces customs and trade laws that protect the U.S. economy and the health and safety of the American people. CBP staff conduct trade enforcement activities at more than 300 ports by, among other things, collecting revenue, identifying noncompliant imports, and seizing prohibited goods, such as counterfeit drugs.

However, we found that CBP generally had not met the staffing levels set by Congress for trade positions and that these shortfalls could impact CBP's ability to effectively enforce trade laws (e.g., fewer cargo inspections). We recommended that CBP develop a long-term hiring plan for trade positions.

**Example of Counterfeit Drugs Seized by CBP**

Source: GAO | GAO-17-618

**Additional Materials:**

- Highlights Page: (PDF, 1 page)
- Full Report: (PDF, 78 pages)
- Accessible Version: (PDF, 85 pages)

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JUL 31, 2017



#### REFUGEES:

State and Its Partners Have Implemented Several Antifraud Measures but Could Further Reduce Staff Fraud Risks

### Explore Related Key Issues »

Explore our Key Issues on International Affairs

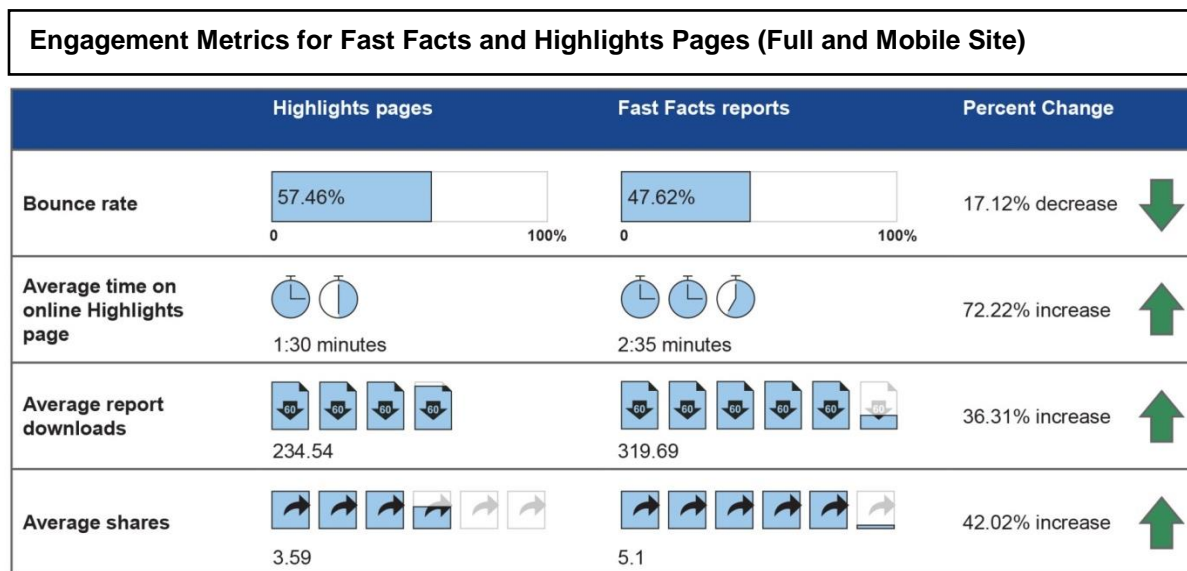
- Countering Overseas Threats
- Diplomatic Security



## PILOT RESULTS

### Bottom Line: It's Working

A Fast Facts findings report was issued recently based on data analysis, 12 usability tests, a ForeSee hybrid insight review, and a survey of assistant directors. It's working: Google Analytics data show that users were more engaged with Fast Facts pages by all measures.



Note: The analysis compares how users interacted with Fast Facts with how users interacted with online Highlights pages publicly released during the same time period a year prior.

### Lessons Learned

Several valuable lessons were learned in the Fast Facts Pilot.

1. Fast Facts improves the GAO.gov user experience by quickly communicating main ideas to users and inviting them to further explore GAO.gov. All participants liked that Fast Facts included a graphic or photo and said the visuals helped them better understand the report. Google Analytics data show users were more engaged with Fast Facts pages and the bounce rate was 17% lower for Fast Facts.
2. Users appreciated the additional information on the Highlights pages as a secondary research tool, but reported that the dense text and jargon on these pages made them difficult to read— particularly on mobile devices. As one user commented, “Reading the Highlights is a bit daunting and intimidating because of its dense text.”
3. Users expect websites to be responsively designed to support mobile, as opposed to having a separate mobile site. Because GAO has a separate mobile site rather than a single responsive site, much of the content on GAO.gov is not mobile-friendly. Moreover, participants experienced significant difficulty using GAO’s mobile website, including issues with mobile Fast Facts and Highlights. As a result, we aren’t meeting the needs of 20% of visitors to our website.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PILOT, APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

### Moving Forward

1. GAO should continue issuing Fast Facts and expand the requirement to all mission teams, depending on resources.
2. GAO should continue to issue Highlights pages. OPA should work with APQA to effectively reiterate guidance to teams on writing Highlights pages to have shorter paragraphs, more white space, visuals, fewer acronyms and less jargon.
3. GAO should develop a completely redesigned website that is fully responsive to mobile and tablet devices. OPA has collaborated with ISTS, ARM, and CPIO to complete a Request for Information to redesign GAO.gov so that it is fully responsive to mobile and tablet devices, and also easier to navigate and use. These offices are now working on moving forward with a Request for Proposal.

### Along the Way:

- OPA identified and started working on improvements to the current Fast Facts process.
- Considered interim improvements to the formatting of GAO's mobile website until GAO's website implements responsive design.
- OPA is working with New Blue to make more content associated with reports accessible to mobile users.

For those interested in the full report which includes methodology, see it here.



[ALL STAFF @](#)

## From Here and There

### *Arrivals and Departures*

#### **Welcome to recently hired GAO employees:**

**ARM:** Caitlin E. Cusati

**ASM:** Jenna T. Blair (Huntsville), Brandon J. Voss

**DCM:** Miranda V. Cohen, Moira A. Lenox, Loren C. Lipsey, Michael L. Perkins (Norfolk), Eric J. Schwab, Sarah B. Warmbein

**EWIS:** Laurie A. Chin, Matthew H Rabe (Chicago)

**FAIS:** Joy Myers (Dallas)

**FMCi:** Gita E. H. DeVaney (San Francisco), Amanda R. Prichard, Elizabeth G. Spurgeon

**IAT:** Kathryn N. Bassion, Michael T. Fahy, Scott M. McClinton

**IO:** Alex C. Bolt

**NRE:** Lawrence E. Crockett Jr. (Atlanta), Ricki B. Gaber, Melissa L. Greenaway (Seattle)

**PI:** Monique M. Nasrallah



## **Good luck to recently retired GAO employees:**

**FAIS:** Julie L. Spetz

**FMA:** Stephen P. Donahue

**IO:** Brenda J. Silver

**ISTS:** Gerri L. Fleming (Norfolk)

**NRE:** James R. Jones Jr.

## **Goodbye and best wishes to employees leaving GAO:**

**ASM:** Alexandra Stone

**HC:** Rachel E. Rhodes

**HCO:** Pedro J. Maldonado

**HSJ:** Katherine M. Davis

**IAT:** Bryant M. Torres

**NRE:** Nancy L. Crothers

## ***Mark Your Calendar***

### **CG Town Hall on Expanded Telework in Headquarters – August 8, 1pm – 2:30pm, Staats Briefing Rm & GAOTV**

Please join the Comptroller General and the Executive Committee for an all-agency town hall meeting to discuss expanded telework in headquarters.

**Phone bridge:** 1-877-446-3914; passcode: 1072236 (listen only) **Job Code Info:** 999051 for non-SES; 999052 for SES

### **Reasonable Accommodation (for employees with disabilities or temporary medical conditions)**

This event will be live-streamed on GAOTV with closed captions and will also be recorded for later viewing. To request Interpreter Services, e-mail [GAOtranslationsvcs@gao.gov](mailto:GAOtranslationsvcs@gao.gov), and cc Dolores Crawford at [CrawfordD@gao.gov](mailto:CrawfordD@gao.gov) and Maria Adams at [AdamsMG@gao.gov](mailto:AdamsMG@gao.gov). To request other types of accommodations, email [ReasonableAccommodations@gao.gov](mailto:ReasonableAccommodations@gao.gov). Please request all accommodations at least 5 days prior to the event.

Send your questions for the Executive Committee in advance of the town hall to Ellery Scott – [scotte@gao.gov](mailto:scotte@gao.gov)

## ***In Memoriam***



**Brent Hall** passed away on July 24. He began working at GAO in 1970 after graduating from Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, TN. After starting at GAO, he was drafted and served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam from 1970-1972. When he returned, he worked in GAO's old Program Analysis Division. Brent retired from FMCI in 2007. Brent enjoyed his retirement; he traveled, played golf and loved being a grandfather.

He is survived by his wife, Nora Ann Hall and a daughter Brittany Haun. A memorial service for Brent was held on July 29 in Ashland, VA. Donations may be made to the RVA Aphasia Group at 7475 Hill Drive, Richmond, VA 23225. Online condolences may be registered at <http://www.nelsenashland.com/>

## **Job Market**

GAO is seeking applicants for the following position. Detailed information may be found at [USAjobs](#).

[Electronics Technician \(Audiovisual\)](#), PT 02, closes 8/7

[Senior Analyst \(Cybersecurity/Software Acquisition\)](#), PE 2A, closes 8/11

[Lead Printing Services Specialist \(Technical Publishing\)](#), PT 03, closes 8/15

## **Recent Reports, Testimony, and Legal Products**

Public GAO products--reports, testimony, and legal decisions and opinions--are available on GAO's [website](#) as they are released. In addition, you may sign up for [daily e-mail alerts](#) about issued products. You may also subscribe to Twitter alerts for [reports](#) and [legal products](#). Use the [search engine](#) to locate older products.

### **Reports**

Defense Transportation: DOD Has Taken Actions to Address Hazardous Material Transportation Issues but It Is Too Soon to Evaluate the Effectiveness of These Efforts. [GAO-17-498](#), July 21

Medicaid Expansion: Behavioral Health Treatment Use in Selected States in 2014. [GAO-17-529](#), June 22

Defense Efficiency Initiatives: DOD Needs to Improve the Reliability of Cost Savings Estimates. [GAO-17-724](#), July 24

Human Trafficking: Information on Cases in Indian Country or that Involved Native Americans. [GAO-17-624](#), July 24

U.S. Postal Service: Key Considerations for Potential Changes to USPS's Monopolies. [GAO-17-543](#), June 22

2020 Census: Bureau Is Taking Steps to Address Limitations of Administrative Records. [GAO-17-664](#), July 26

Highlights of a Forum: Combatting Synthetic Identity Fraud. [GAO17-708SP](#), July 26

Highway Bridges: Major Projects Present Challenges for States, but Strategies Exist to Overcome Them. [GAO-17-707](#), July 26

Information Security: Control Deficiencies Continue to Limit IRS's Effectiveness in Protecting Sensitive Financial and Taxpayer Data. [GAO-17-395](#), July 26

Inland Harbors: The Corps of Engineers Should Assess Existing Capabilities to Better Inform Dredging Decisions. [GAO-17-635](#), July 26

Internet of Things: Communities Deploy Projects by Combining Federal Support with Other Funds and Expertise. [GAO-17-570](#), July 26

Air Ambulance: Data Collection and Transparency Needed to Enhance DOT Oversight. [GAO-17-637](#), July 27

Federal Contracting Improvements Needed in How Some Agencies Report Personal Services Contracts. [GAO-17-610](#), July 27

Information Security: SEC Improved Control of Financial Systems but Needs to Take Additional Actions. [GAO-17-469](#), July 27

Internet of Things: Enhanced Assessments and Guidance Are Needed to Address Security Risks in DOD. [GAO-17-668](#), July 27

National Mall: Actions Needed to Better Manage Physical Security Risks. [GAO-17-679](#), July 27

Social Security Numbers: OMB Actions Needed to Strengthen Federal Efforts to Limit Identity Theft Risks by Reducing Collection, Use, and Display. [GAO-17-553](#), July 25

Surface Transportation: A Comprehensive Plan Could Facilitate Implementation of a National Performance Management Approach. [GAO-17-638](#), July 27

State Department Telecommunications: Information on Vendors and Cyber-Threat Nations. [GAO-17-688R](#), July 27

U.S. Democracy Assistance in Burma: USAID and State Could Strengthen Oversight of Partners' Due Diligence Procedures. [GAO-17-648](#), July 28

Bureau of Prisons: Better Planning and Evaluation Needed to Understand and Control Rising Inmate Health Care Costs. [GAO-17-379](#), June 29

Prepositioned Stocks: DOD Needs to Develop a Department-Wide Vision and Goals to Guide Program Management. [GAO-17-653](#), July 31

Refugees: Actions Needed by State Department and DHS to Further Strengthen Applicant Screening Process and Assess Fraud Risks. [GAO-17-706](#), July 31

Refugees: State and Its Partners Have Implemented Several Antifraud Measures but Could Further Reduce Staff Fraud Risks. [GAO-17-737](#), July 31

Defense Cybersecurity: DOD's Monitoring of Progress in Implementing Cyber Strategies Can Be Strengthened. [GAO-17-512](#), August 1

## **Congressional Testimony**

Coast Guard Acquisitions: Limited Strategic Planning Efforts Pose Risk for Future Acquisitions, by Marie Mak, ASM, before the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. [GAO-17-747T](#), July 25

Iraq: DOD Should Increase Visibility and Accountability Over Equipment Provided to Iraq's Security Forces, by Jessica Farb, IAT, before the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee, House Armed Services Committee. [GAO-17-771T](#), July 25

Drug Control Policy: Information on the Status of Federal Efforts and Key Issues for Preventing Illicit Drug Use, by Diana Maurer, HSJ, before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. [GAO-17-766T](#), July 26

Federal Emergency Management Agency: Additional Actions Needed to Improve Handling of Employee Misconduct Allegations, by Chris Currie, HSJ, before the Oversight and Management Efficiency Subcommittee, House Homeland Security Committee. [GAO-17-758T](#), July 27

DOD Excess Property: Enhanced Controls Needed for Access to Excess Controlled Property, by Zina Merritt, DCM, and Wayne McElrath, FAIS, before the Readiness Subcommittee, House Armed Services Committee. [GAO-17-781T](#), July 27

Low Income Housing Tax Credit: Actions Needed to Strengthen Oversight and Accountability, by Daniel Garcia-Diaz, FMCI, before the Senate Committee on Finance. [GAO-17-784T](#), August 1



## **Legal Decisions and Opinions**

### **Bid Protest Decisions**

B-414623.2, B-414623.3, [Tien Walker](#), July 10, 2017  
B-414555.2, [American Native Veterans of Louisiana](#), July 11, 2017  
B-414638, [REG Products, LLC](#), July 3, 2017  
B-412468.8, [Target Media Mid Atlantic, Inc.](#), June 27, 2017  
B-414498, [C-III Asset Management, LLC](#), June 27, 2017  
B-414383.2, [Bluehorse Corporation--Costs](#), July 13, 2017  
B-414168.4, B-414168.5, B-414436.3, B-414436.4, [SageCare, Inc.; AeroSage, LLC--Reconsideration](#), July 13, 2017  
B-414615, B-414615.2, [MINACT, Inc.](#), July 12, 2017  
B-414265.8, [STG, Inc.--Costs](#), July 7, 2017  
B-413816.3, [Katmai Health Services, LLC](#), July 12, 2017  
B-413952.3, B-413952.4, [American Systems Corporation](#), June 23, 2017  
B-414476, B-414476.2, [DKW Communications, Inc.](#), June 23, 2017  
B-414555.4, [Stone Hill Park, LLC](#), July 18, 2017  
B-414578, [Bluehorse Corporation](#), July 20, 2017  
B-411848.3, [Eastern Forestry & Tree Service, Inc. -- Costs](#), July 20, 2017  
B-414636, [Ghazanfar Neft Gas LTD](#), July 21, 2017  
B-414314.3, [AeroSage LLC--Reconsideration](#), July 24, 2017  
B-414426, [CompQsoft, Inc](#), June 12, 2017  
B-414548, B-414548.2, B-414548.3, [SMS Data Products Group, Inc.](#), July 12, 2017  
B-413546.4, B-413546.5, [Technica LLC](#), July 10, 2017  
B-412577.2, B-412577.3, [Eagle Support Services Corporation](#), July 19, 2017  
B-414265.7, [BTAS, Inc.--Costs](#), June 30, 2017  
B-414590, [RCR Properties, G.P.](#), July 21, 2017  
B-414640, B-414640.3, [AeroSage, LLC](#), July 27, 2017  
B-414555.3, B-414555.6, [MLU Services, Inc.](#), July 17, 2017  
B-414617, [Truston Technologies, Inc.](#), July 28, 2017  
B-413805.5, B-413805.6, [Enterprise Resource Planned Systems International, LLC](#), July 6, 2017  
B-414634, [Piton Science and Technology](#), July 28, 2017  
B-414591, [Defense Base Services, Inc.](#), July 12, 2017

## **Speakers' Platform**

Berri Davis, Jim Dalkin, Asif Khan (FMA), Bob Dacey and Tim Persons (ARM) spoke at the Association of Government Accountants 2017 Professional Development Training, in Boston MA, July 10-12,

Nancy Kingsbury, ARM, participated in a panel at the Association of Government Accountants' Professional Development Conference in Boston, MA, on "A Case for Program Evaluation" directed at how evaluation activities could be useful to financial managers, in Washington, DC, July 11.

Kathryn Larin, EWIS, presented on "Childhood Trauma and the Implications for Child Welfare" at a Congressional briefing hosted by Rep. Danny K. Davis (IL) and the Congressional Foster Youth Caucus, in Washington DC, July 26.

## ***On the Air***

Jenny Grover, HSJ, spoke with Federal News Radio about the report she and Nancy Kingsbury, ARM, directed on TSA behavior detection ([GAO-17-608R](#), July 20), July 24.

Mike Sullivan, ASM, was interviewed by Federal News Radio about the team's report on defense innovation ([GAO-17-499](#), June 29), July 28.

John Pendleton, DCM, was interviewed by Federal News Radio about the team's report on defense efficiency initiatives ([GAO-17-724](#), July 24), July 31.

Joe Kirschbaum, DCM, appeared on NewsChannel 8's "Government Matters" program to discuss the team's report on DOD and the internet of things ([GAO-17-668](#), July 27), August 1.

## **About *Management News***

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