

Data Analytics Forum and Community of Practice

National Intergovernmental Audit Forum (NIAF)

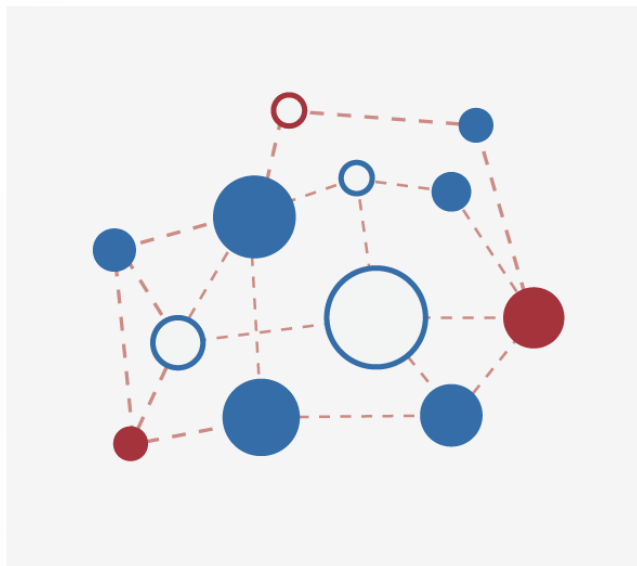
Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Steve Lord

**Director, Forensic Audits and Investigative Service
U.S. Government Accountability Office**

Agenda

- Why analytics are important for oversight
- Data Analytics Forum
- Challenges and opportunities
- Government Data Sharing Community of Practice



Why analytics are important

Data analytics can be used to

- Identify patterns or trends, and identify when aberrations occur
 - Data-mining and data-matching techniques can identify fraud or improper payments that have already been made
 - Predictive analytic technologies can identify fraud and errors before payments are made, helping avoid “pay and chase” payment recovery
- Determine whether problems are widespread and systemic in nature
- Evaluate program performance and outcomes
 - For example, accessing data to verify program eligibility, thus improving program integrity and payment accuracy

Why analytics are important

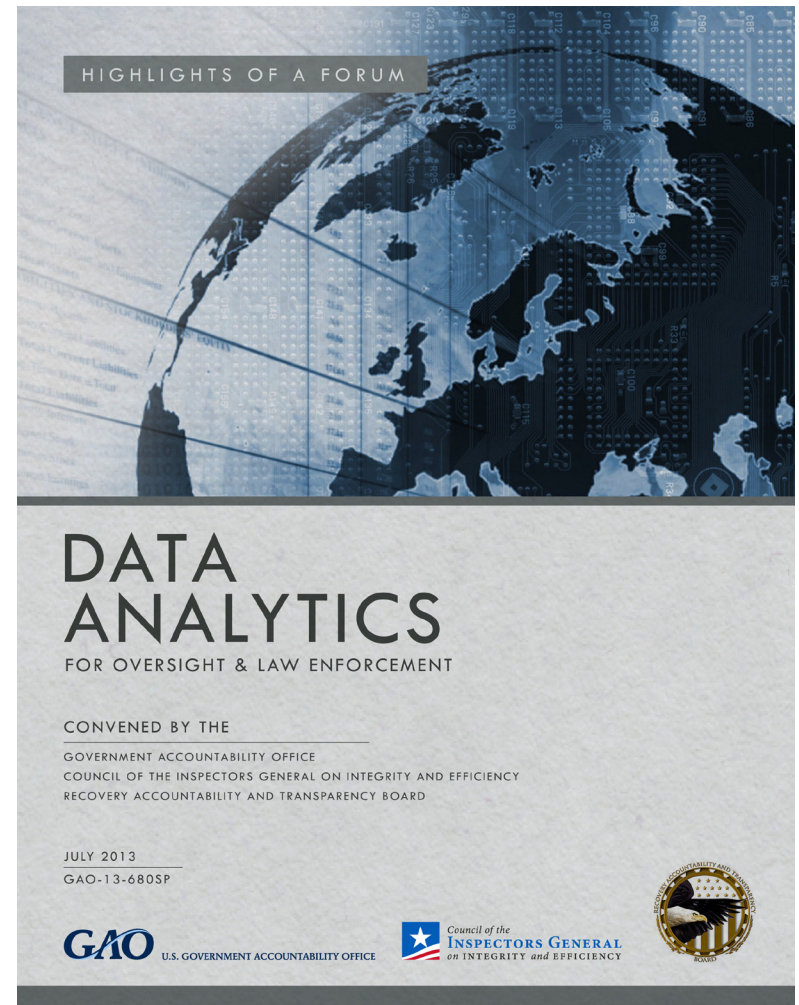
Top 10 program improper payment estimates by dollar amount

Program	Agency	Reported Improper Payment Estimates	
		Dollars (in billions)	Error rate (percent of outlays)
Medicare Fee-for-Service	HHS	\$29.6	8.5%
Medicaid	HHS	\$19.2	7.1%
Medicare Advantage (Part C)	HHS	\$13.1	11.4%
Medicare Prescription Drug	HHS	\$1.6	3.1%
School Lunch	USDA	\$1.6	15.5%
Earned Income Tax Credit	Treasury	\$12.6	22.7%
Unemployment Insurance	DOL	\$10.3	11.4%
Supplemental Security Income	SSA	\$4.7	9.2%
Old Age, Survivors & Disability Insurance	SSA	\$3.2	0.4%
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program	USDA	\$2.7	3.8%
TOTAL		\$98.6	

Source: Estimates reported by OMB for fiscal year 2012.

Data Analytics Forum

- Held on January 16, 2013
- Cohosted by CIGIE, Recovery Board, and GAO
- 34 managers and data experts
- Discussed conducting analytics to identify fraud, waste, and abuse in government
- Identified challenges to and opportunities for using and sharing data



Challenges and opportunities

Forum participants identified analytics challenges

Accessing and using data

- Need for more awareness of data sources
- Lack of incentives to design systems useful for oversight due to differing missions
- Difficulties in measuring results and prioritizing resources

Sharing data

- Varying standards make interpreting and using others' data difficult
- Intergovernmental challenges—such as costly access to certain federal data and perceptions that sharing is a “one-way street”

Challenges and opportunities

Participants identified opportunities to enhance analytics efforts

- Attracting and retaining knowledgeable and skilled staff
- Garnering organizational support by demonstrating value and building credibility
- Reach agreement on common understanding of current law, and support legislative updates, as appropriate
- Further dialogue

Forum cohosts agreed to implement several “next steps” to address challenges and take advantage of opportunities

Government Data Sharing Community of Practice

Mission: Bring together officials from all levels of government to promote data collaboration

First meeting is today, 3:35-4:35

- Topic: Legal Issues to Data Sharing

We will partner with relevant groups for future meetings

- Topics: technological and cultural challenges
- GovernmentDataShare@gao.gov





GAO on the Web

Web site: <http://www.gao.gov/>

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