

Final Assessment Report 06-06, September 22, 2006, “WebTrust Pre-Assessment of GPO Certificate Authorities”

GPO implemented a Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) to support its “born digital and published to the web” methodology to meet GPO customer expectations that documents are official and authentic. The GPO PKI also directly supports GPO’s mission related to electronic information dissemination and e-government. The GPO PKI recently became cross-certified with the Federal Bridge Certificate Authority (FBCA) whose certification provisions require that the GPO PKI undergo a compliance review. To satisfy this compliance requirement, the GPO Office of Inspector General (OIG) tasked an independent public accounting firm to conduct a WebTrust assessment of its Certificate Authorities (CA). The assessment was conducted in accordance with the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) “WebTrust Principles and Criteria for Certificate Authorities.” The assessment represents an evaluation of whether GPO’s assertions related to the adequacy and effectiveness of controls over its CA operations is fairly stated based on underlying principles and evaluation criteria.

The purpose of the WebTrust pre-assessment was to identify gaps and deficiencies between the current GPO PKI environment and the required criteria of the WebTrust Program for CA. During the pre-assessment phase, the contractor performed procedures, including testing where deemed appropriate, on GPO’s CA business processes, supporting applications, and technologies related to GPO’s assertions regarding CA operations. The OIG issued a sensitive pre-assessment report which summarized gaps and deficiencies identified during the pre-assessment phase and made several recommendations requiring GPO’s attention prior to finalization of the WebTrust assessment. The GPO Chief Information Officer concurred with each of the pre-assessment recommendations and took corrective actions prior to the final WebTrust phase. During the final WebTrust phase, controls were tested to gather support for an opinion regarding compliance with applicable WebTrust principles and criteria for certification.