



Office of the Inspector General

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Audit Report

The Social Security Administration's Use of Amazon Web Service Connect for Telephone Services

042512 September 2026



Office of the Inspector General

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

September 30, 2026

The Honorable Ron Estes, Chairman
Subcommittee on Social Security
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
1139 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In a letter dated July 30, 2025, you asked that we conduct an audit related to the Social Security Administration's use of Amazon Web Service Connect for telephone services.

The attached final report presents the results of the Office of Audit's review. The objectives were to determine whether SSA complied with Federal regulations when it (1) selected, administered, and oversaw its blanket purchase agreement for Amazon Web Services Connect for telephone services and (2) incorporated quality standards or performance incentives into the blanket purchase agreement.

If you have any questions concerning this report, please call me or have your staff contact Jonathan Blyth, Congressional Affairs Advisor.

Sincerely,

Michelle Anderson
Assistant Inspector General
as First Assistant

Enclosure

cc:
Frank Bisignano, Commissioner



Office of the Inspector General

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

MEMORANDUM

Date: September 30, 2026

Refer to: 042512

To: Frank Bisignano
Commissioner

From: Michelle L. Anderson *Michelle L. Anderson*
Assistant Inspector General for Audit as First Assistant

Subject: The Social Security Administration's Use of Amazon Web Service Connect for Telephone Services

The attached final report presents the results of the Office of Audit's review. The objectives were to determine whether the Social Security Administration complied with Federal regulations when it (1) selected, administered, and oversaw its blanket purchase agreement for Amazon Web Services Connect for telephone services and (2) incorporated quality standards or performance incentives into the blanket purchase agreement.

Please provide within 60 days a corrective action plan that addresses each recommendation. If you wish to discuss the final report, please call me or have your staff contact Jeffrey T. Brown, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audit.

Attachment

The Social Security Administration's Use of Amazon Web Service Connect for Telephone Services

042512



September 2026

Office of Audit Report Summary

Objective

To determine whether the Social Security Administration (SSA) complied with Federal regulations when it (1) selected, administered, and oversaw its blanket purchase agreement (BPA) for Amazon Web Services (AWS) Connect for telephone services and (2) incorporated quality standards or performance incentives into the BPA.

Background

In February 2020, SSA signed a contract with its previous contractor to support its Next Generation Telephony Project (NGTP). SSA leadership later determined the NGTP platform could not meet SSA's needs and resulted in increased call wait times and disconnected or unanswered calls. As a result, SSA transitioned to a different platform in August 2024 and did not renew the NGTP contract.

In August 2024, SSA used an existing BPA with a contractor to acquire AWS Connect for telephone services. SSA originally established the BPA in December 2020, using the General Service Administration's (GSA) Federal Supply Schedules program, to purchase various cloud information technology services, such as platforms or storage.

On July 30, 2025, Congressman Ron Estes, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security of the United States House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means, requested we conduct this review.

Results

SSA complied with Federal regulations when it selected a contractor for its BPA for AWS Connect for telephone services. However, SSA did not always administer or oversee the BPA in accordance with Federal regulations. Specifically, SSA did not comply with the Federal Acquisition Regulation when it

- did not perform sufficient annual reviews of the BPA to fully determine whether the BPA still represented the best value to the Agency and therefore may have missed opportunities for additional discounts;
- modified the scope of the BPA beyond the original established term; and
- did not consistently monitor and assess contractor performance.

Additionally, SSA included limited quality standards and performance incentives in its BPA. Although SSA generally experienced improved telephone service platform performance under AWS Connect, we identified other areas where SSA could have identified solutions and addressed its needs more promptly if the Agency had stronger performance measures and methods to monitor performance in the BPA.

Conclusion

SSA must take steps to ensure it can adequately support its vital telephone services for the public. Additionally, as a steward of public funds, SSA must comply with Federal acquisition laws and best practices and pursue cost savings so the Government receives the best value for its expenditures. By strengthening its acquisition and BPA oversight processes, SSA can ensure the Agency complies with applicable regulations and safeguards taxpayer resources.

Recommendations

We made five recommendations for SSA to improve its administration and oversight of the BPA for AWS Connect for telephone services. SSA agreed to implement our recommendations.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AWS	Amazon Web Services
BPA	Blanket Purchase Agreement
CPARS	Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System
DDS	Disability Determination Services
FAR	Federal Acquisition Regulation
FSS	Federal Supply Schedule
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GSA	General Services Administration
N8NN	National 800-Number Network
NGTP	Next Generation Telephony Project
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
RFO	Revolutionary Federal Acquisition Regulation Overhaul
SSA	Social Security Administration

OBJECTIVE

Our objective was to determine whether the Social Security Administration (SSA) complied with Federal regulations when it (1) selected, administered, and oversaw its blanket purchase agreement (BPA) for Amazon Web Services (AWS) Connect for telephone services and (2) incorporated quality standards or performance incentives into the BPA.

BACKGROUND

SSA's telephone services are an essential way for the public to obtain information and assistance with benefits, Social Security numbers, and other vital services. SSA's telephone services comprise a national 800-number and a network of approximately 1,200 field offices. SSA's teleservice centers answer calls to the National 800-Number Network (N8NN).

In February 2020, SSA signed a contract with its previous contractor to support its Next Generation Telephony Project (NGTP). SSA established NGTP to replace and modernize its legacy telephone systems across the Agency. SSA leadership determined the NGTP platform could not meet SSA's needs and hindered the Agency's ability to serve the public, which resulted in increased call wait times and disconnected or unanswered calls. As a result, in August 2024, SSA transitioned to a different platform and did not renew the NGTP contract.

In an April 2025 review, we found the NGTP contract lacked sufficient performance-based quality standards and associated incentives to enable SSA to hold the NGTP contractor accountable for resolving system-performance issues identified during the contract's design and implementation phases.¹

Federal Acquisition Regulations and Blanket Purchase Agreements

In August 2024, to support its transition from NGTP, SSA used an existing BPA with another contractor to acquire AWS Connect for telephone services. SSA originally established the BPA in December 2020. To do this, SSA used the General Service Administration's (GSA) Federal Supply Schedules (FSS) program to purchase various cloud information technology services (for example, platforms or storage).²

¹ SSA, OIG, *The Social Security Administration's Administration of the Next Generation Telephony Project Contract, 022324* (April 2025).

² GSA Federal Supply Schedules Contract Number 47QTCA19D00MP, GS-35F-0509S and GS-35F-0312U.

A BPA establishes an agreement between a Federal agency and a contractor to fill repetitive needs for supplies or services. A BPA is not a contract and does not obligate an agency to make a purchase. After an agency issues a call order for supplies or services under a BPA, and after a BPA vendor agrees to the order, the order becomes a binding contract between the parties. Both parties are then bound by all the terms and conditions in the BPA for that order.³ Once established, an agency can issue multiple orders under one BPA.

The codified Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) provides streamlined procedures for agencies to use BPAs to order supplies and services from FSS vendors to meet recurring needs. Under this program, GSA manages schedule contracts and establishes pricelists with vendors. An agency may establish a BPA with one vendor (as a single-award BPA) or more than one vendor (a multiple-award BPA) in this program. Agencies should generally give preference to multiple-award BPAs over single-award BPAs to promote competition.⁴

The codified FAR, which was applicable when SSA established the BPA, includes many requirements and procedures for establishing an FSS BPA, placing orders, and reviewing the BPA.⁵ For example, Agency heads must provide written justification to support establishing any single-award BPA with an estimated value that exceeds \$150 million.⁶ Also, for BPAs that exceeded the simplified acquisition threshold (\$250,000 as of August 2020⁷ and \$350,000 since October 2025⁸), the codified FAR requires that agencies seek a price reduction before they establish the BPA⁹ and seek price reductions before they place the orders.¹⁰

According to the written justification SSA provided, awarding a single award BPA against an FSS contract was advantageous to the Agency as it ensured continuity of services and reduced the administrative costs of acquiring the information technology services. As of June 2026, under the BPA, SSA had issued eight orders to obtain access to cloud service providers to support the development and delivery of services to the public and SSA employees. This included AWS Connect. See Table 1.

³ Codified FAR 13.303-1. Government Accountability Office, *Contract Management: Agencies Are Not Maximizing Opportunities for Competition or Savings Under Blanket Purchase Agreements Despite Significant Increase in Usage*, GAO-09-792, p. 1 (September 2009).

⁴ Codified FAR 8.405.

⁵ Codified FAR 8.405.

⁶ Codified FAR 8.405-3.

⁷ FAR: Increased Micro-Purchase and Simplified Acquisition Thresholds; 85 Fed. Reg. 40064 (August 31, 2020).

⁸ Codified FAR 2.101 and Codified FAR 8.405-4; Federal Acquisition Regulation: Inflation Adjustment of Acquisition-Related Thresholds; 85 Fed. Reg. 62485 (October 1, 2025).

⁹ Codified FAR 8.405-4.

¹⁰ Codified FAR 8.405-4.

Table 1: Overview of Blanket Purchase Agreement and Call Orders¹¹

Count of Call Order	BPA and Call Orders	Effective Date	Purpose
N/A	28321321A00040003	12/22/2020	BPA awarded to contractor.
1	28321321FA0010133	04/14/2021	To fund the base year of the Cloud BPA.
2	28321322FA0010168	04/25/2022	To fund Option Year 1 of the BPA.
3	28321323FA0010120	04/17/2023	To fund Option Year 2 of the BPA.
4	28321324FA0010089	04/24/2024	To fund Option Year 3 for cloud services. Also funded the purchase of additional software.
5	28321324FA0010214	08/01/2024	To fund AWS Connect for Contact Center as a Service.
6	28321325FA0010110	04/21/2025	To fund Option Year 4 of the BPA.
7	28321326FA0010007	01/12/2026	To procure additional software.
8	28321326FA0010026	01/30/2026	To procure a data warehouse management product that can process and analyze data.

Amazon Web Services Connect

SSA's Phone Operations described AWS Connect as

. . . a Contact Center as a Service (CCaaS), cloud-based solution designed to provide scalable and cost-effective customer service solutions. This product provides a single Unified Communications platform for the integration of audio, video, web, desktop, and mobile telecommunications. AWS Connect is a telephone infrastructure that will enhance SSA's ability to meet the changing demand for services, improve business efficiency, and achieve greater customer satisfaction.

In October 2024, SSA's AWS Connect use began steadily increasing as the Agency transitioned from the N8NN to AWS Connect. In March 2025, SSA started rolling out AWS Connect to all field offices and Social Security Card Centers. SSA expected to expand AWS Connect to the rest of the Agency by September 2026.

On July 30, 2025, Congressman Ron Estes, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security of the United States House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means, requested that we review the AWS Connect contract to determine whether SSA “. . . has robust quality performance standards or incentives tied to performance built into that contractual vehicle” and answer a series of questions related to the contract. See Appendix A for the Chairman's request.

¹¹ Multiple call orders can be active at the same time, and each call order can have more than one modification.

Federal Acquisition Regulations Overhaul

To overhaul Federal procurement processes, an April 2025 Executive Order directed the codified FAR should contain “only provisions required by statute or essential to sound procurement.”¹² The Executive Order directed that the FAR Council (four Federal officials who oversee the FAR), heads of agencies, and senior acquisition and procurement officials take appropriate actions to amend the codified FAR within 180 days.

The overhaul of the FAR, known as the Revolutionary FAR Overhaul (RFO), is being done in two phases. In Phase I, the FAR Council issued model deviation text for parts of the FAR, on a rolling basis.¹³ The deviations are a formal authorization for agencies to adopt RFO FAR parts before they are incorporated into the codified FAR through the formal rulemaking process. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) directs agencies to “. . . generally issue individual or class deviations to implement [these changes] within 30 days after the model deviation text is released.”¹⁴

Phase I was completed on September 30, 2025 when the FAR Council issued the final model deviation text.¹⁵ SSA adopted all the model deviation language of the FAR parts.¹⁶ In Phase II, the FAR Council will turn to the formal rulemaking process, which will be informed by the model deviation text and public input received.¹⁷ As of June 2026, Phase II had begun and the FAR Council had begun releasing the proposed rules to solicit public input and implement the final rules. As of August 2026, the FAR Council had not released proposed rules for all FAR parts.¹⁸

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

We obtained, reviewed, and analyzed documents and information for SSA’s BPA with the contractor for AWS Connect between December 2020 to June 2026. Since the BPA was active during our audit, we obtained and reviewed any subsequent changes to the BPA, including call orders SSA issued after we began our review in September 2025 through January 2026. We reviewed the codified FAR and the RFO to determine any impact they had on the current BPA and whether SSA followed FAR and its own policies to select, administer, and oversee the AWS Connect contract. We analyzed the monthly AWS Connect invoices for December 2020 through November 2025 and determined whether payments were proper and the contract deliverables met the contract terms. We reviewed contractors’ performance reports,

¹² *Restoring Common Sense to Federal Procurement*, Executive Order No. 14275, 90 Fed. Reg. 16447 (April 15, 2025).

¹³ OMB, *Overhauling the Federal Acquisition Regulation*, M-25-26, app., p. 1 (May 2, 2025).

¹⁴ OMB, *Overhauling the Federal Acquisition Regulation*, M-25-26, app., p. 1 (May 2, 2025).

¹⁵ GSA, *Revolutionary FAR Overhaul, FAR Parts and Agency Deviations*, acquisition.gov.

¹⁶ GSA, *Revolutionary FAR Overhaul, FAR Parts and Agency Deviations*, acquisition.gov.

¹⁷ OMB, *Overhauling the Federal Acquisition Regulation*, M-25-26, app., p. 1 (May 2, 2025). *Restoring Common Sense to Federal Procurement*, Executive Order No. 14,275, 90 Fed. Reg. 16,447 (April 15, 2025).

¹⁸ This report will cite to the “codified FAR” when we refer to the regulatory FAR as it was drafted before the RFO is incorporated. When citing to the agency deviations that were adopted pursuant to the RFO, this report will provide a citation to the RFO and will include the date adopted by SSA.

SSA's contract oversight reports, and other relevant reports SSA used to monitor the BPA. See Appendix C for detailed scope and methodology.

RESULTS OF REVIEW

SSA complied with Federal regulations when it selected the contractor for the BPA for AWS Connect for telephone services. However, SSA did not always administer or oversee the BPA in accordance with Federal regulations. Specifically, SSA

- ✓ did not conduct sufficient annual reviews to determine whether the BPA still represented the best value to the Agency and may have missed opportunities for additional discounts;
- ✓ modified the scope of the BPA beyond the original established term; and
- ✓ did not consistently monitor and assess contractor performance.

Additionally, SSA included limited quality standards and performance incentives in its BPA. Although SSA generally experienced improved telephone service platform performance under AWS Connect, we identified other areas where SSA could have identified solutions and addressed its needs more promptly had the Agency had stronger performance measures and methods to monitor performance in the BPA.

Best Value Determinations and Discount Negotiations

Initial Best Value Determination and Discount Negotiation

When SSA established this BPA in December 2020, the codified FAR required that SSA determine which vendor would provide the best value to the Government.¹⁹ Additionally, for BPAs that exceeded the simplified acquisition threshold (\$250,000 in 2020),²⁰ the codified FAR requires that agencies seek a price reduction before they establish the BPA.²¹

In accordance with the codified FAR, SSA determined which vendor would provide the best value when it initially established the BPA. In September 2020, SSA issued a Request for Quotation. In December 2020, SSA reviewed quotes from three vendors, evaluated their performance history, and assessed their ability to provide cloud services within the BPA's terms. SSA selected the contractor because, according to SSA's documentation, its quote submitted represented the best value to the Government. Specifically, an SSA technical evaluation panel gave the contractor the highest rating for its past performance and ability to provide cloud services that met SSA's requirements. The contractor offered the lowest price compared to the other two quotes received in response to the solicitation. We reviewed the related documentation and verified the contractor quoted the lowest price at \$173 million, while the other two vendors' quotes were \$174 million and \$199 million, respectively.

¹⁹ Codified FAR 8.405-3.

²⁰ Codified FAR 2.101 and Codified FAR 8.405-4; FAR: Increased Micro-Purchase and Simplified Acquisition Thresholds; 85 Fed. Reg. 40064 (August 31, 2020).

²¹ Codified FAR 8.405-4.

In an attachment to its Request for Quotation, SSA included a statement requesting vendors to “provide a discount rate” and noted that “SSA is interested in receiving the greatest discount for each dollar the agency spends on the cloud provider’s portal.” The quotes SSA received from the three vendors included discount rates that ranged from 3 to 21 percent. According to SSA, “The existence of pre-discounted pricing demonstrates that pricing negotiations had already occurred as part of the quotation process.” There was no documentation to support SSA requested any additional price reductions after it received the quotes and before it established the BPA. When SSA awarded the BPA in December 2020, it accepted the discount rate for each option year the contractor proposed in its original quote (see Table 2). SSA personnel documented in the award summary that, in its quote, the contractor offered discounts between 16 and 21 percent off the GSA schedule rates.

Table 2: Discount Rate for the BPA as of December 2020

Period	Discount Rate
Base Year	16%
Option Year 1	16%
Option Year 2	18%
Option Year 3	21%
Option Year 4	21%

SSA further indicated it did not have leverage to negotiate additional discounts when it established the BPA. According to SSA,

At the time the BPA was established, no funds were obligated and no specific quantities or ordering commitments existed. As is customary for FSS BPAs, the BPA established the contractual framework under which future requirements would be ordered. The Government’s leverage to negotiate additional pricing was directly tied to actual ordering requirements, forecasted demand, and anticipated spending commitments that materialized only as call orders were issued.

Although we cannot know whether SSA could have received additional discounts if it had negotiated them, it is possible. In 2009, GAO reported almost half of the agencies they reviewed did not seek discounts when they established schedule BPAs. However, “agencies frequently received discounts when they requested them.” GAO noted agencies missed opportunities to save money when they did not request a discount.²²

²² GAO, *Contract Management: Agencies Are Not Maximizing Opportunities for Competition or Savings Under Blanket Purchase Agreements Despite Significant Increase in Usage*, GAO-09-792 (September 2009).

Annual Reviews

After establishing the BPA, the codified FAR required that SSA review the BPA's terms at least annually to confirm

- the schedule contract, upon which the BPA was established, was still in effect;
- the BPA still represented the *best value*; and
- estimated quantities/amounts had been exceeded and additional price reductions could be obtained.²³

Further, for BPA orders that exceeded the simplified acquisition threshold (\$250,000 as of August 2020²⁴ and \$350,000 since October 2025),²⁵ the codified FAR required that agencies seek price reductions before placing the orders.²⁶ The codified FAR also required that SSA document these reviews in its file.²⁷

We reviewed documentation in the Agency's file and located support that SSA conducted annual BPA reviews. However, we could not locate support that SSA made a best-value determination each year, as required by the codified FAR. Instead, the documentation indicated SSA relied on the best-value determination it used to initially establish the BPA. Specifically, for Call Orders 1 through 4 and 6 placed between April 2021 and April 2025, instead of documenting the pricing, performance, and technical abilities of competitors, SSA personnel stated its initial fair value determination was "fair and reasonable," and a "separate determination of fair and reasonable" pricing was not required. Additionally, we could not locate documentation that SSA sought additional discounts, as the codified FAR required, before placing Call Orders 1 through 4 and 6 despite each order exceeding \$250,000.

SSA stated it "... acknowledges that the annual review documentation could have more fully articulated the underlying factors supporting its best-value conclusion. However, the absence of additional narrative detail does not establish that the review was not performed or that the BPA ceased to represent the best value." Without sufficient documentation, we could not determine whether SSA appropriately assessed BPA value and pricing in adherence with the codified FAR. We discussed this with SSA's contracting personnel, who stated they were not required to negotiate every year and when exercising the option year. They indicated they conducted annual reviews and documented that the price was fair and reasonable, the contractor's performance was satisfactory, and the BPA continued to meet SSA's operational and technical requirements. Additionally, they noted the pricing was "already beating the industry."

²³ Codified FAR 8.405-3(e).

²⁴ FAR: Increased Micro-Purchase and Simplified Acquisition Thresholds; 85 Fed. Reg. 40064 (August 31, 2020).

²⁵ Codified FAR 2.101 and Codified FAR 8.405-4; FAR: Inflation Adjustment of Acquisition-Related Thresholds; 85 Fed. Reg. 62485 (October 1, 2025).

²⁶ Codified FAR 8.405-4.

²⁷ Codified FAR 8.405-3.

However, because SSA did not fully determine whether the BPA still represented the best value and sought price reductions, it may have missed opportunities for additional discounts. According to a prior GAO report, “. . . annual reviews present contracting officers with an opportunity to assess whether the BPA still represents the best value and to identify additional opportunities for discounts by determining whether the quantities or amounts estimated when the BPA was established have been exceeded and whether additional price reductions can be obtained.”²⁸

Opportunities for Additional Discounts

When SSA issued Call Order 5 in August 2024 to obligate funds for AWS Connect to serve as the contact center for the Agency’s Teleservice Centers and the N8NN, it negotiated with the contractor for an annual credit after it met an agreed-upon spending commitment (see Table 3).

Table 3: Discount Rate for the BPA as of August 2024

Period	Discount Rate	Credit After Meeting Commitment
Base Year	16%	\$0
Option Year 1	16%	\$0
Option Year 2	18%	\$0
Option Year 3	21%	\$8,000,000
Option Year 4	21%	\$6,000,000

In October 2024, SSA had a significant increase in AWS use as it transitioned its N8NN system to AWS Connect and rolled out AWS Connect to field offices and Social Security Card Centers. According to the technical expert, SSA expected call volume to increase from October 2024 through February 2025 because of the normal seasonal pattern in SSA’s public telephone service. The technical expert explained that N8NN call volumes typically begin to rise in October and November and peak between December and February. In addition, SSA implemented an appointment-focused service model beginning in November 2024. This operational change required that, instead of walking into a field office, the public call the N8NN to schedule appointments for several services.

In July 2025, SSA requested a meeting with the contractor to discuss pricing. In the same month, SSA used a vendor with an existing contract to benchmark pricing for the Agency to conduct a fair market value analysis of the contractor’s offer for the AWS Connect service. Based on SSA’s expected volume and relative growth, the vendor concluded the contractor should offer a discount between 25 and 29 percent. The discount could also be in the form of credits that could increase SSA’s purchasing power. Based on the fair market value analysis, SSA accepted the following updated terms and discounts proposed by the contractor.

²⁸ GAO, *Contract Management: Agencies Are Not Maximizing Opportunities for Competition or Savings under Blanket Purchase Agreements Despite Significant Increase in Usage*, GAO-09-792, p. 22 (September 2009).

1. A 25-percent “cross-service” discount that applies equally to all eligible AWS cloud services.²⁹
2. Incremental annual credits tied to SSA’s commitment to the multi-year adoption of AWS Connect—specifically, SSA is eligible for \$8 million in annual credits by achieving \$73 million in annual use during each performance period.
3. An extension of the cross-service discount to AWS Connect telephony services unique to SSA.

In August 2025, SSA consulted with GSA about its AWS Cloud procurement.³⁰ GSA reviewed the discounted price and compared SSA’s terms to those of other agencies with similar AWS deployments. GSA confirmed the proposed cross-service discount rate of 25 percent was consistent with rates offered to other agencies and noted the \$8 million in credits exceeds discounts provided elsewhere. GSA agreed the discounted rates offered significant value to SSA and recommended proceeding with the modification at the negotiated rates. In September 2025, SSA modified Call Order 5 to extend the terms of the BPA and incorporate the renegotiated discount rate and credit (see Table 4).

Table 4: Discount Rate after the Modification in September 2025

Period	Discount Rate	Credit After Meeting Commitment
Option Year 1	25%	\$8,000,000
Option Year 2	25%	\$8,000,000
Option Year 3	25%	\$8,000,000
Option Year 4	25%	\$8,000,000

As SSA increased its AWS use in October 2024, it spent significantly more on the AWS Connect services to manage the higher call volumes. The average monthly use from July 2021 through September 2024 was about \$2.7 million. Between October 2024 and October 2025, the average monthly use increased to about \$10 million, a 269 percent increase. For example, SSA spent \$4.5 million in September 2024; \$8 million in October 2024; and \$12 million in May 2025.

SSA stated it continuously monitored use under the cloud order and initiated internal forecasting and pricing analyses when it became evident AWS Connect consumption had increased. SSA then began negotiations with the contractor to obtain larger discounts. Although SSA noticed an increase in AWS use in October 2024 due to the timing and complexity of the negotiating effort, the higher discount was not negotiated until September 2025.

²⁹ The cross-service discount applies because SSA uses multiple AWS services. For example, SSA uses AWS CloudWatch to monitor resources and AWS Connect for cloud-based contact center operations.

³⁰ We found no evidence GSA commented on SSA’s extension of the BPA duration.

Between October 2024 and August 2025, SSA received the 21-percent discount it negotiated in December 2020. In August 2024, before SSA placed Call Order 5, it negotiated with the contractor for an annual credit after meeting an agreed-upon spending commitment for Option Years 3 and 4 (see Table 3). In September 2025, SSA renegotiated its discount to 25 percent. However, SSA did not negotiate price reductions before placing Call Orders 1 through 4 and 6, in addition to its annual reviews, as codified FAR requires.

If SSA attempted to renegotiate the 25-percent discount rate earlier when it expanded the AWS Connect use in October 2024 and was successful, it could have potentially saved approximately \$4.5 million in AWS Connect costs, an average monthly savings of \$400,000 (see Table 5).³¹

Table 5: Potential Monthly Savings Had SSA Successfully Negotiated the 25-percent Discount Earlier Than September 2025

Month/Year	AWS Use	Old Discount Rate (21 Percent)	New Discount Rate (25 Percent)	Potential Savings
October 2024	\$8,132,044	\$1,707,729	\$2,033,011	\$325,282
November 2024	\$9,034,125	\$1,897,166	\$2,258,531	\$361,365
December 2024	\$9,077,735	\$1,906,324	\$2,269,434	\$363,110
January 2025	\$12,155,653	\$2,552,687	\$3,038,913	\$486,226
February 2025	\$15,166,402	\$3,184,944	\$3,791,601	\$606,657
March 2025	\$13,089,545	\$2,748,804	\$3,272,386	\$523,582
April 2025	\$12,476,251	\$2,620,013	\$3,119,063	\$499,050
May 2025	\$11,736,662	\$2,464,699	\$2,934,166	\$469,467
June 2025	\$6,934,000	\$1,456,140	\$1,733,500	\$277,360
July 2025	\$7,411,809	\$1,556,480	\$1,852,952	\$296,472
August 2025	\$7,187,601	\$1,509,396	\$1,796,900	\$287,504
Average				\$408,734
Total				\$4,496,075

³¹ SSA negotiated annual credits after it met an agreed-upon spending commitment in August 2024 and September 2025. The computations in Table 5 do not account for the credits SSA received between October 2024 and August 2025. The credits applied to both negotiated rates—21 percent and 25 percent. See Table 3 and Table 4.

Modification of the Scope of the Blanket Purchase Agreement

When SSA established the single-award BPA in December 2020, the codified FAR limited the duration of the BPA to 1 year, with up to four 1-year option periods, for a total of 5 years.³² SSA initially established the BPA with a duration of 5 years, beginning in 2021 through 2026 (see Table 6). This included a 1-year base period and four 1-year option periods. In addition, the BPA included an option for SSA to extend services up to 6 months for a total of 66 months (5 years and 6 months) if all options were exercised. SSA established the initial BPA for 5 years, in accordance with the codified FAR.

Table 6: Initial BPA Period of Performance

BPA Periods	Period of Performance
Initial Base Period	02/01/2021 – 01/31/2022
Option Year 1	02/01/2022 – 01/31/2023
Option Year 2	02/01/2023 – 01/31/2024
Option Year 3	02/01/2024 – 01/31/2025
Option Year 4	02/01/2025 – 01/31/2026
Extension of Services	02/01/2026 – 07/31/2026

The RFO's ordering procedures for FSS BPAs eliminate the duration restriction on single-award BPAs.³³ On September 5, 2025, SSA authorized a class deviation and adopted the RFO changes.³⁴ Model deviation text for a particular FAR part is not applicable to an agency until the agency has issued a class deviation.³⁵ When an agency authorizes a class deviation for an RFO part, that RFO language applies to solicitations for procurement, such as BPAs, that agencies issued on or after the effective date of the change. The RFO states

... unless otherwise specified – (1) FAR changes apply to solicitations issued on or after the effective date of the change; (2) Contracting officers may, at their discretion, include the FAR changes in solicitations issued before the effective date, provided award of the resulting contract(s) occurs on or after the effective date; and (3) Contracting officers may, at their discretion, include the changes in any existing contract with appropriate consideration.³⁶

³² Codified FAR 8.405-3(d)(2).

³³ Revolutionary Far Overhaul 8.401 (issued August 14, 2025; adopted by SSA September 5, 2025); General Services Acquisition Regulation (Deviation) Subpart 538.71 (FSS Ordering Procedures).

³⁴ SSA, *Request for Class Deviation from the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Parts 4,5,8,12,26,38,40, and 51 – Decision*, (September 5, 2025).

³⁵ GSA, *RFO- Frequently Asked Questions*, Q: How Does an Agency Adopt Model Deviation Text?, Acquisition.gov.

³⁶ Revolutionary FAR Overhaul 1.107(d) (issued May 2, 2025; adopted by SSA June 11, 2025).

SSA subsequently extended the duration of the BPA, from the original, 5-year term to 10 years. SSA did not comply with FAR when it modified the scope and extended the duration of the BPA beyond the original established term.

- On September 30, 2025, as part of its plan to replace NGTP with AWS Connect and expand its use to all Agency components, SSA modified the AWS call order by extending the duration of the BPA for 2 months until September 2026, added 4 more option years, and updated the BPA terms.
- On December 8, 2025, SSA modified the BPA and added 4 option years with an option to extend services for 6 months. These new option years extended the AWS call order through July 2030 (see Table 7).

Based on our review of call order documentation, SSA estimated that it will spend almost \$471 million for 5 years between Fiscal Years 2025 and 2029, without any discount.

Table 7: Extended BPA Duration

BPA Periods Added	Duration
Option Year 5	02/01/2026 - 01/31/2027
Option Year 6	02/01/2027 - 01/31/2028
Option Year 7	02/01/2028 - 01/31/2029
Option Year 8	02/01/2029 - 01/31/2030
Option to Extend	02/01/2030 - 07/31/2030

According to SSA subject-matter experts, SSA extended the duration of the BPA because the RFO removed the requirement that BPAs not extend more than 5 years. Adding these new option years did not change the scope of the BPA, only its duration. SSA states the RFO³⁷ allows contracting officers, at their discretion, to include FAR changes in any existing contract with appropriate consideration. SSA indicated the contracting officer exercised this discretion by modifying the BPA to extend the term. Subject-matter experts indicated the Agency could extend the BPA further with sufficient justification.

Although the RFO allows a contracting officer to retroactively apply FAR regulatory changes to an existing contract, it is unclear whether this provision allows a contracting officer to retroactively include agency deviations (as opposed to FAR regulatory changes) into an existing BPA.

³⁷ Revolutionary FAR Overhaul Subpart 1.107(d)(3).

However, despite the relaxed requirements for FSS BPAs, the FSS ordering procedures in the RFO continue to require that agencies issue a Request for Quotation to establish BPAs above the simplified acquisition threshold³⁸ and establish BPAs with a defined ordering period, inclusive of any option years.³⁹ SSA modified the established BPA to add option years not included in the original BPA without following the competition rules in the RFO. We found SSA's modification of the BPA to extend the option years was outside the scope of the original BPA and subject to competition requirements. However, SSA did not recompete the BPA when it modified the BPA to change its performance period, as GAO case law and the RFO indicate it should have.

GAO decisions and case law help determine whether orders and modifications are outside the BPA's scope. Previous decisions have established several tests and factors for making this determination. Notably, GAO and the courts will consider whether

. . . the modified contract materially departs from the scope of the original procurement. . . [and] examines changes in the type of work, performance period, and costs as between the original contract and modified contract. The GAO also considers whether the solicitation for the original contract adequately advised offerors of the potential for the type of change found in the modification or whether the modification is of a nature that potential offerors would reasonably have anticipated at the time of the original award.⁴⁰

For example, in one decision, GAO examined an FSS BPA and, when deciding whether a call order was outside the scope of an underlying contract or BPA and required competition, GAO looked for material differences between the call order and the BPA.⁴¹ To find these differences, GAO reviewed the circumstances of the original procurement for any changes in the type of work, performance period, and costs between the awarded contract (or BPA) and the issued order. GAO also determined whether the original solicitation informed offerors about the possibility of these types of orders.⁴²

We applied these principles to SSA's call order and modification to add option years to the BPA and found they could substantially change the scope of the BPA by increasing the number of call orders and the amount of work given to the current vendor, which could also increase the total value of the BPA. If SSA continues extending the duration of the BPA beyond its original term (which ended July 31, 2026), the BPA will unduly limit competition, and SSA may lose the opportunity to seek potential contractors with better pricing.

³⁸ Revolutionary Far Overhaul 8.401 (issued August 14, 2025; adopted by SSA September 5, 2025); General Services Acquisition Regulation (Deviation) 538.7102-2(a) (FSS Ordering Procedures); General Services Acquisition Regulation (Deviation) 538.7104-1 (FSS Ordering Procedures); General Services Acquisition Regulation (Deviation) 538.7103-3 (FSS Ordering Procedures).

³⁹ General Services Acquisition Regulation (Deviation) 538.7104-1(a)(2) (FSS Ordering Procedures).

⁴⁰ *CCL, Inc. v. U.S.*, 39 Fed. Cl. 780 (1997) (citing GAO, *Matter of: MCI Telecommunications Corp.*, B-276659 (September 29, 1997)).

⁴¹ GAO, *Matter of: Vettera, LLC*, B-417991 (December 29, 2019).

⁴² GAO, *Matter of: Vettera, LLC*, B-417991 (December 29, 2019) (emphasis added).

Performance and Monitoring the Blanket Purchase Agreement

Contractor Performance

When an agency establishes a BPA and determines best value, in addition to price, the agency may consider a variety of factors, including a contractor's past performance.⁴³ Accordingly, SSA personnel assessed contractor performance when they initially established the BPA. Before SSA personnel selected the contractor, they verified and documented that its past performance questionnaire ratings were "exceptional" or "very good." However, SSA did not consistently monitor and assess contractor performance after it awarded the BPA, as required by FAR and Agency policies.

The codified FAR requires that, after an agency awards a BPA, it must regularly document the contractor's performance for orders that exceed the simplified acquisitions threshold.⁴⁴ Specifically, the codified FAR requires that agencies prepare past-performance evaluations in the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS)—a web-based application agencies use to document and evaluate contractor performance—at least annually and upon completion of the work under an order.⁴⁵

SSA's *Acquisition Handbook* requires that Agency personnel evaluate the contractor performance under the BPA according to internal the *CPARS Policy Guide*.⁴⁶ In addition, the *Acquisition Handbook* requires that Agency personnel further assess contractor performance for BPAs. For example, the contracting officer should complete an interim performance evaluation when exercising an option or approving incremental funding.⁴⁷ SSA requires that the contracting officer obtain informal performance information from the contracting officer's representative, indicating the contractor is performing at a satisfactory level. The contracting officer must prepare and complete a past performance evaluation in CPARS within 120 days of the end of the period being evaluated.⁴⁸

According to codified FAR and SSA's policy, SSA personnel should have submitted past performance reports in CPARS at least annually or upon completion of each call order. After SSA awarded the BPA to the contractor in December 2020, it issued eight call orders through January 2026. SSA personnel should complete an interim performance evaluation when major events occur, such as exercising an option, or requesting additional funding. However, we verified personnel only completed CPARS reports for Call Orders 4 and 5, and did not submit reports for Call Orders 1, 2, 3, and 6 at the end of their performance periods (see Table 8). During our review period, CPARS reports were not required for Call Orders 7 and 8 because they were still active. According to SSA subject-matter experts, the contracting officer

⁴³ Codified FAR 8.405-3(a)(2)(i).

⁴⁴ Codified FAR 8.406-7.

⁴⁵ Codified FAR 8.406-7 and Codified FAR 42.1502.a

⁴⁶ SSA, *Social Security Acquisition Handbook*, subpart H2342.1502(a), last updated May 2021. SSA, Office of Acquisition and Grants Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) Policy Guide (July 2024).

⁴⁷ SSA, *Social Security Acquisition Handbook*, subpart H2342.1502(a), last updated May 2021. SSA, Office of Acquisition and Grants Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) Policy Guide (July 2024).

⁴⁸ SSA, *Social Security Acquisition Handbook*, subpart H2317.207(c)(7), last updated as of June 2019.

did not submit CPARS reports on time because of staff losses and job duty changes in SSA's office of Strategic Sourcing.

In addition, the contracting officer did not always communicate or document the contractor's performance when SSA exercised an option or approved additional funding, as required by SSA's Acquisition Handbook. Contracting personnel stated that the contracting officer, or designated Contract Specialist, obtained informal performance feedback from the contracting officer's representative that the contractor's performance is at least satisfactory. However, we found emails that documented satisfactory performance only in January and November 2023, December 2024, and July 2025. The contracting officer did not always verify the contractor's performance within the required time frame before they exercised an option or approving additional funding, as policy requires (see Table 8). As a result, SSA may not identify and address contractor performance problems promptly.

Table 8: CPARS and Performance Verification

Count of Call Order	BPA and Call Orders	Award Date	Purpose	Period of Performance	CPARS	Performance Verification
N/A	28321321A00040003	12/22/2020	BPA awarded to contractor.	02/01/2021 - 01/31/2022	Not required	Not required
1	28321321FA0010133	04/14/2021	To fund the base year of the Cloud BPA.	05/01/2021 - 04/30/2022	Not submitted	Not required
2	28321322FA0010168	04/25/2022	To fund Option Year 1 of the BPA.	05/01/2022 - 04/30/2023	Not submitted	No documentation to support verification before exercising the option year.
3	28321323FA0010120	04/17/2023	To fund Option Year 2 of the BPA.	5/01/2023 - 04/30/2024	Not submitted	Informal verification was completed in January 2023.
4	28321324FA0010089	04/24/2024	To fund Option Year 3 for cloud services. Also funded the purchase of additional software.	5/01/2024 - 04/30/2025	Completed	Informal verification was completed in November 2023.
5	28321324FA0010214	08/01/2024	To fund AWS Connect for Contact Center as a Service.	08/01/2024 - 07/31/2025	Completed	Informal verification was completed in July 2025.
6	28321325FA0010110	04/21/2025	To fund Option Year 4 of the BPA.	05/01/2025 - 04/30/2026	Not submitted	Informal verification was completed in December 2024.
7	28321326FA0010007	01/12/2026	To procure additional software.	11/30/2025 - 11/29/2026	Not required	Not required

Count of Call Order	BPA and Call Orders	Award Date	Purpose	Period of Performance	CPARS	Performance Verification
8	28321326FA0010026	01/30/2026	To procure a data warehouse management product that can process and analyze data.	12/06/2025 - 12/05/2026	Not required	Not required.

Performance Measures

The codified FAR states the preferred method for acquiring services is performance-based acquisition, and it should be used to the maximum extent practicable.⁴⁹ The codified FAR also states performance-based acquisition should include measurable performance standards, methods for assessing performance against the standards, and performance incentives that correspond to the performance standards.⁵⁰ The codified FAR further states, “To the maximum extent practicable, positive and negative performance incentives shall be considered in connection with service contracts for performance of objectively measurable tasks when quality of performance is critical and incentives are likely to motivate the contractor.”⁵¹

SSA’s only documented performance measure required that the contractor reimburse SSA for any losses of telephone services or apply service credits for service outages or interruptions. During our interviews with SSA subject-matter experts, they stated SSA assigned a technical expert to oversee the technical and administrative functions related to the BPA. The assigned technical expert monitored SSA’s daily use of AWS Connect and communicated any issues, such as a significant drop in calls, to the contracting team as needed.

Telephone Service Outage

As of June 2026, AWS Connect had experienced two outages. We reviewed outage reports and related documentation and verified the contractor issued credits for the loss of service and provided SSA troubleshooting for the outages.

- The first outage occurred on June 18, 2025 in the Northern Virginia and Oregon regions. The outage lasted for approximately 4 hours. During the outage, callers’ requests for a callback were not routed to SSA employees. The callback feature in AWS Connect allows callers to receive a callback from an SSA employee when it is their turn in line instead of waiting on the telephone. This outage delayed callbacks to callers in two regions and negatively affected SSA’s service to the public. SSA did not know how many calls were affected. The contractor provided SSA a \$100,000 credit for the service outage.

⁴⁹ Codified FAR 37.102(a).

⁵⁰ Codified FAR 37.6 and Codified FAR 46.4.

⁵¹ Codified FAR 16.402-2(b).

- The second outage occurred in the Northern Virginia region on October 19 and 20, 2025 for approximately 15 hours. The outage caused connection errors for AWS Connect, which prevented SSA offices in the Northern Virginia region from receiving calls from the public and negatively affected SSA's services. SSA did not know how many calls were affected. The contractor provided SSA a \$189,917 credit for the service outage.

For both outages, AWS reportedly conducted root-cause analyses and identified ways to prevent future outages. According to SSA's subject-matter experts, AWS' response and the contractor's compensation to SSA appropriately addressed the outages.

SSA's technical expert indicated the Agency's telephone services experienced fewer outages under AWS Connect than the NGTP platform and the telephone service platform that preceded it. Specifically, a prior audit reported 13 N8NN telephone service disruptions under NGTP between November 2023 and May 2024.⁵² Additionally, before SSA began using NGTP, the N8NN experienced 10 full outages (where the entire N8NN system was down and SSA received no incoming calls) and 11 partial outages (where SSA received sporadic incoming calls) between December 2021 and October 2022.

Workforce Management Solution

When SSA began using AWS Connect as its platform for telephone services in August 2024, it also attempted to use AWS' Workload Management solution to support "scheduling, forecasting, performance management, agent tracking, and reporting" at its call centers. However, according to SSA subject-matter experts, AWS Connect's scheduling and forecasting tool "was not ready," despite AWS attempting to retrofit it to meet SSA's needs, and the scheduling feature was not working. As a result, it could not support SSA's needs in providing services to the public, which resulted in inconsistent service levels and decreased productivity.

In July 2025, SSA met with the contractor and AWS to discuss these issues. SSA sought "compensation for the failed solution." As SSA requested, the contractor compensated SSA a total of \$1.3 million to recover the costs to replace the software and for related staffing.

Later in July 2025, SSA purchased a cloud-based workforce management software that used the same BPA with the contractor to provide solutions for workforce optimization, scheduling, forecasting, monitoring, and reporting. While SSA indicated the workforce management software met its needs, procuring it resulted in about \$1 million in increased costs for SSA for the first year and \$870,000 for each subsequent option year.

⁵² SSA, OIG, *The Social Security Administration's Administration of the Next Generation Telephony Project Contract*, 022324, pp. C1 and C2 (April 2025).

Further, because the original BPA did not adequately outline Agency needs and performance standards to ensure AWS Connect would perform as expected, SSA did not have an effective workload management tool for almost 1 year after it began using AWS Connect. During that time, SSA stated it faced, “. . . challenges such as inconsistent service levels, decreased productivity, limited insight into improvement opportunities, and difficulties with optimizing resource allocation.” SSA subject-matter experts indicated the BPA did not require additional performance standards or incentives and believed the technical expert’s oversight was adequate. However, had SSA included stronger performance measures and methods to monitor performance in the BPA, it may have been able to identify solutions, address its needs more promptly, and avoid additional costs.

Outages and ineffective tools for managing SSA’s telephone services workforce can negatively affect SSA’s service to the public as they could result in longer wait times, disconnected and unanswered calls, and increased customer dissatisfaction. As recognized in our 2025 audit of SSA’s NGTP, without robust quality performance standards or incentives tied to performance, SSA may face challenges in enforcing BPA requirements and holding the contractor accountable for performance deficiencies.

CONCLUSION

Based on lessons learned from prior contract weaknesses, SSA must incorporate standards and incentives into the BPA and closely monitor performance to ensure it can adequately support SSA’s vital telephone services for the public. Additionally, as a steward of public funds, SSA must comply with Federal acquisition laws and best practices and actively pursue cost savings so that the government may receive the best value for its expenditures. By strengthening its acquisition and BPA oversight processes, SSA can ensure it complies with applicable regulations and safeguards taxpayer resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend SSA:

1. Ensure employees, in their annual reviews, determine and document whether the BPA represents the best value.
2. Re-evaluate whether this BPA secures the best contractor and pricing to support SSA’s telephone services and monitor the Agency’s needs for services and negotiate price reductions before placing orders, as appropriate.
3. Document the contracting and legal analysis used to support the Agency’s decision to extend the BPA duration and ensure compliance with the RFO and other Federal acquisition regulations.
4. Consistently monitor and assess contractor performance, including documenting contractor performance evaluations, as required by the FAR and SSA’s Acquisition Handbook.
5. Incorporate more robust performance measures and methods to monitor performance in this and/or future BPAs to ensure contractors effectively support SSA’s telephone services and SSA can hold them accountable for performance deficiencies.

AGENCY COMMENTS

SSA agreed to implement our recommendations (see Appendix D). SSA also provided technical comments in response to our draft report that we incorporated into this final report as appropriate.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – CONGRESSIONAL REQUEST LETTER

RON ESTES
KANSAS,
CHAIRMAN



JOHN LARSON
CONNECTICUT,
RANKING MEMBER

U.S. House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY
1139 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
(202) 225-3625
Washington, DC 20515

July 30, 2025

Michelle L. Anderson
Assistant Inspector General for Audit
Office of the Inspector General
Social Security Administration
6401 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland 21235

Dear Assistant Inspector General Anderson:

I appreciate the Social Security Administration (SSA) Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) recent report on the SSA's administration of the Next Generation Telephony Project (NGTP) contract. The report found that the NGTP contract lacked sufficient performance-based quality standards and associated incentives to enable the SSA to hold the NGTP contractor accountable for resolving system-performance issues identified during the contract's design and implementation phases.¹ As a result, the NGTP platform was unable to meet the SSA's needs and hindered the SSA's ability to serve the public, resulting in increased call wait times and disconnected or unanswered calls.

I understand that the SSA did not renew the NGTP contract and has subsequently contracted with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to provide the agency's primary telephone services. I write to request a review of the AWS contract to determine whether the SSA has robust quality performance standards or incentives tied to performance built into that contractual vehicle. Given the continuing importance of telephone services at the SSA, and the findings of the prior audit, I request a report addressing the following questions:

1. Describe the contract solicitation, bid, and selection process for the NGTP replacement:
 - a. Did the SSA develop and disclose requirements for its 800-Number NGTP replacement that provided sufficient detail for prospective contractors to ensure they could meet the SSA's needs before bidding for the contract?
 - b. Did the SSA's contract solicitation include quality performance standards?
 - c. Did the SSA follow the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) standards and the SSA acquisition policy requirements when the agency selected AWS for the contract?
 - d. Who was responsible for ensuring the contract solicitation, bid, and selection processes were robust and met FAR standards and the SSA's acquisition policy requirements?

¹ SSA OIG, *The Social Security Administration's Administration of the Next Generation Telephony Project Contract* (022324 | April 2025).

2. Describe the contracting process once the contractor was selected:
 - a. Did the SSA include measurable performance standards in the contract?
 - b. Did the SSA include specific actions that would be taken if AWS did not meet the performance standards?
 - c. Who was responsible for drafting the contract and ensuring it met the SSA's needs?
3. Describe the contract oversight process:
 - a. Has the SSA provided contract oversight to ensure AWS is providing the required goods and services within the contract terms?
 - b. Has the SSA identified any issues with AWS goods and services under the current contract? If so, what actions has the SSA taken to hold AWS accountable?
 - c. Has the SSA identified any system-performance issues? If so, how has the SSA ensured remediation of any system-performance issues?
 - d. Who is responsible for the AWS contract oversight, and did they have qualifications for both contract administration and technical knowledge of the needs for the SSA's 800-number system?

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Ron Estes
Chairman
Subcommittee on Social Security
Ways and Means Committee

Appendix B – THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION’S AMAZON WEB SERVICE CONNECT FOR TELEPHONE SERVICES

The Social Security Administration's (SSA) Amazon Web Service (AWS) Connect use has steadily increased since October 2024, as the Agency transitioned the National 800-Number Network (N8NN) from Next Generation Telephony Project (NGTP) to AWS Connect. See the following timeline, based on the AWS Operations Rollout Plan.

- June 2024 – The Commissioner of Social Security approved implementing AWS Connect as the N8NN and future Enterprise Contact Center Solution. The purpose is to migrate the N8NN to AWS Connect, commencing June 27, 2024, with a target implementation by September 27, 2024, or sooner.
- August 2024 – SSA used an existing Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) with a contractor to acquire AWS Connect for telephone services.
- October 2024 – SSA's use of AWS Connect has steadily increased starting in October 2024 as it transitioned the N8NN to AWS Connect.
- March to August 2025 – SSA rolled AWS out to all field offices and Social Security Card Centers.
- Spring 2025 – SSA conducted a limited rollout to two disability determination services (DDS).
- Summer 2025 – SSA conducted a limited rollout to four to five DDSs.
- Fall 2025 – SSA rolled out AWS to Processing Centers and International Call Center.
- Winter 2026 – SSA rolled out AWS to the remainder of DDSs and Disability Processing Branches/Disability Processing Units.
- Spring/Summer 2026 – SSA plans to roll out AWS to all other components including Headquarters and Regional and Area Director Offices and other large sites.
- September 2026 – SSA plans to complete Agency-wide implementation.

Appendix C – SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

To accomplish our objective, we:

- Reviewed policies and procedures related to the Social Security Administration's (SSA) telephone services.
- Reviewed relevant Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and SSA policies regarding the contract process, specifically, the blanket purchase agreement.
- Mapped SSA's contracting process, including the activities involved in selection, administration, and oversight.
- Obtained and reviewed the blanket purchase agreement (BPA) SSA awarded to a contractor including the Amazon Web Services (AWS) Connect service.
- Interviewed relevant SSA employees who are involved in the contracting processing, including the Contracting Officer Representative. The Contracting Officer representative authorizes and designates technical or administrative functions related to a contract or blanket purchase agreement.
- Determined whether SSA followed FAR and its own policies to select, administer, and oversee the AWS Connect contract.
- Reviewed the contract's quality assurance requirements to ensure SSA receive the deliverables in accordance with contract terms.
- Reviewed contractors' performance reports, SSA's contract oversight reports, and other relevant reports SSA uses to monitor the contract.
- Reviewed and analyzed invoices and payments with the contractor.
- Determined whether the contract deliverables meet with contract terms.

We assessed the significance of internal controls necessary to satisfy the audit objective. This included an assessment of the five internal control components: control environment, risk assessment, control activities, information and communication, and monitoring. In addition, we reviewed the principles of internal controls associated with the audit objective. We identified the following components and principles as significant to the audit objective.

- Component 1: Control Environment
 - Principle 2: Exercise oversight responsibility
 - Principle 3: Establish structure, responsibility, and authority
- Component 2: Risk Assessment
 - Principle 7: Identify, analyze, and respond to risks

- Component 3: Control Activities
 - Principle 12: Implement control activities
- Component 5: Monitoring
 - Principle 16: Perform monitoring activities
 - Principle 17: Evaluate issues and remediate deficiencies

We conducted our review between September 2025 and August 2026. The entity audited was SSA's Office of Strategic Sourcing. We performed limited data reliability testing for this review, which included reconciling all BPA invoices related to AWS provided by SSA, verifying policy, and interviewing SSA experts on this subject matter. We determined the data were sufficiently reliable for the purpose of this report.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective.

Appendix D – AGENCY COMMENTS



MEMORANDUM

Date: September 25, 2026

Refer To: TQA-1

To: Michelle L. Anderson
Assistant Inspector General for Audit as First Assistant

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chad Poist', is written over a horizontal line.

From: Chad Poist
Chief Risk Officer

Subject: Office of the Inspector General Draft Memorandum "Social Security Administration's Use of Amazon Web Service Connect for Telephone Services" (042512) -- INFORMATION

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft report. We agree with the recommendations.

Please let me know if I can be of further assistance. You may direct staff inquiries to Amy Gao, Director of the Audit Liaison Staff.



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