
A MESSAGE FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

I am pleased to submit the Department of Justice's *FY 2003 Performance and Accountability Report*, prepared under the aegis of the Reports Consolidation Act of 2000 and guidance from the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Bulletin No. 01-09 and Circular A-11. This *Performance and Accountability Report* contains the Department's performance report, as required by the Government Performance and Results Act; our audited consolidated financial statements, as required by the Chief Financial Officers Act and the Government Management Reform Act; a report on management decisions and actions in response to audit reports issued by the Department's Inspector General, as required by the Inspector General Act; and a report on our material weaknesses, as required by the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act (Integrity Act).

The Department of Justice is accountable for meeting the highest standards of effectiveness, efficiency, and integrity, and are indeed meeting this challenge. From the war on terrorism to the battle against violent crime, our strategy is succeeding. The FBI and our law enforcement partners have identified, disrupted and neutralized over 100 terrorist threats and cells. Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, as of December 3, 2003, terrorism investigations have resulted in criminal charges against 287 individuals, 155 of which have been convicted or pled guilty. There were 5.2 million fewer violent crimes in 2002 than in 1993. In fact, the violent crime rate is now at its lowest level in 30 years.

With the submission of the FY 2003 consolidated financial statements, we have earned Departmentwide unqualified audit opinions on all statements for the third straight year. While this is a significant accomplishment, it is not enough. We continue to work diligently to improve our financial management performance in many areas, including those areas that have been identified by our auditors as material weaknesses. Ongoing efforts to unify and improve the Department's core financial systems are key to our success.

The financial and performance data presented in this report are complete and reliable, as outlined in guidance from OMB. The Department's managers routinely use these data to carry out their responsibilities. I am pleased to provide qualified reasonable assurance that our management control and financial systems met the objectives of Sections 2 and 4 of the Integrity Act.

The President's Management Agenda (PMA) outlines five governmentwide goals that envision a results-oriented, citizen-centered government and that allow for improving performance and overall effectiveness. The Department is committed to implementing the strategies outlined in the PMA, measuring our progress through the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) process, and implementing PART recommendations. Further, in FY 2002, I announced ten Departmentwide management goals that support the President's vision for government reform. This report provides evidence that we are working successfully toward those goals.

In the past year we successfully transitioned several Department of Justice functions to the Department of Homeland Security. We also integrated the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives into the Department of Justice. In the coming year, we will continue to examine critically the breadth of our functions to eliminate any duplication of effort and to streamline our operations. Above all, we will continue to work to preserve the lives and liberties of Americans and pursue vigorously the defense of freedom and the principles of justice for all Americans, and we will not waiver in this pursuit.



John Ashcroft