Maria Roat has been serving as CIO at the Small Business Administration since 2016. Photo Credit: Small Business Administration

Maria Roat, current CIO of the Small Business Administration, has been confirmed to serve as the next federal deputy CIO, GovernmentCIO Media & Research has learned.

The position was previously held by Margaret Graves, who announced her retirement from public service at the end of December after serving more than 18 years in government.

Some of Graves' recent initiatives, working with CIO Suzette Kent, included reskilling the cybersecurity workforce and thinking of "getting talent to the table" by
leveraging IT modernization alongside data as a strategic asset. The initiatives are outlined as three key drivers in bringing change to the federal government, as outlined in the President's Management Agenda.

Rumors that Roat was on tap to take over the position began swirling in January.

Roat has been in her role at SBA since 2016, with prior appointments at the Department of Transportation, the Department of Homeland Security and the private sector. She is also a U.S. Navy veteran.

She is a member of the Federal CIO Council, led by Kent, and co-chairs its Innovation Committee to help agencies speed the adoption of new practices, processes and technologies.

As co-led of the Federal Data Strategy Development Team, she released a draft of the action plan in December after OMB approval.

“When you look at the federal government and how it manages data, getting us to be more consistent, making sure we’re protecting security, privacy, confidentiality — being able to do all of those things but being consistent across the federal government is really where we need to drive, and that’s where the strategy is going,” Roat told us in December.

Roat's team at SBA has been working to increase and improve collaboration and transparency in a DevSecOps model, SBA Director of Business Technology Solutions Nagesh Rao said in a recent podcast.

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