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Contact:  
Lindsey Hunter  
703-883-9000, ext. 151  
[lhunter@meritalk.com](mailto:lhunter@meritalk.com)

**Despite Data Governance Efforts, Eighty-Nine Percent of Federal IT Professionals Are Apprehensive About Migrating IT Services to the Cloud**

*New Study Identifies Agency Concerns and Opportunities Surrounding Cloud Data Stewardship and Management*

**Alexandria, Va., September 9, 2014** – [MeriTalk](#), a public-private partnership focused on improving the outcomes of government IT, today announced the results of its new report, “[Cloud Control: Moving to the Comfort Zone](#).” The study, underwritten by [NetApp](#) and [Arrow](#), reveals that Federal agencies want to double their cloud use – across infrastructure, platforms, and applications – but, 89 percent of Federal IT professionals still feel some apprehension about migrating to the cloud.

While there’s no question that Federal agencies are reaping cloud’s benefits – like improved agility, less IT complexity, and greater collaboration through shared services – concerns around data stewardship can slow or halt migrations.

So how are Federal agencies dealing with the cloud control challenge? While only 44 percent of agencies have “mature” data governance practices in the cloud, 56 percent are currently in the process of implementing data stewardship or a more formal data governance program for their cloud services or vendors. Importantly, those who are actively improving these programs are more likely to be comfortable turning over their IT services to cloud vendors (53 percent), than those who are not (32 percent).

Fifty-five percent of Federal IT professionals say that cloud makes data management/stewardship easier, noting easier upgrades and configuration management, stronger virtual staff support, faster data access, and system monitoring as key benefits.

But Federal agencies still have a ways to go – with key elements missing from their data governance policies. Sixty-one percent of respondents note that their agencies do not have quality, documented metadata. Fifty-two percent do not have well-understood data integration, 50 percent have not defined/identified data owners, and 49 percent do not have known systems of record.

In addition, many agencies face roadblocks associated with managing cloud services and vendors, citing remediation for data exceptions, data integration, and collaboration/interoperability as their top challenges. And while 54 percent of respondents cite security as their top concern, only one in five feels that the security offered by their cloud vendors is completely sufficient.

“The benefits cloud offers are immense, but with the introduction of new hybrid cloud architectures, data stewardship becomes even more complex, as data must be managed and accessed across any cloud. Federal agencies must establish enterprise-wide governance practices, while deploying solutions that streamline data mobility and stewardship across cloud models. Cloud consumers must develop data management processes and role-based control mechanisms to ensure success,” said Kirk Kern, chief technology officer, NetApp U.S. Public Sector.

Indeed, nearly nine out of ten (89 percent) agencies have taken steps to manage trust with their cloud vendors, including keeping security functions on-premise (42 percent); requiring certification of security measures taken (41 percent); and requiring that data resides on dedicated server, storage, and network infrastructure (39 percent). Additionally, those who use or plan to use a cloud brokerage service are significantly more comfortable turning their agency’s IT services and applications over to cloud providers (62 percent) than those who do not (32 percent).

“Federal end users are looking to the cloud for options that are faster, safer, and a better value than traditional IT,” said Dee Dee Lear, vice president, cloud and business development, Arrow ECS. “To get more comfortable with the transition, agencies should seek out partners that offer best of breed IT services and focus on government data security for a proven path to cloud success.”

“Why are grown adults afraid of the dark?” asked Stephen O’Keeffe, founder, MeriTalk. “Cloud solution providers need to turn on the lights so Feds can see if there are monsters behind the door and under the bed!”

“Cloud Control: Moving to the Comfort Zone” is based on an online survey conducted in June 2014 of 153 Federal IT professionals who have implemented cloud computing as part of their IT strategy. The report has a margin error of  $\pm 7.89$  at a 95% confidence level. To download the full study, please visit [www.meritalk.com/cloudcontrol](http://www.meritalk.com/cloudcontrol).

### **About MeriTalk**

The voice of tomorrow’s government today, MeriTalk is a public-private partnership focused on improving the outcomes of government IT. Focusing on government’s hot-button issues, MeriTalk hosts [Big Data Exchange](#), [Cloud Computing Exchange](#), [Cyber Security Exchange](#), and [Data Center Exchange](#) – platforms dedicated to supporting public-private dialogue and collaboration. MeriTalk connects with an audience of 85,000 government community contacts. For more information, visit [www.meritalk.com](http://www.meritalk.com) or follow us on Twitter, @meritalk. MeriTalk is a [300Brand organization](#).