



# MEMORANDUM

## Legislative Post Audit

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TO: Members, Legislative Post Audit Committee  
FROM: Katrin Osterhaus, IT Audit Manager  
DATE: October 10, 2023  
SUBJECT: Automated Biometric Identification System ABIS IT Project - Update

Our primary aim in monitoring IT projects is to identify when a project is at risk of failure due to scope, schedule, cost, or quality problems. By communicating our concerns to the agency, legislators, and other stakeholders we hope to help improve the project's health. Our secondary objective is to evaluate whether monitored IT projects have adequately planned for security controls.

We have monitored the Kansas Bureau of Investigation's Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS) project since January 2020. KBI signed a primary contract with IDEMIA July 8, 2021, to upgrade the state's automated fingerprinting system. KBI also signed a separate contract with "Mission Critical Partners, LLC (MCP)" for periodic Independent Verification & Validation.

We have been updating the committee, after receiving the MCP quarterly reports. We have recently received the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2023 report (April 1 – June 30, 2023). However, instead of providing only the quarterly update, we have decided to present information on the project status over time to provide additional context and perspective.

Based on our review of the MCP reports since project inception:

- **the ABIS project is satisfactory in Scope and Cost.** MCP measures the project based on 12 risk areas with 5 risk criteria each. We have continuously evaluated the contractors' scores in terms of project scope, cost, schedule, and quality. As shown in the far-right column of **Figure 1** on the next page, we determined the project is in satisfactory status with regard to Scope and Cost for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2023. The project scope appears appropriate, change orders appear to be successfully managed, and requirements are appropriate given the type of project. The projects' approximate \$5.5 million cost appears similar to other states' modernization projects. Project funding is secured through a one-time legislative appropriation. As the figure shows, the relevant risk criteria across these 2 areas have generally been low over time.
- **the ABIS project has persistently high risk ratings in Schedule and Quality.** As shown in the far-right column of **Figure 1** on the next page, the project had high risk rankings with regard to its Schedule performance for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2023. Specifically, the project's original go-live date was January 2023. The

most recent schedule revision showed a completion date of October 2023. That completion date is unlikely since the schedule has already slipped, and a recent decision to delay the factory acceptance test. Several Quality criteria also received high risk scores in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2023, as shown in the figure. This includes things like project management authority and intergroup coordination. Lastly, risks in these 2 areas have remained high across the prior 5 quarters, as shown in the figure.

Figure 1. The ABIS project is satisfactory in Scope and Cost, but has persistently high risk ratings in Quality and Schedule.

	2022 QTR 1	2022 QTR 2	2022 QTR 3	2022 QTR 4	2023 QTR 1	2023 QTR 2
<b>The Project Scope is in Satisfactory Status</b>						
Project Scope Size	1	1	1	1	1	1
Change Control Management	1	1	3	1	1	1
Requirements Diversity	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>The Project Cost is in Satisfactory Status</b>						
Budget Size	1	1	1	1	1	1
Achievable Benefits	1	1	1	1	1	1
Economic Justification	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cost Controls	1	3	1	1	1	1
<b>The Project Schedule is in Unsatisfactory Status</b>						
Work Plan	4	4	5	5	5	5
Available Resources	3	4	5	5	5	5
Elapsed Time	4	3	4	4	4	4
Schedule Performance	5	3	4	5	5	5
<b>The Project Quality is in Caution Status</b>						
User Communication	4	4	4	4	4	3
Project Manager Authority	2	4	4	4	4	4
Project Management Approach	3	5	5	4	4	4
Project Management Relationships	3	5	4	3	3	5
Intergroup Coordination	2	4	4	4	4	4
Hardware Implementation	3	3	3	4	4	4
Technical Documentation	5	5	5	5	5	5

Source: MCP reports for 6 quarterly review periods (Jan 1, 2022-March 31, 2022 through April 1-June 30, 2023)

**MCP summarized the project status for the quarter ending June 30 2023 as follows:**

The project continues with difficulties relative to resource availability, foundational documentation completion, and schedule adherence. As time passes, these root issues have contributed to other problems on the project that are largely symptomatic of the root problems. Efforts this period appear to have been more focused on hardware configuration and foundational documentation completion. Business users report a significant increase in the number of meetings, some of which have been productive, others that were not. Program and project managers from both IDEMIA and KBI report high levels of frustration regarding communications, resource availability, and document completion. High-level observations this period include:

- **Questionable Efficacy of Project Execution Approaches:** Root project issues remain unresolved after several months of awareness, correctional recommendations, and project management and executive involvement. It is clear this project has been unable to achieve a sustained shared and executable vision of project management, project scope, approach, and schedule.
- **Resource Coordination Issues:** The inability to have the right people “in the room” to discuss and finalize design documents has resulted in unnecessary delays and inefficiency in completing documents. This leads to extreme frustration for all and has put the project in jeopardy.
- **Persistent Schedule Issues:** After 24 months since contract signing, the project schedule remains in question, and a recent decision to delay the Factory Acceptance Test (FAT) has raised concern that the schedule will slip again. Resource availability, which continues to hinder progress on documentation, is the primary factor in schedule slippages.
- **Completion of Design Documentation Still an Issue:** Some progress has been made on the completion of design documentation and several documents; particularly, the Interface Control Design (ICD) documents were finalized during this reporting period. Other critical documents (e.g., 2 System Design Document [SDD] and the Acceptance Test Plan [ATP]) have not been completed during this reporting period.
- **Lack of Basic Meeting Protocols:** Although interviewees indicated a significant increase in the number of in-house and joint meetings, basic meeting protocols in terms of the right people (specifically IDEMIA engineers/subject-matter experts) being in attendance, and documentation version controls remain irritants to productivity. A contributing factor is the long history of meeting protocol missteps. While it has been much better of late, any missteps appear to be received in an overly negative manner. Of note, however, it was reported that the meetings with the new IDEMIA lead and KBI on the Migration Plan have been well run and organized with open discussions and follow-up as needed.

## **MCP Recommendations**

3 recommendations were closed, one was accepted, and 4 recommendations were continued from the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2023 report. Additionally, MCP added a new recommendation:

- (1) Together, the KBI and IDEMIA should work toward a more useful method of managing and optimizing the use of scarce team member resources,
- (2) KBI and IDEMIA should prioritize and execute project schedule updates,
- (3) Set up weekly KBI/IDEMIA small team checkpoint calls/videoconferences to confirm workstream activity and action item progress, address questions, and promote collaboration,
- (4) Together, the KBI and IDEMIA should set a standard process for the development, review, and completion of upcoming key deliverables.
- (5) New: The KBI and IDEMIA Project Sponsors should conduct a formal review of project manager assignments with defined goals.