SPECIAL PROJECT

GPO Regional Site Visit Report

Report Number OIG-22-05

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

710

OFFICE *of the* INSPECTOR GENERAL
U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

Report Number OIG-22-05   **May 03, 2022**

RESULTS IN BRIEF

What We Did

Starting in May 2021 and ending in March 2022, our office sent joint teams of auditors, inspectors, and investigators to better understand the purpose, functioning, and management of the U.S. Government Publishing Office's (GPO) regional offices. We physically visited 11 out of 15 regional facilities and conducted virtual site visits for the four remaining (as they had three or fewer personnel on site).

As indicated above, the purpose of the site visits was to first provide a level of oversight not exercised in the history of the GPO Office of the Inspector General (OIG) by physically visiting each site. Second, we endeavored to understand the mission and purpose of each site. Lastly, we sought to educate remote site employees about our office in order to deter fraud, waste, and abuse. Ultimately, we believe the visits were mutually beneficial.

What We Observed

At the time we began the project, GPO operated 15 regional facilities located throughout the country. These facilities consisted of two warehouse and distribution centers, one secure production facility, and twelve regional procurement offices. Of the 12 regional procurement sites, the Chicago office closed in December 2021. At the time of the review, these facilities employed 178 personnel (11 percent) of GPO's workforce.

At the distribution centers (Laurel, MD and Pueblo, CO), managers expressed a desire for additional warehouse space. According to one distribution center manager, the operation had grown so much that having additional space would allow further expansion of their operation. Similarly, at another distribution center, we learned that the facility was at its maximum storage and production capacity, and as a result, it could not take on any new customers or store any additional publications. Further, employees described challenges with technology and hiring.

At the secure production facility (Stennis, MS), employees expressed concerns regarding the hiring process. There were also concerns about routine communication between the staff and management, and about weather-related emergency notifications as a tenant of NASA's Stennis Space Center.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, our visits to the Customer Services sites came at a time of transition to telework and remote work. In fact, GPO is currently assessing whether the regional-sites should remain open and in what capacity. We learned that Customer Services' employees wanted additional at-home computer peripherals, such as printers, to help with

telework. Additionally, employees expressed concerns with record keeping and not having a standardized electronic file naming convention, as well as privacy and safety concerns resulting from providing their home addresses to customer agencies and vendors.

Finally, as a result of updating the telework program, eight (of 11) offices (72 percent) have remained largely empty after 2 years. In February 2022, GPO began a 6-month pilot program to minimize space requirements. Still, GPO is at risk of unnecessarily spending over $2 million over the remaining lease terms if it does not make timely decisions on the future disposition of their regional offices.

For Consideration

This report contains 10 "considerations" on topics related to storage space, technology, weather-related protocols, standard naming conventions, privacy and safety, and leased spaces.

Michael P. Leary
Inspector General

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This special project report presents our collective site visit observations from May 2021 to March 2022. Going forward, we may initiate audits or inspections in the areas identified in this report. In the interim, this report provides GPO with 10 areas to consider addressing.

Background

Prior to December 2021, outside of the Government Publishing Office (GPO) central complex located in Washington, DC, GPO operated 15 regional facilities throughout the country. These facilities consisted of two warehouse and distribution centers, one secure production, and twelve regional offices. The Chicago regional office closed in December 2021. These regional facilities employ 178 personnel approximately 11 percent of GPO's workforce.

Distribution Centers

GPO's Publication and Information Sales Business Unit administers its Agency Distribution Services (ADS) program through two distribution centers located in Laurel, MD, and Pueblo, CO. The two distribution centers offer the federal government over 225,000 square feet of climate-controlled distribution, storage, and order fulfillment space. Services provided through the ADS program include website hosting, consulting services, print- product fulfillment and distribution, address validation services, call center operations, and printing optimization services. In addition, the Pueblo Distribution Center (PDC), facility is capable of fulfilling small-batch printing requests via a contract with a local printing company. The Laurel Distribution Center (LDC) also fulfills GPO's on-line bookstore orders.

PUEBLO DISTRIBUTION CENTER - EXTERIOR

Source: GPO

FIGURE 1: GPO CUSTOMER SERVICES NATIONWIDE PROCUREMENT OFFICES*
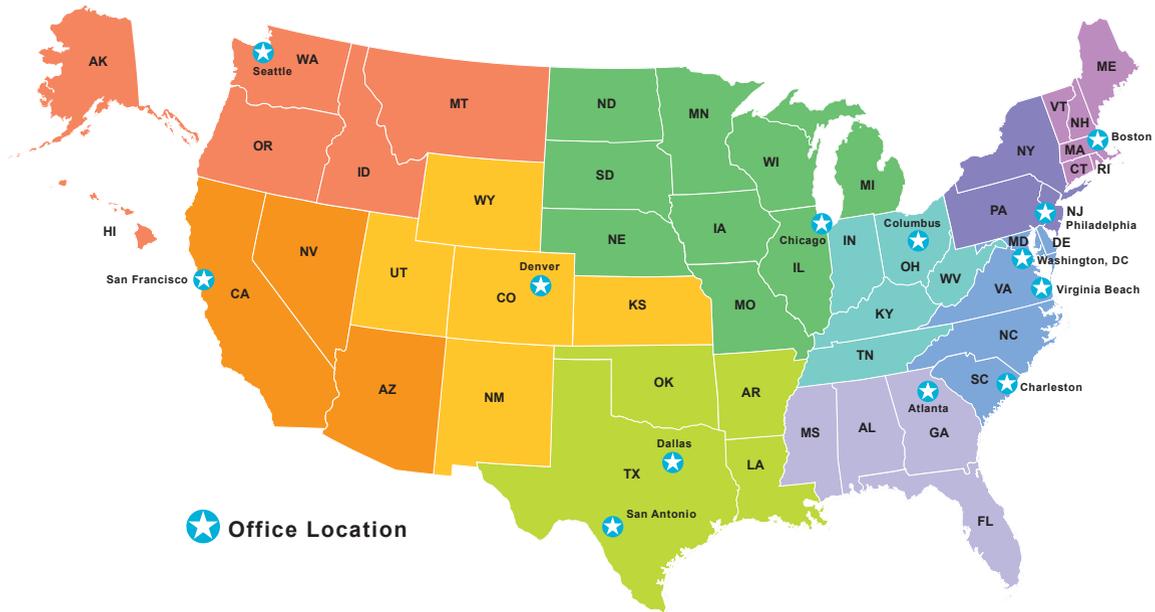
Source: GPO
*In December 31, 2021, the Chicago regional office was closed.

Secure Production Facility

The Security & Intelligent Documents (SID) business unit prints, manufactures, and distributes secure credentials and documents for Federal customer agencies. SID operates two facilities, one at GPO Headquarters in Washington, DC, and one at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Stennis Space Center in Mississippi. Major customers at the Stennis Production Facility (SPF) include the Department of State (DOS) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The SPF produces 45 percent of all Next Generation Passports for the DOS. They also produce 30-40 percent of GPO's smart card orders from DHS and DOS. In addition, SPF supports the daily production and personalization of the DHS Customs and Border Protection Trusted Traveler Program cards and the Transportation Security Administration's Transportation Worker Identification Credential.

Regional Offices

The Customer Services (CS) business unit provides print procurement services to customer agencies. They do this by fulfilling publishing requirements for federal agencies through a nationwide network of vendors. Customer agencies located in the National Capital Region typically work with the CS Agency Procurement Services (APS) teams located in the DC Central Office. Customers located outside of the National Capital Region typically work with the GPO Regional APS teams at a regional office closest to them. The APS teams handle the entire customer request procurement process: identifying which procurement vehicle to utilize, writing specifications, obtaining bids or quotes, selecting a contractor, contract administration, and quality assurance.

SITE VISIT OBSERVATIONS

The purpose of the site visits was to provide oversight, better understand GPO's regional mission, and educate the GPO staff about the roles and responsibilities of the OIG. On-site visits and direct interaction with GPO employees supports GPO OIG's mission to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse.

To our knowledge, the GPO OIG had not previously visited the totality of GPO's regional sites. To provide education to the GPO employees, we provided an overview presentation of the OIG's mission, and to understand the site, we also received a mission briefing at each site. We also physically toured 11 of 15 facilities noting the general appearance and any obvious maintenance or safety concerns. We interviewed the facility supervisors and staff, to better understand what operations they believed were effective, could be improved, or should receive further review from the OIG.

Overall, we saw that the facilities were well maintained and operated; however, a number of opportunities for improvements exist. At the distribution centers, employees described challenges related to storage space, technology, and hiring. Similarly, at the secure production facility, employees stated hiring was a challenge. They also named challenges with routine communication as well as weather-related emergency protocols and notification. At the CS regional offices, employees described wanting additional computer peripherals, such as monitors, printers, scanners, keyboards, etc., to help when teleworking. Additionally, employees expressed concerns

with not having a standardized electronic file naming convention, as well as privacy and safety concerns related to providing their home addresses to customer agencies and vendors.

Finally, as a result of updating the telework and remote work programs, which allows employees to full-time telework or remote work, GPO's leased office spaces will remain mostly empty throughout their remaining 1 to 6-year lease terms.

Based on our observations,a we offer GPO 10 "considerations" for corrective actions[1] related to storage space, technology, weather-related protocols, standard naming conventions, privacy and safety, and leased spaces.

PUEBLO DISTRIBUTION CENTER

Source: GPO

---

[1] Considerations are suggested corrective actions to address potential deficiencies or problems. Considerations do not rise to the level of formal recommendations and are not necessarily tracked by the OIG.

Distribution Centers
(Laurel, MD and Pueblo, CO)

Employees at the distribution centers reported concerns with available storage space, and challenges with technology, including manual processes, and hiring.

Storage Space

Managers at both distribution centers expressed a desire for additional warehouse space. According to the LDC's manager, the operation has grown so much that additional space would allow further expansion of their operation. At the PDC, the manager stated that the facility was at its maximum storage and production capacity, and as a result, it could not take on any new customers or store any additional publications.

At the PDC, there are GPO sales publications that occupy existing space and prevent PDC from using that space for another customer. According to the PDC manager, these GPO sales publications occupied 185 out of 266 general sales pallets.Although PDC continues to warehouse these publications, it has not fulfilled an order with this stock in over 2 years. Having additional space would provide opportunities to increase revenue, through either storing new publications until distribution, or taking on additional customers for publication storage and distribution.

At the LDC, we learned that there are congressional publications that require the Joint Committee on Printing's approval to destroy. Similarly, Federal customers must grant permission to destroy their respective materials. PDC continues to bill GPO's General Sales program for the storage, instead of removing the stock and getting a new federal customer. Staff at PDC stated that the GPO Central Office told them not to dispose of the pallets as they contained congressional publications and unnamed Members of Congress wanted the publications to continue to be stored. We could not determine further information based on our interviews. GPO should evaluate the continued business case for retaining these materials long-term. GPO should also consider contacting the publication owners to decide whether to maintain or dispose of the publications in order to better use the existing space to increase revenue.

PUEBLO DISTRIBUTION CENTER - INTERIOR

Source: GPO

Technology and Manual Processes

Employees at both the LDC and PDC described their needs for new technology or updating old technology. Staff at the LDC reported slow network access and having old computer equipment. Specifically, LDC staff explained that order tickets are sometimes difficult to read and must be manually keyed for processing because they come from legacy mainframe systems.

At the PDC, employees highlighted a need for basic modernization efforts. They stated that inventory is conducted manually because there is not a barcode scanning system, nor is there wi-fi throughout the distribution center to support such a system. The staff explained that manual inventory processes are time consuming since they are conducted with pen and paper; a barcode system would increase efficiency (and potentially reduce error).

Additionally, the PDC manager and supervisors stated that they should be issued government mobile phones so that they do not have to use their personal phones.

In response to an OIG data call on the barcode scanning system, GPO management stated that barcode scanners will be part of a new Warehouse Management System/Inventory Management System solution. Determining that solution will require identifying software applications, the required hardware to support the applications, and wi-fi integration at both facilities. According to GPO, it plans to schedule reviews of possible applications in April 2022.

In addition to implementing barcode scanning systems, GPO should consider evaluating the use of additional technologies to increase efficiency throughout the distribution centers in line with private sector leading practices.

Hiring

Managers at both distribution centers reported difficulties with hiring. Specifically, managers reported difficulty in hiring personnel and slow hiring processing.

At the LDC, we learned of challenges with the use of out-of-date job descriptions, the slow development of updated descriptions, and employees with limited analytical and technological skills. According to the LDC personnel, they are trying to cross train the work force into sales roles that use GPO's systems. However, the challenge is that many of the employees have been warehouse workers with over 15 years of experience filling orders, which required limited analytical skills. The manager hopes to hire employees with more analytical and technological skills in the future.

At the PDC, employees stated that the hiring process often took too long, even up to one year from announcing an open position to on-boarding the selected candidate. Staff at the PDC shared concerns with having different types of pay plans for performing the same job functions. According to staff, Wage Grade (WG) employees and Printing Office Grade (PG) employees perform essentially the same job functions; however, WG employees are limited in pay[2]. GPO should consider reviewing and evaluating position descriptions in order to ensure they are still reflective of the work requirements.

---

[2] According to OPM, the WG pay plan is included under the Federal Wage System (FWS) for craft, trade, and laboring positions. FWS positions are paid on an hourly basis.

Secure Production Facility (SPF) (Stennis, MS)[3]

Based on our site visit and interviews, employees at the SPF expressed concerns about hiring and communication. In addition, staff at the SPF had concerns with SPF's emergency procedures, specifically during weather-related events.

Hiring

According to employees at the SPF, the hiring process needs improvement. Specifically, both supervisors and staff noted that the hiring process was lengthy, taking 6 months or longer to fill a vacancy. According to one supervisor, an applicant was offered a job in May 2021 and had not onboarded as of December 2021. Another supervisor stated that it personally took them 6 months to transition into a new position within GPO. One staff explained that it took more than 3 months to post, or advertise, the job opportunity for a vacant position.

Employees also reported that the GPO HC candidate screening and selection process was a challenge to navigate. Supervisors explained that in the past, they had a Subject Matter Expert review resumes to help them select a candidate. However, Human Capital did not agree with the selection. Additionally, supervisors stated that they were told to select an unqualified candidate that had preferential appointment eligibility (veteran) over a qualified candidate without preferential appointment eligibility. Staff also described that the applicant screening process was broken. One employee explained that they applied for a vacant bindery position at both Stennis and DC. They were told that they were not

eligible for the position in DC, but they were later selected for the position in Stennis.

In addition to the challenging hiring process, supervisors explained that the shortage of bookbinders in the open job market also makes it difficult to create an additional work shift that is needed to keep up with operational demands.

Communication

SPF staff reported that communication between management and staff could be improved. For example, employees reported that they were often asked to work overtime with less than a day's notice causing an untenable burden with unpredictable results in being able to adjust their schedules. In another example, the staff we interviewed stated that SPF "all-hands" meetings stopped in March 2019. Further, since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic[4] (pandemic) in March 2020, shift briefings and production meetings stopped. As a result, feedback on quality control measures were not consistently communicated. For example, feedback on what constituted a "good" passport book versus a "bad" passport book became inconsistent. Finally, staff explained that they were excluded from new product testing and unable to offer their insight; instead, only managers are involved with new product testing. They opined that once a new product is in production, it is very difficult to change any of the processes should an unforeseen correction be needed.

---

[3] GPO is a tenant organization on the NASA Stennis Space Center.
[4] On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak a global pandemic.

Emergency Protocols and Notification

According to staff, weather-related emergency protocols and notifications are a concern, especially during hurricane season. SPF management follows NASA's protocols to determine the site's operational status. According to the staff, if NASA opens the Space Center, SPF staff are expected to be at work or take annual leave. During the most recent category 4 hurricane[5], SPF staff said they were called back to work just 12 hours after the storm made landfall, even though roads were still impassable.[6]

While NASA may make these opening determinations based on their own set of Mission Essential Functions (MEFs)[7], GPO management should consider developing their own return-to-work determinations based on their specific MEFs.Another weather-related concern that staff shared was that emergency notifications during the workday are often not relayed timely. For example, on Monday, December 6, 2021, a Tornado warning was issued by the State of Mississippi that affected the area surrounding the SPF facility. According to staff, the sirens that sounded throughout the NASA Space Center could not be heard within the SPF plant floor, due to the noise of the presses and staff wearing earplugs. In contrast, the sirens were heard in the SPF reception area and office spaces. SPF employees on the production floor only found out about the emergency notification when they went into the breakroom and saw the notification on their mobile phones. Employees should be able to hear, or see, emergency notifications at the time they are issued so they may properly respond. GPO should consider implementing, or working with NASA to implement, additional emergency protocols to ensure that employees are notified promptly during weather-related events.

STENNIS PRODUCTION AREA

Source: GPO

---

[5] Hurricane Ida made landfall near Port Fourchon, Louisiana, around noon on Sunday, August 29, 2021. Port Fourchon is about 95 miles to the southwest of the Stennis Space Center. Mississippi was put in a *State of Emergency* on August 28, 2021, and the President's approval of a major disaster declaration for Mississippi states that Mississippi was affected by Hurricane Ida from August 28-September 1, 2021.

[6] The Stennis Space Center's Emergency Management site update stated to avoid an area where there was no power, and to "exercise caution and reduce speed on Stennis roadways as small debris (pine needles etc.) remain."

[7] Primary Mission Essential Functions (PMEFs) are those functions that need to be continuous or resumed within 12 hours after an event and maintained for up to 30 days or until normal operations can be resumed. PMEFs are validated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Community Coordinator. For example, NASA's PMEF is to operate satellites.

Customer Services Regional Offices (Atlanta, GA; Boston MA; Charleston, SC; Chicago, IL; Columbus, OH; Dallas, TX; Denver, CO; Philadelphia, PA; San Antonio, TX; San Francisco, CA; Seattle, WA; Virginia Beach, VA)

As a result of the pandemic, our visits to the Customer Services sites came at a time of transition to telework and remote work. As a result, when we visited these facilities, most of the employees had not been to their respective sites since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020.

Employees at the customer service regional offices reported desired areas for improvement. Specifically, staff expressed that having additional computer peripherals for teleworking would be helpful. In addition, staff stated that there was not a standardized electronic file naming convention across all regional offices. Also, some staff raised concerns about privacy and safety due to the requirement to provide their home addresses to customer agencies and vendors. Finally, 8 out of 11 (72 percent) of GPO's leased spaces will remain empty and GPO risks paying for essentially unused space over the remaining

1 to 6-year lease terms.

Telework Areas for Improvement

With few exceptions, employees at the regional offices had a positive view of the move to telework and remote work. Both supervisors and staff commented on the benefits of telework: no commute, fewer distractions, and better work/life balance. According to one regional office supervisor, staff engagement was more structured with remote communication, such as Microsoft Teams, versus the previous ad hoc conversations at the office. In addition, both supervisors and staff stated that they adjusted to new digital work processes, such as creating electronic file jackets versus paper jackets. Additionally, they adjusted to not having all the computer peripherals they would have in the office, such as printers or scanners that would match more closely with their office work experience[8].

However, staff at six regional offices expressed their desire for a GPO supplied or approved printer or scanner at home. According to one employee, reviewing several printed documents was easier than moving between multiple applications on their computer screen. Another employee stated that reading printed material gave their eyes a break from the computer screen. In order to print at home, one employee said they emailed documents to their personal computer to print on their home printer. Another employee stated they were able to connect their personal printer to their GPO laptop to print documents. Both activities conflict with GPO's information security policy prohibiting users from directly connecting any personally owned hardware or software to a GPO computer or network.[9]

---

[8] For this project we did not examine how relative productivity compared between telework/remote work vs. onsite work, which may have resulted in different levels of efficiency and effectiveness.
[9] GPO Directive 825.33C, *Information Technology (IT) Security Program Statement of Policy*, March 19, 2021.

While the majority of employees adjusted to not using computer printers and scanners, GPO's telework policy[10] allows employees to request computer peripherals through its IT Service Hub[11]. Ultimately, the requests are sent to the employee's Managing Director for approval. GPO should consider periodically reminding employees of information security policies while teleworking, including how to request IT equipment.

Employees discussed another area for improvement, to standardize naming conventions for electronic files. Specifically, supervisors and staff at three regional offices said there was no standardized file naming convention. Further, one supervisor said regional office supervisors are allowed to determine their preference for file naming conventions. In other words, each regional office can potentially name the same types of files in different ways. In December 2021, Customer Services released their Customer Services Records Management Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) which provides specific instructions on how to create an eJacket[12] including a section on the recommended file naming conventions. The SOP states that "[i]f an office doesn't already have a structure in place they will follow the structure identified" in the SOP. Alternatively, if an office already has a structure in place, they do not have to use the provided naming conventions. Allowing regional offices that already have a structure in place to use other naming conventions effectively negates the benefits of having standard naming conventions. Using a structured and intuitive file naming convention provides for the efficient search

and identification of the files, especially as more records are stored electronically. GPO should consider requiring the use of a standard file naming convention across the central and regional offices.

Additionally, staff at some regional offices expressed concerns with having to provide their home addresses to customer agencies and vendors. Prior to the pandemic, print materials samples and/or documents were delivered to the regional offices. However, because the regional offices were closed during the pandemic, staff had to either provide their home addresses for package delivery or go into the office. From our interviews, staff at six regional offices told us they chose to receive customer and vendor deliveries at their homes. Staff at two of the regional offices shared their concerns with providing their home address to customer agencies and vendors. An employee at one regional office stated they took extra safety precautions when leaving their home. This was due to concerns over a vendor's behavior. Similarly, another employee expressed that if vendors or customer agencies were to ever get upset, the vendors or customer agencies having their home address could potentially put the staff "in a bad position."

According to GPO, the regional office's full-time telework employees are required to provide their home addresses for deliveries. If the employee is unable to provide their home address, they are required to go to the regional office to retrieve mail. While the option to retrieve the deliveries from the regional offices may be feasible when the offices are open, it would not be when an office is permanently closed. For example,

---

[10] GPO Directive 645.19C, *GPO Telework Program*, June 25, 2021.

[11] The GPO web-based portal for requesting information technology equipment and technical support.

[12] An eJacket is a job-specific electronic folder that contains all of the job-related records; it is an electronic version of a hardcopy file.

GPO closed its Chicago regional office in December 2021. According to the regional office manager, although an alternate work space was found, options to receive deliveries at that work space had not been finalized in December. Without an alternate option to receive mail at a different location, staff are only left with the option to provide their home address to customer agencies and vendors. Other potential alternatives to the above include having packages sent to the Central Office, and then forwarding them to the employees, or using a package forwarding service.

In addition to raising potential privacy concerns, requiring the use of a personal home address to receive and conduct official GPO business can also pose safety risks. According to the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) *2021 Guide to Telework and Remote Work in the Federal Government*, dated November 2021, Federal Management Regulation Part 102-192.70 requires agencies to have a security policy for employees receiving incoming mail and sending outgoing mail at an alternative worksite such as a government-owned or leased alternative site, telework center, or employee residence. In addition, GPO's *Suspicious Mail and Packages* directive[13] states that "[i]n order to maintain the highest level of safety for all employees, mail entering the GPO Central Office is being x-rayed and screened." According to GPO, the frequency of tangible materials sent to GPO's regional offices is low. However, GPO should consider the best practices outlined in OPM's guide mentioned above.

---
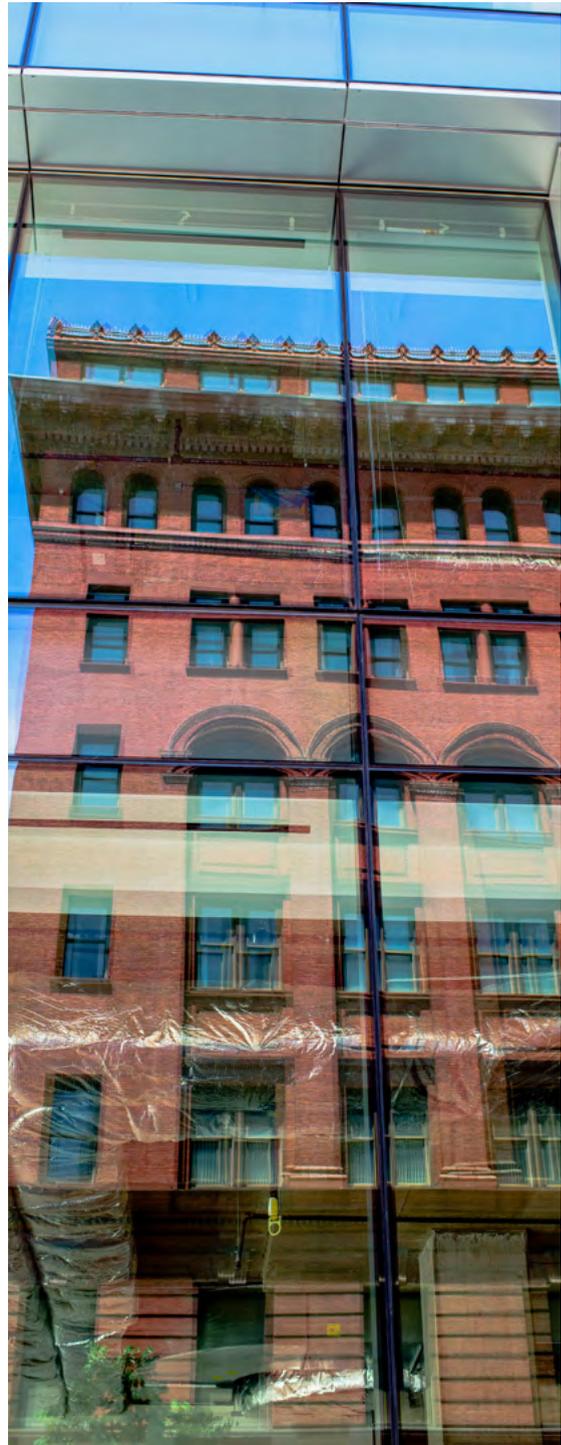
[13] GPO Directive 670.111A, *Suspicious Mail and Packages*, July 12, 2013.

Continued Use of Leased Space in Question

In June 2021, following the success of maximum telework during the pandemic, GPO revised and updated the telework program directive[14], allowing employees to participate in a new type of telework schedule, known as full-time telework or remote work. Full-time telework allows employees to telework every workday. Remote work does the same and changes the employee's primary duty station to their residence. Prior to the new directive, GPO's available telework schedules only included routine and situational type telework, which allowed the employee to telework on certain days, but not on a full-time basis. As of March 2022, 91 percent of the regional office employees are full-time teleworkers and will not return to the office; see Table 1, below.

Table 1 Number of Full-time Teleworkers[15]

Regional Offices	No. of Employees	No. of Full-time Teleworkers	Percentage
Atlanta	8	8	100%
Charleston	2	2	100%
Columbus	8	7	88%
Denver	3	1	33%
Philadelphia	2	2	100%
San Francisco	6	6	100%
Virginia Beach	5	5	100%
Boston	1	1	100%
Dallas	6	6	100%
Seattle	6	4	67%
San Antonio	1	1	100%
Chicago	6	6	100%
Total	54	49	91%

---

[14] GPO Directive 645.19C, *GPO Telework Program*, June 25, 2021.

[15] For purposes of this table we did not delineate between full time teleworkers and remote workers.

During our site visits, we found that the office spaces were used primarily as storage for paper files and mail/package delivery. According to regional employees, a physical office space could be used during Continuity of Operations (COOP) situations, such as loss of internet or power, or if they need to meet a customer in-person. However, some agreed that the current office footprint would no longer be needed once the historic paper files stored in the office are digitized. We learned that over the past 2 years, some employees went into the office, on rare occasions, to retrieve mail or files; however, employees did not describe any instances of going into the office for COOP situations. Further, staff reported that even before the pandemic, visits from customer agencies and vendors were minimal. According to one regional office, it had been 15 years since the last visit from a vendor.

GPO has had an extended opportunity to evaluate the continued use of its leased sites. As of March 2022, the regional offices had remaining lease terms ranging between 11 to 78 months, or up to nearly 7 years; see Table 2 on page 13. At the current Fiscal Year 2022 lease rates, GPO would spend $2,034,387, at a minimum, over the remaining lease terms if it does not terminate any leases. As part of our review, we asked GPO to review the lease termination requirements; they reported that although notification was required for early termination of certain leases, there would be no additional costs.

After closing the Chicago regional site (December 2021), GPO started a 6-month pilot program using a shared work space. GPO also stated that any future changes to leased spaces for any other regional office would be contingent upon the outcome of the pilot program. In the 8 months since the update to the telework program (June 2021) through the start of the pilot program (December 2021), GPO has spent approximately $448,000 in lease payments; funds which we think could have been put to better use.

GPO has had over 2 years to assess their regional presence in light of the pandemic. GPO should consider ending their leases as expeditiously as possible, prior to the completion of the 6-month pilot program, particularly for those eight locations where employees are already 100 percent teleworking, or risk spending unnecessary money. Moreover, since during the same two years, regional employees did not use the available office spaces for COOP purposes, and the majority of the staff in the current pilot program are not interested in using the shared work space, GPO should consider a more flexible pay-as-you-go type hoteling solution instead of a contract-based solution.

Table 2 Lease Expiration

Regional Offices	Lease Expiration Date	Remaining Months as of March 2022	Lease Costs for Remaining Months
Atlanta	6/30/2023	15	$123,875
Charleston	12/31/2024	33	$77,000
Columbus	10/3/2023	19	$93,417
Denver	4/30/2023	13	$52,000
Philadelphia	2/28/2023	11	$63,708
San Francisco	10/3/2023	19	$101,333
Virginia Beach	12/31/2023	21	$66,500
Boston	11/30/2027	68	$532,667
Dallas	4/30/2025	37	$265,167
Seattle	9/30/2028	78	$623,220
San Antonio	2/22/2028	71	$35,500
Total			$2,034,387

CONSIDERATIONS

01) Reassess the value of long-term retention of potentially outdated publications at the Distribution Centers.

02) Evaluate the use of additional technologies to increase efficiency throughout the distribution centers.

03) Execute a focused effort to improve the speed of hiring at the regional sites. GPO should also consider reviewing and evaluating position descriptions for the PDC in order to ensure they are still reflective of the work requirements.

04) Develop return-to-work determinations based on SPF's specific mission essential functions.

05) Implement, or work, with NASA's Stennis facility to adopt additional SPF emergency protocols that ensure employees are notified quickly of weather-related events.

06) Remind employees about information security policies while teleworking, including how to request IT equipment.

07) Require the use of a standard file naming convention across the Central Office, and all regional offices, for electronic files in Customer Services.

08) Implement procedures to mitigate privacy and safety risks resulting from employees sharing their home addresses with customer agencies and vendors.

09) End the regional office leases as expeditiously as possible, particularly for those locations where employees are already 100 percent teleworking.

10) Explore a more flexible pay-as-you-go type hoteling solution instead of a contract-based solution.

APPENDIX A. SPECIAL PROJECT METHODOLOGY

Special Projects are usually ad-hoc and assigned by the Inspector General, and oftentimes not listed in the Annual Work Plan. They can often take the form of research projects and do not necessarily need to conform to the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE).

To the greatest extent possible, we endeavored to conform to the December 2020 CIGIE *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation (Blue Book)* as shown in the table below.

Blue Book Standards	Were the Standards Applicable to this Project?
Standard 1. Independence	
1.1 Independence	Yes. Each GPO OIG member annually attests to their independence.
1.2 Threats to Independence	There were no known threats to independence reported.
Standard 2. Competence	
2.1 General Competence	Yes. Each member of the OIG contributed to the site visits and report.
2.2 and 2.3 Professional Develtopment and Training	No. While training is completed and documented, training requirements differ from auditor and investigator training. Since all OIG cadre participated in this project, this standard does not apply.
Standard 3. Planning	
3.1 Topic Selection	Yes. This topic was generated after historical analysis revealed a lack of oversight over GPO's regional sites.
3.2 Coordination	Yes. The site visits were coordinated with Agency and site leadership.
3.3 Research	Yes. Each site was researched in detail.
3.4 Criteria	Somewhat. While specific contract requirement criteria were used with the Customer Services sites, we did not use specific criteria for the distribution and production facilities.
3.5 Inspection Plan	Yes. Each site visit was planned to a standard site-visit "package."

Standard 4. Evidence	
4.1 and 4.2 Evidence	Yes. Relevant evidence was collected and documented.
4.3 Sufficiency and Appropriateness	Yes. Given the lack of criteria by which to base findings, we offered GPO observations and considerations.
4.4 Protection of Information	No. There was no Controlled Unclassified Information nor classified information.
4.5 Fraud and Other Illegal Acts	None reported.
Standard 5. Reporting	
5.1 Inspection Report Language	Yes. Standard reporting language was used.
5.2-5.6	Yes. This report contains conclusions in the form of "Observations" and "Considerations".
Standard 6. Recommendation Follow-Up	
6.1 Solicit agreement or disagreement	No. We did not issue recommendations for this report. Considerations will not be tracked.
6.2 Monitor Progress	No. See above.
Standard 7. Quality Control	
7.1 Quality Control	Yes. Referencing the report's assurances was conducted in accordance with the Inspection Division's independent reference review process.
7.2 Supervision	Yes. This project fell under the supervision of the Deputy Inspector General.

APPENDIX A (CONTINUED)

This special omnibus report presents the collective observations from the individual site visits.

Starting in May 2021 and ending in March 2022, we physically visited 11 of 15 regional GPO facilities located outside of Washington, DC, and virtually visited 4 of the 15 facilities. During the site visits, the OIG provided an overview of the OIG's mission and received an overview of the regional facilities' missions. The OIG also received a facility walkthrough and interviewed the facility supervisors and staff to better understand what operations they believed were effective, could be improved, or should receive further review from the OIG. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, we conducted virtual interviews with sites that had three or fewer GPO employees.

- As originally conceived in early 2020, each site visit was to consist of the following:
- An introduction to the OIG staff, mission, and responsibilities, aka OIG-101 A mission brief and tour from the site
- Individual and/or focus group interviews of staff to include job-specific checklists.

In Summer 2021, after the pandemic delayed the site visits, the OIG added focused questions regarding the sustainability, future posture, use, and viability of the Customer Services sites.

Site Visit Location	State	Site Visit Date
Laurel Distribution Center (IG Visit)	Maryland	April 2021
Laurel Distribution Center	Maryland	May 13, 2021
Pueblo Distribution Center	Colorado	September 21, 2021
Denver Regional Office	Colorado	September 20, 2021
Columbus Regional Office	Ohio	September 21, 2021
Atlanta Regional Office	Georgia	September 29, 2021
Boston Regional Office	Massachusetts	October 1, 2021*
San Antonio Regional Office	Texas	October 20, 2021*
Charleston Regional Office	South Carolina	December 16, 2021*
Virginia Beach Regional Office	Virginia	November 9, 2021
Stennis Secure Production Facility	Mississippi	December 7, 2021
Chicago Regional Office	Illinois	February 17, 2022*
Philadelphia Regional Office	Pennsylvania	January 28, 2022
Dallas Regional Office	Texas	February 11, 2022
San Francisco Regional Office	California	March 9, 2022
Seattle Regional Office	Washington	March 8, 2022
* Virtual site visit		

APPENDIX B. ABBREVIATIONS

ADS	Agency Distribution Services
APS	Agency Procurement Services
COOP	Continuity of Operations
CIGIE	Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency
CS	Customer Services
CUI	Controlled Unclassified Information
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOS	Department of State
FWS	Federal Wage System
GPO	U.S. Government Publishing Office
LDC	Laurel Distribution Center
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
PDC	Pueblo Distribution Center
PG	Printing Office Grade
SID	Security & Intelligent Documents
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPF	Stennis Production Facility
WG	Wage Grade

OFFICE *of the* INSPECTOR GENERAL

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE