



Highlights of [GAO-04-299](#), a report to Congressional Committees

Why GAO Did This Study

The Office of the Architect of the Capitol (AOC) plays an important role in supporting the effective functioning of Congress and its neighboring institutions. In January 2003, GAO conducted a comprehensive management review of AOC's operations and made 35 recommendations to help AOC establish a strategic management and accountability framework, improve its management infrastructure and internal control, and address long-standing concerns. In February 2003, the Conference Report mandated GAO to monitor progress being made on the implementation of the 35 management review recommendations.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that AOC strengthen agencywide communications with employees and congressional stakeholders.

GAO also recommends that AOC further improve its management infrastructure internal controls in the management of IT by planning for and implementing mature investment management and enterprise architecture (EA) practices.

GAO provided a draft of this report to the Architect of the Capitol in December 2003 for his review and comment. The Architect generally agreed with our findings, although there are some areas of disagreement in IT, worker safety, and recycling.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-04-299.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact J. Christopher Mihm, 202-512-6806 or mihmj@gao.gov.

ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

Status Report on Implementation of Management Review Recommendations

What GAO Found

As discussed in GAO's January 2003 report, many of AOC's management problems were long-standing and its organizational transformation would take time to fully accomplish. Not surprisingly, AOC's efforts in addressing these initial management review recommendations is very much a work in progress. Initial steps are being taken, but a great deal more needs to be done. Moreover, greater effort will have to be made if more timely improvements are to occur. Sustained commitment and assertive involvement of AOC's leadership is key to addressing AOC's long-standing weaknesses and instilling lasting change.

AOC is taking the first steps in the development of its management and accountability framework, such as improving planning and organizational alignment through its draft strategic plan. AOC is also strengthening individual accountability for organizational goals through its senior executive performance management systems, but more progress can be made by aligning its employee performance management system with mission-critical goals. AOC needs to take additional steps to strengthen agencywide communications by providing opportunities to gather employee feedback sooner than fiscal year 2005 and by conducting a pilot of its congressional protocols.

AOC is making some progress in improving its management infrastructure and internal control. AOC is addressing initial concerns about the lack of consistent human capital policies and procedures. Also, AOC has developed three broad-based action plans to achieve its strategy of institutionalizing financial management best practices. However, while efforts on individual action items associated with the three action plans have begun, many are not scheduled for completion until fiscal years 2006 and 2007. Much work remains to address unplanned action items and complete ongoing efforts in improving financial management. AOC is developing a new IT portfolio management process or investment framework, which it plans to implement in fiscal year 2004 and is also taking steps to develop and use EA. However, while AOC is generally implementing the kind of IT management reforms recommended, GAO makes additional recommendations to ensure that mature investment management and EA processes are developed and implemented.

Finally, AOC is addressing GAO's concern about worker safety by developing a hazard assessment and control policy, but this policy is not expected to be fully implemented in all jurisdictions until May 2006. Until AOC completes this policy implementation and its subsequent analysis in all jurisdictions, it will not be able to develop a comprehensive picture of AOC hazards. AOC is also taking steps to establish a project priority framework for better project management and accountability. Also, AOC has made some progress toward adopting a more strategic approach to recycling taking steps to clarify the mission of the program and establishing goals as part of its environmental program plan.