

**STATEMENT OF  
MR. JEFF VANBEMMEL  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF END USER OPERATIONS,  
OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY (OIT)  
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)  
BEFORE THE  
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
"EXAMINING VA'S OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY  
SOFTWARE ASSET MANAGEMENT"  
May 19, 2025**

**Introduction**

Chairman Barrett, Ranking Member Budzinski, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding Software Licensing at VA. Your longstanding support of Veterans and their families is greatly appreciated. I am accompanied by Don Carter, Don Carter, Executive Director for Contract and Operations Management, OIT.

**VA's Past Software Asset Management State**

OIT recognizes that software is a critical component in delivering the care and services our Veterans deserve. This recognition has led to substantial investments in both commercial and VA-developed software solutions. The increase in software solutions has required VA to constantly review and update its management policies and practices, especially in areas such as decentralized procurement and license oversight.

**Current Efforts of the SAM Program**

In January 2024, OIT established the Enterprise Software Asset Management (SAM) program to address the two GAO recommendations made in GAO-240105717 including issues such as decentralized software procurement, lack of product

ownership, loose license management, and data management. The core aspects of this program are:

1. **Centralization and Standardization:** Establishing a centralized data repository for software inventory, deploying modern tools for tracking software usage, and assigning clear product ownership across the enterprise. Previously, software was managed in a decentralized manner. The SAM program will assign product ownership to enhance communications with software stakeholders and streamline management.
2. **Automation and Efficiency:** Automating tasks within the SAM lifecycle framework where feasible while leveraging existing tools and systems for efficient SAM implementation and improving the integration of tools, systems, and reporting mechanisms. The process includes managing licensing, data migration, configuration, and other related services.
3. **Continuous Improvement:** The SAM program incorporates Continuous Process Improvement to meet future software needs, manage updates, and ensure proper retirement of unused software. OIT has implemented tools to improve software visibility and data management, and to consolidate data on software usage into a singular centralized enterprise repository for better oversight and management.

OIT's comprehensive approach involves planning for future software needs, managing updates, and ensuring proper disposal of outdated or unused software. The software management lifecycle comprises six phases: plan, request, procure, deploy, manage, and retire. Notable progress has been made in the area of Centralization and Standardization noted above including managing the software asset lifecycle from deployment to retirement, particularly in license management, software reclamation, and repurposing.

## **Current Challenges**

Starting with the top 15 most widely used software titles across VA, these improvements in license management tools and practices have already led to over

\$136M in software cost avoidance but challenges remain. . Identified key challenges include:

- **Business Led Information Technology (IT):** Software procured or deployed outside approved channels poses security, compliance, and financial risks. We are strengthening governance mechanisms, improving software visibility, and working with VA business owners to rationalize requirements and minimize unauthorized software acquisitions.
- **Training and Culture Change:** Training staff on SAM processes and policy compliance is crucial. OIT is rolling out guidance for all relevant staff, focusing on requirements definition, acquisition planning, software lifecycle management, and the risks associated with unauthorized software procurement. By educating staff early in the acquisition process, we aim to foster a culture of accountability and proactive software management.
- **Improving IT Visibility and Governance:** Identifying existing capability gaps in software and asset visibility, establishing a "single source of truth" for software usage data, and developing and implementing new SAM policies and formal governance procedures.

## Way Forward

VA has accomplished the first recommendation made in GAO 24-10571 to track software for its most widely used titles. This improved management has produced the cost avoidance outlined in the testimony above. VA has made substantive progress on the second recommendation in GAO 24-10571. All software in use on the VA network has been identified and VA will complete the population of the centralized SAM data repository by the end of the year. This will enable VA to compare licenses in use against purchase records and make better informed investment decisions. VA's way forward includes:

- **Strengthening Governance and Oversight:** VA Directive 6008, Acquisition and Management of VA Information Technology Resources, governs all IT acquisitions and enforces Chief Information Officer oversight for software purchases, ensuring compliance with Federal laws. We also track IT

procurements through product service codes and medical devices that have a software component. These procurements also go through our Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act review process. This closes many previous gaps that allowed licenses to be purchased without centralized review.

- **Metrics and Performance Measurement:** When the centralized data repository is completed at the end of the year, OIT will be able to establish clear Key Performance Indicators to measure the effectiveness of the SAM program, including cost avoidance, compliance rates, utilization efficiency, and audit findings. These metrics can be included in the Annual Performance Plan.
- **Ongoing Improvement:** Effective software management is not the responsibility of a single office but a collective effort across VA's entire enterprise. The OIT team is committed to continuing our progress, strengthening our governance, and fully optimizing our software portfolio.

## **Conclusion**

Through OIT's ongoing efforts in the SAM program, VA aims to ensure that every dollar spent on technology supports the critical mission of serving America's Veterans with excellence. Thank you for your continued support and for the opportunity to testify here today.