

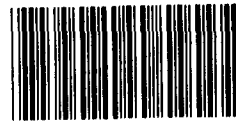
GAO

Report to the Chairman and Ranking  
Minority Member, Committee on  
Governmental Affairs, U.S. Senate

May 1992

PROGRAM  
PERFORMANCE  
MEASURES

Federal Agency  
Collection and Use of  
Performance Data



146544

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RELEASED

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**General Government Division**

B-247844

May 4, 1992

The Honorable John H. Glenn  
Chairman, Committee on  
Governmental Affairs  
United States Senate

The Honorable William V. Roth  
Ranking Minority Member  
Committee on Governmental Affairs  
United States Senate

Your Committee held a hearing in May 1991 on legislation that would require all federal agencies to develop standards and goals and to measure and report progress toward them. At that hearing, you raised questions about the current state of program performance measurement in federal agencies. In subsequent discussions with your staff, we agreed to survey major federal agencies to determine to what extent they already had developed performance standards and goals and had created at least some measures of progress toward these goals. We surveyed 103 federal agencies all of which had over 1,000 employees or over \$500 million in annual outlays.

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**Results in Brief**

About two-thirds of the agencies in our survey said they had a single long-term strategic plan in place that defined their goals and objectives. In addition, over three-quarters of the surveyed agencies reported that they collected a wide variety of data to assess program performance. We also found that key performance measures were used for internal purposes and infrequently reported to external sources such as Congress and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

To validate responses and get a better understanding of how agencies were using performance measures, we visited a sample of 14 agencies. We found that most of these agencies used the information at the program level. However, such information is fundamentally different than that needed to manage or make strategic policy decisions for the agency as a whole.

On a broader scale, our survey of 103 agencies showed that only about half of the agencies with strategic plans said that they were using most or all of their existing measures to assess their progress in achieving the goals or objectives reflected in their plans. And only 9 of the 103 agencies reported having the organizational characteristics experts view as necessary to link

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plans and measures, such as an office that collects performance measures and prepares regular reports on progress toward goals set in strategic plans.

Agencies we visited were using their performance measurement systems for a variety of purposes. Some were using them to ensure organizational accountability and efficiency. Others reported that they used existing performance measures to manage current operations (e.g., making budget decisions and determining individual employee performance assessments and rewards). However, few used them to help manage toward the long-term goals or standards set forth in their strategic plans.

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## Background

Traditional management practices involve the creation of long-term strategic plans and regular assessments of progress toward stated goals. Strategic planning is an effort to establish long-term goals and objectives that will shape and guide activities and programs to fulfill an organization's mission. Performance measures are a key tool to help managers assess progress toward the goals or objectives stated in their plans. They are also an important accountability tool to communicate agency progress to Congress and the public.

Program performance measurement is commonly defined as the regular collection and reporting of a range of data, including a program's

- inputs, such as dollars, staff, and materials;
- workload or activity levels, such as the number of applications that are in process, usage rates, or inventory levels;
- outputs or final products, such as the number of children vaccinated, number of tax returns processed, or miles of road built;
- outcomes of products or services, such as the number of cases of childhood illnesses prevented or the percentage of taxes collected; and
- efficiency, such as productivity measures or measures of the unit costs for producing a service (e.g., the staff hours it takes to process a Social Security claim or the cost to build a mile of highway).

Other data might include information on customer satisfaction, program timeliness, and service quality.

Managers can use the data that performance measures provide to help them manage in three basic ways: to account for past activities, to manage current operations, or to assess progress toward planned objectives. When

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used to look at past activities, performance measures can show the accountability of processes and procedures used to complete a task, as well as program results. When used to manage current operations, performance measures can show how efficiently resources, such as dollars and staff, are being used. Finally, when tied to planned objectives, performance measures can be used to assess how effectively an agency is achieving the goals stated in its long-range strategic plan.

Having well-designed measures that are timely, relevant, and accurate is important, but it is also important that the measures be used by decision makers. While it is difficult to assess if and how measures are used, the existence of certain organizational characteristics, such as a central collection office and consolidated reports, can help ensure the use of measures. Nevertheless, while these characteristics may be important, they are not necessarily sufficient to ensure the use of performance measures. The use of performance measurement is more likely in cases where top management supports performance measurement and links the resulting measures to goals and objectives in strategic plans.

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## Approach

To assess the status of program performance measurement in the federal government, we surveyed 103 federal agencies with 1,000 or more employees or with annual outlays in excess of \$500 million. All but one agency returned our questionnaire. These agencies covered 87 percent of all federal employees and 92 percent of total outlays in fiscal year 1990 (see app. I for responding agencies). Respondents to the survey were generally located in their agency's planning, policy, or evaluation offices or in the office of the agency head.

We asked agencies to self-report on which, if any, of a listed variety of performance measures they used in all or part of their operations. We also asked how these measures were related to their efforts to monitor their progress toward the goals established in their strategic planning as well as their efforts to assess individual job performance. To validate the self-reported answers, we visited 11 of these agencies, as well as 3 other programs considered to have model systems that we learned about during our survey. We selected these agencies and programs because they represented a wide spectrum of the different approaches agencies were taking in developing and using performance measures. We found a variety of interpretations regarding some of the terms used in the survey, such as the term "outcomes of products or services." Nevertheless, we believe the

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general results are indicative of the overall status of performance measures in federal agencies.

We did our work from June to December 1991 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Our results are based on interviews with selected agencies as well as survey information; we did not attempt to verify information provided by each of the 102 agencies. Appendix II contains more details regarding our scope and methodology, and appendix III is a copy of the survey sent to agencies.

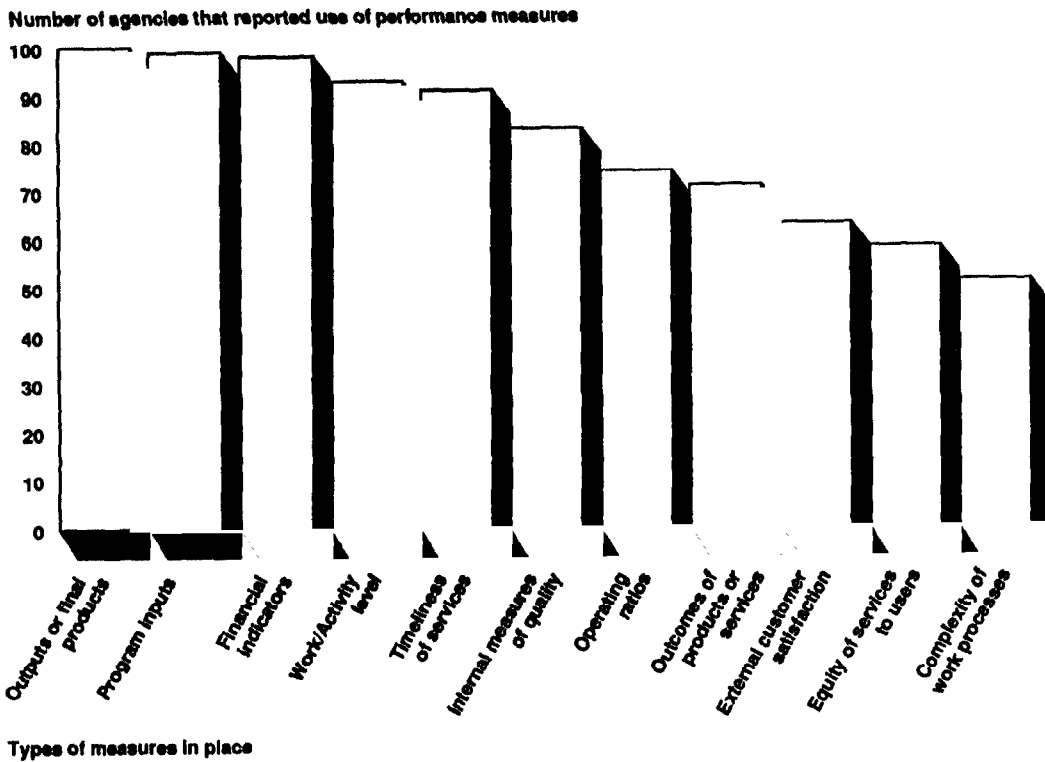
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## Most Agencies Had Strategic Plans and Collected a Wide Variety of Measures

Most of the agencies reported that they had strategic plans and collected a wide variety of program performance measures. About two-thirds of the agencies (67) said they had a single long-term plan that contains goals, standards, or objectives for the entire agency or program. In addition, over three-quarters of the agencies (78) indicated they had long-term plans at the subcomponent level to set goals, standards, or objectives for their programs.

Nearly all agencies said they measured a range of performance, such as program inputs, work activity levels, and program outputs. Over 80 percent said they also collected internal quality and timeliness measures, and more than half measured external customer satisfaction, equity of service availability, or program outcomes. In all, over 82 percent of the agencies said they collected measures covering at least parts of their activities in 7 or more of the 11 broad categories of measures listed in the survey. Figure 1 shows the number of agencies and the different kinds of measures that the 102 responding agencies reported they use.

**Figure 1: Types of Performance Measures Agencies Reported They Use**



Note: The number of agencies responding was 102.

Note: Definitions of the measures in this figure appear in appendix III.

Most of the performance measurement data agencies collected were reported internally. For example, the Farmers Home Administration named 30 objectives which it measured regularly, but did not report to Congress or OMB. As a result of this limited reporting of measures, many policymakers have been unaware of much of the existing data. Moreover, managers within an agency might have also been unaware of existing measures if the data was only reported on a program level. In many cases, program level information—such as the numbers of tax returns processed—is different from what is useful at higher levels—such as the extent of noncompliance with tax laws due to confusion over the written instructions.

A Department of Labor study of federal agencies administering education and training programs reported that even in cases where program outcome data were collected, they appeared to serve no more than informational

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purposes. This finding is supported more broadly by our survey results. Relatively few agencies that responded to our survey said that they reported key information to Congress or OMB. For example, of the agencies that collected information on external customer satisfaction, 44 percent reported this information to Congress and 32 percent to OMB. Likewise, of those that collected program outcome data, 68 percent reported this information to Congress and 54 percent to OMB.

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### Many Agencies Visited Used Performance Measures to Assess Organizational Accountability

Our interviews and a Department of Labor study of the use of employment and training performance measures in 39 federal programs indicated that measures typically were generated and used by program level units within an agency and focused on measuring work activity levels and outputs at the subcomponent level. Our interviews also revealed that in some cases, such as in grant-making agencies, performance measures were used for statutory compliance.

The following examples taken from our visits to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), formerly the Urban Mass Transportation Administration, and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) show how these agencies have used performance measures to achieve accountability.

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#### Federal Transit Administration

FTA, in the Department of Transportation, provides grants to states and localities to help develop, maintain, and operate their mass transit systems. An official said that to track its grant-making activities, FTA created a series of indexes that served as standards to assess the grant-making status among its regional offices. The indexes were based on measures of specific work activities such as the number of grants developed, grants managed, transportation improvement program reviews, and triennial reviews. While these measures were related to the efficiency and compliance efforts of the agency's grant-making activities, they were not used to assess progress toward its strategic plan or that of the Department.

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#### Federal Aviation Administration

As a regulatory agency within the Department of Transportation, FAA said it used a system of performance measures to assess overall organizational accountability toward its mission of fostering a safe, secure, and efficient aviation system. The use of existing data provided information to be used for general management purposes instead of control of individuals or units.



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FAA reported that it focused on programs and activities that promote safety by using performance indicators of ratios and comparisons. FAA used these historical trend measures to compare the targets set annually to measure agency progress. Typical indicators included year-to-year comparisons of security inspections, air traffic delays, and pilot deviations.

FAA said it delivered electronic monthly reports in an executive information system and prepared quarterly paper reports that contained concise information and were widely circulated among senior management. Managers were to use this information to get an overall sense of how FAA was doing.

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## Many Agencies Used Measures to Manage Operations

In order to see how well resources were being managed to accomplish tasks, many of the agencies we visited used performance measures to help make budget decisions, to assess employee performance, and to provide incentives. On our visits, we found more ties to individual employee assessment than any other management use. This was supported by survey results, which show over one-third of the agencies required the use of performance measures in senior management performance contracts. Three examples of agencies that use performance measures to manage operations are the Department of Defense (DOD), the National Archives and Records Administration, and the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA).

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## Department of Defense

At the time of our visit, the Office of the Comptroller of DOD had begun to determine the unit costs of selected support activities, such as recruiting and supply management, in order to identify efficiencies and to make budget decisions. With operation and maintenance outlays of about \$85.7 billion in fiscal year 1992, "unit cost resourcing" was intended to help DOD reduce the costs of doing business by helping managers identify the costs of delivering service outputs and by helping them understand the long-term and indirect costs of producing specific outputs. With this knowledge, unit costing was intended to serve as a decision support system that could put DOD closer to budgeting a specific set of activities on the basis of what it actually costs to do the job.

According to a senior DOD official, unit cost resourcing was used as a tool to improve management with a focus on output, which requires employees to know what they produce, identifies customer-provider relationships, causes workers to examine the process for needed changes, and creates better cooperation between management and employees. According to

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DOD's Comptroller's Office, these efforts called for a change in the management culture to develop different expectations of management.

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## National Archives and Records Administration

The work of the Archives consists of responding to requests for historical records and preserving those records. At the technician level, this labor intensive work involves repetitive tasks and takes place in a nontraditional workplace setting where supervision is difficult because staff have to search for records located in many places throughout the building and may be gone from their workplaces for hours. For these reasons, the Archives, with the support of its agency head, said it chose to measure individual performance by using industrial engineering methods. This required setting optimal standards of how long various tasks took to complete.

According to officials, operational technicians in two offices, the Office of National Archives and the Office of Federal Records Centers, started using engineered standards in 1985. The two offices that used the system covered about 11 percent of the Office of the National Archives' full-time equivalent employees and about 12 percent of the Office of Federal Records Centers' full-time equivalent employees.

Officials said technicians were expected to meet the established standards, which were given to them by management. For example, a technician might have been expected to complete 42 genealogical searches of a particular type in an 8-hour period. At the time of our visits, the Archives was in the process of writing detailed manuals describing the procedures for accomplishing tasks and how long each task should take.

The Archives's standards for routine tasks were the basis for quarterly incentive bonuses given to employees in the GS-4 to GS-6 range. When technicians reached or surpassed these standards, they were rewarded monetarily. Quarterly bonuses ranged from \$250 to \$400. Performance-based action had been taken against technicians who repeatedly failed to reach the standards.

The Archives had contracted for a series of studies to develop their engineered standards. For example, the first study in 1985 developed an engineered standard for retrieving requests for Revolutionary War Military Service records. This new standard was 63 percent higher than the traditional standard for record retrievals. In 1991, the Archives examined actual productivity figures for many of the work units covered by engineered standards and found, in most cases, significant increases in

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productivity. For example, the unit that searches military records increased its productivity by 46 percent after the initial engineered standards were set and an additional 15 percent after these standards were fine tuned.

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### Job Training Partnership Act

Enacted in 1982, JTPA trains disadvantaged youth and adults in job skills and then helps them find employment. JTPA's Title II-A program is the first federal program with mandated performance standards as well as monetary incentives for exceeding the standards. Two examples of key measures Labor officials told us they had implemented were the proportion of persons who had ended the program and had a job 13 weeks after completing it and the average earnings of those employed 13 weeks afterwards. To allow for factors which might affect program outcomes, standards could be adjusted to reflect the characteristics of the participants and the local economy. With a focus on outcomes, the standards were applied to local programs.

The system was designed to be highly decentralized. Under the system, the national office is to approve state plans, identify national measures, set national performance standards, and allot funds to states on a formula basis. The states' role is to establish individual state plans, set performance levels for local programs, allocate funds to local programs on a formula basis, reward performers, identify technical assistance needs, and impose sanctions.

Six percent of JTPA funds were set aside at the state level for incentives and technical assistance. The incentives rewarded local programs that exceeded performance standards and those that served target groups or provided intensive services. A senior labor official stated that this method of providing incentives had improved performance.

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### Few Agencies Visited Used Measures to Manage for Results

Only a few of the agencies we visited seemed to use performance measures to manage toward long-term objectives. One explanation may be the weak link we saw in most agencies we visited between measures and planning. In contrast, more than half of the agencies we surveyed that said they had strategic plans said they wrote most or all of their goals in quantifiable terms and used their performance measures to assess progress toward the goals stated in their plans. However, only nine of these reported having the three organizational characteristics experts view as necessary to tie plans and measures—(1) a unified strategic plan with measurable goals, (2) an

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office that collects performance measures, and (3) regular consolidated reports.

One agency we visited had these characteristics—the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP) in the Department of Health and Human Services. Here, top management support for the creation and use of measures was seen as a critical element in the use of a measurement system.

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## Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

ODPHP oversees Healthy People 2000, a project aimed at increasing the healthy lifespan for Americans, decreasing health disparities among Americans, and achieving access to preventive services for all Americans within this decade. The Healthy People 2000 project was based on the results of a similar 10-year health improvement project undertaken by the ODPHP in the 1980s. The emphasis in the earlier project was to reduce mortality rates among various age groups and to reduce the number of sick days for the elderly. In 1986, ODPHP undertook a midcourse review of progress toward the 1990 objectives. According to a senior official, the review process accomplished a number of positive results including clarifying opportunities for progress and addressing the issue of accountability for failures (such as in the disparities in health improvements between various populations). On the basis of that assessment, new goals were created for continuing to improve American health care in the next decade. ODPHP set over 300 specific objectives that were divided into 22 priority areas. The health objectives reflected the need for improvement in three broad areas: health promotion, health protection, and preventive services. The responsibility for providing leadership in achieving the objectives of each priority area is to belong to a specific agency which is to organize an inter-agency team, define a leadership strategy, and ensure that data are collected to track progress.

The Assistant Secretary for Public Health is to review each priority area at least once a year. The planned and ongoing activities of each departmental subunit are to be measured against the Healthy People 2000 objectives to monitor progress in achieving the project goals.

For example, one of the stated priority areas of Healthy People 2000 is to reduce heart disease and strokes. The National Institutes of Health, through its National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, was named the lead agency in this effort. Two of the Institute's programs, the National High Blood Pressure Education Program and the National Cholesterol Education

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Program, were to focus on program activities categorized into areas such as special populations and age groups. These activities were designed to (1) increase professional education opportunities from the results of studies, (2) increase public and patient education efforts to alert the population about the problem, and (3) teach skills to patients who have the disorders.

Some of the planned activities to help reduce heart disease and strokes included development and support of community-based programs to reduce behaviors, such as smoking, that place individuals at increased risk for disease and research aimed at developing prevention techniques for heart disease in women. These activities were designed to contribute to the broader objective of reducing heart disease deaths to no more than 100 per 100,000 people by the year 2000. Achieving this goal would represent a 26 percent decrease in the heart disease death rate between 1987 and the year 2000.

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## Conclusion

Many of the agencies we surveyed reported having a range of program performance measures. However, relatively few reported having the organizational characteristics that would make it more likely for them to use their performance measures to assess progress towards goals in their strategic plans. In fact, most of the agencies we visited used measures to provide internal information relating to their past activities or present operations.

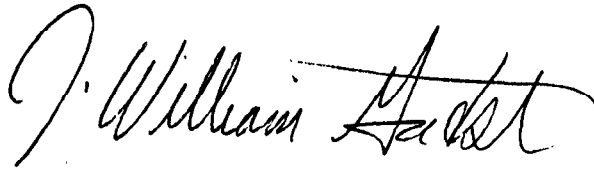
As budgetary resources continue to shrink, many agencies may find that using a range of performance measures to help them better focus on achieving results envisioned in their strategic plans may be beneficial. Not only can such a link provide managers information about accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness, but it also can provide Congress and the public with information on how public resources are being used.

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As arranged with the Committee, unless you publicly announce the report earlier, we plan no further distribution until 30 days from the date of this letter. At that time, we will send copies of this report to the Chairman, House Government Operations Committee; the Director, Office of Management and Budget; and the agencies that responded to our survey. We will also send copies to other interested parties and make copies available to others upon request.

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Please contact me at (202) 275-8387 if you or your staff have any questions concerning this report. Major contributors to this report are listed in appendix IV.



J. William Gadsby  
Director, Federal  
Management Issues



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Figure 1: Types of Performance Measures Agencies Reported They Use

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## Abbreviations

DOD	Department of Defense
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
JTPA	Job Training Partnership Act
ODPHP	Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
OMB	Office of Management and Budget





# Major Federal Agencies and Programs Included in the Survey

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**Department of Agriculture**

Agricultural Marketing Service  
Agricultural Research Service  
Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service  
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service  
Farmers Home Administration<sup>a</sup>  
Food and Nutrition Service  
Food Safety and Inspection Service  
Forest Service<sup>a</sup>  
Foreign Agricultural Assistance  
Soil Conservation Service  
National Agricultural Statistics Service  
Federal Crop Insurance Corporation

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**Department of Commerce**

Bureau of the Census  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration<sup>a</sup>  
International Trade Administration  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Patent and Trademark Office

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**Department of Defense**

Defense Contract Audit Agency  
Defense Logistics Agency  
Defense Mapping Agency  
Department of the Army  
Department of the Air Force  
Department of the Navy

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**Department of Education**

Office of Vocational and Adult Education  
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education<sup>a</sup>  
Office of Special Education<sup>a</sup>  
Office of Rehabilitative Services  
Office of Post Secondary Education

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**Department of Energy**

Atomic Energy Defense Activities  
Energy Programs

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**Appendix I  
Major Federal Agencies and Programs  
Included in the Survey**

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**Department of Health and  
Human Services**

Administration for Children and Families  
Health Care Financing Administration  
Public Health Service:  
Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration  
Centers for Disease Control  
Health Resources and Services Administration<sup>a</sup>  
Food and Drug Administration  
National Institutes of Health  
Indian Health Service  
Social Security Administration

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**Department of Housing and  
Urban Development**

Public and Indian Housing  
Community Planning and Development

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**Department of the Interior**

Bureau of Indian Affairs<sup>a</sup>  
Bureau of Land Management  
Bureau of Mines  
Bureau of Reclamation  
Geological Survey  
National Park Service  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
Minerals Management Service  
Office of Surface Mining Reclamation

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**Department of Justice**

Bureau of Prisons  
Immigration and Naturalization Service  
Drug Enforcement Administration  
Office of Justice Programs  
Justice Management Division  
U.S. Marshals Service  
Federal Bureau of Investigation<sup>b</sup>

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**Department of Labor**

Employment and Training Administration  
Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Mine Safety and Health Administration  
Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation  
Employment Standards Administration

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**Appendix I  
Major Federal Agencies and Programs  
Included in the Survey**

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**Department of State**

**Bureau of Consular Affairs**

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**Department of  
Transportation**

**Maritime Administration  
Coast Guard  
Federal Aviation Administration<sup>a</sup>  
Urban Mass Transportation Administration<sup>a,c</sup>  
Federal Highway Administration**

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**Department of the Treasury**

**Bureau of the Public Debt  
Bureau of the Mint  
Bureau of Engraving and Printing  
Comptroller of the Currency  
Secret Service  
Internal Revenue Service  
Customs Service  
Financial Management Service  
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms**

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**Department of Veterans  
Affairs**

**Veterans Benefits Administration  
Veterans Health Administration**

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**Agency for International  
Development**

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**Equal Employment  
Opportunity Commission**

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**Environmental Protection  
Agency<sup>a</sup>**

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**Federal Communications  
Commission**

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**Appendix I  
Major Federal Agencies and Programs  
Included in the Survey**

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Federal Deposit Insurance  
Corporation

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Federal Emergency  
Management Agency

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General Services  
Administration

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Government Printing Office

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Library of Congress

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National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration

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National Archives and  
Records Administration<sup>a</sup>

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National Labor Relations  
Board

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National Science Foundation

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Nuclear Regulatory  
Commission

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**Appendix I  
Major Federal Agencies and Programs  
Included in the Survey**

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Office of Personnel  
Management

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Panama Canal Commission

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Postal Service

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Railroad Retirement Board

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Resolution Trust Corporation

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Securities and Exchange  
Commission

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Small Business  
Administration

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Tennessee Valley Authority

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U.S. Information Agency

<sup>a</sup>Agencies where on-site visits were conducted.

<sup>b</sup>Agencies that did not respond to survey.

<sup>c</sup>Now the Federal Transit Administration.

# Scope and Methodology

We surveyed 103 federal agencies that had 1,000 or more employees or annual outlays in excess of \$500 million. All but one agency—the Federal Bureau of Investigation—responded. These agencies covered 87 percent of all federal employees and 92 percent of total outlays in fiscal year 1991. Respondents to the survey were generally located in their agency’s planning, policy, or evaluation offices or in the office of the agency head.

We asked agencies to self-report on which, if any, of a listed variety of performance measures they used in all or part of their operations. We also asked how these measures were related to their efforts to monitor their progress in their long-term strategic planning efforts and to assess individual job performance. We visited 11 of the 102 agencies to validate the responses provided in the questionnaire and to obtain a greater understanding of how they used the program performance measures they reported. We also visited 3 programs considered to have model programs that were not covered by the survey. These were the Job Training Partnership Act in the Department of Labor, the Unit Cost Resourcing Project in the Defense Department, and the Healthy People 2000 project in the Department of Health and Human Services. We selected these agencies and programs because they represented a wide spectrum of different approaches agencies were taking in developing and using performance measures. In our interviews, we asked what activities were measured; who developed the measurements; who used the measurements; and if the measurements were tied to agency goals, standards, or objectives.

In verifying the general validity of the results of the survey, we found a variety of interpretations regarding some of the terms used in the survey. For example, agencies differed in their understanding of what were “outcomes of products or services.” As a result, we found that 3 of the 11 agencies we visited were not able to support the responses they provided in certain categories. We expanded the verification for one key question—the existence of a single report of performance measures—to 22 agencies responding “yes,” and found 2 changed their response to “no;” 11 others failed to provide the supporting documentation requested. Nevertheless, given the aggregate responses in our interviews and follow-ups, we believe the general results are indicative of the overall status of performance measures in federal agencies.

# Survey of Federal Agency Program Performance Measures

Note: Where appropriate, we have included survey results.

U.S. General Accounting Office

## Survey of Federal Agency Program Performance Measures

### INTRODUCTION

Legislation is pending in Congress to require all federal agencies to develop program goals and standards. It would also require agencies to measure program performance and use these measures to annually report on progress toward the goals and standards. It's not clear how much of this information is already available, and in which agencies. This survey is being sent to all federal agencies and bureaus with over 1,000 employees or over \$500 million in outlays. It's purpose is to better understand the current status of measuring program performance.

In this survey we are attempting to develop: 1) a description of performance measures in your organization, 2) a knowledge of how performance measures are used in conjunction with your organization's planning efforts, and 3) an indication of how satisfied you are with your performance measures. We are not evaluating the appropriateness of the performance measures for your organization.

### INSTRUCTIONS

Most of the questions in this questionnaire can be answered by checking boxes or making short written entries. Please use a black pen to make your entries. Throughout the survey, the term "your organization" is used. This refers to the organization entered in column two of this page. Please respond to the questions for the entire organization.

Please return this survey by FAX to John Kamensky on or before August 19th. The FAX telephone number is (202) 275-3938.

If you have any questions about the survey, or if you believe someone else in your agency would be a more appropriate respondent, please contact John Kamensky at (202) 275-2718.

Thank you for your cooperation.

### Program Performance Measures

"Program performance measures" are a composite of key indicators of a program's or activity's inputs, outputs, outcomes, productivity, timeliness, and/or quality. They are means of evaluating policies and programs by measuring results against agreed upon program goals or standards.

If your organization does not have program delivery responsibilities, substitute the term "organizational performance measures" for "program performance measures".

Total number of agencies responding = 102

### I. RESPONDENT INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) \_\_\_\_\_



**Appendix III  
Survey of Federal Agency Program  
Performance Measures**

**II. TYPES OF MEASURES**

1. For the following types of performance measures, please indicate whether the measure is currently in use in your organization, whether it is under development in your organization, or whether it is neither in use nor under development in your organization. (PLEASE CHECK ONE BOX FOR EACH PERFORMANCE MEASURE.)

Performance Measures and Definitions	Performance Measure Currently In Use (1)	Performance Measure Under Development (2)	Neither In Use Nor Under Development (3)
<b>1. Program inputs</b> - Recurring resources provided for your organization's program activities (e.g., dollars, staff, materials, etc.).	99	-	3
<b>2. Work/Activity level</b> - Work measures that assess intermediate steps in producing outputs (e.g., number of applications in process, usage rates, inventory levels, etc.).	93	-	8
<b>3. Complexity of work processes/activities</b> - Measures of level(s) of difficulty associated with work processes or activities (e.g., investigation of a bank robbery vs. investigation of organized crime).	51	8	41
<b>4. Internal measures of quality of product or services</b> - Measures of quality from <u>internal</u> sources (e.g., quantitative scores by quality reviewers, error rates, etc.).	83	6	13
<b>5. External customer satisfaction</b> - Measures of quality and timeliness from external sources (e.g., external customer surveys, levels of complaints, etc.).	63	15	24
<b>6. Timeliness of product or services</b> - Measures of timeliness which may be based on specific standards or past trends.	91	3	8
<b>7. Equity/availability of services to users</b> - Measures referring to fair or equitable distribution of services in different locations or populations (e.g., demographic or geographic availability of library or mail services, etc.).	58	5	37
<b>8. Outputs or final products</b> - Products or services produced, distributed, or provided to service population (e.g., number of clients vaccinated, number of tax returns processed, miles of roads built, etc.).	100	-	2
<b>9. Outcomes of products or services</b> - Direct results achieved through the provision of goods and services by your organization (e.g., illnesses prevented, taxes collected, commerce achieved, etc.).	71	9	21
<b>10. Financial indicators</b> - Comparison of planned vs. actual expenditures, costs, obligations, receipts, allocations, or losses.	98	2	1
<b>11. Operating ratios</b> - Efficiency measures such as cost per unit, productivity measures, ratios of direct to indirect costs, etc.	74	9	18

**Appendix III  
Survey of Federal Agency Program  
Performance Measures**

2. For those performance measures that currently exist in your organization, please list four of the largest programs, services, or organizational units for which the measures are produced. (Please avoid using abbreviations whenever possible.)

(Cross out any measures in column 1 that do not currently exist in your organization and list the programs for which measures are produced.)

Performance Measures (See question 1 for definitions.)	Four of the Largest Programs, Services, or Organizational Units for which Measures are Produced
1. Program inputs	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
2. Work/activity level	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
3. Complexity of work processes/ activities	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
4. Internal measures of quality of product or services	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
5. External customer satisfaction	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
6. Timeliness of product or services	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
7. Equity/availability of services to users	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
8. Outputs or final products	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
9. Outcomes of products or services	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
10. Financial indicators	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
11. Operating ratios	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

**Appendix III  
Survey of Federal Agency Program  
Performance Measures**

3. For those performance measures that currently exist in your organization, who are the current users?

(Cross out all measures in column 1 that do not currently exist in your organization and check all boxes that apply for each measure that does exist in your organization.)

<u>Types of measures that exist in your organization</u>  See question 1 for definitions.	Office of Management and Budget (OMB)	Congress	Office of Organization Head	Headquarters Staff Organization	Headquarters Line Organization	Regional/District Office	Field Operations Unit
1. Program inputs	80	80	94	98	96	69	74
2. Work/activity level	53	57	78	90	92	67	66
3. Complexity of work processes/activities	16	17	35	46	48	36	35
4. Internal measures of quality of product or services	28	27	66	76	76	58	61
5. External customer satisfaction	20	28	58	60	55	40	44
6. Timeliness of product or services	30	39	80	85	86	66	65
7. Equity/availability of services to users	24	29	50	52	50	45	42
8. Outputs or final products	66	77	97	96	94	69	77
9. Outcomes of products or services	38	47	64	64	63	46	48
10. Financial indicators	75	72	95	96	90	63	68
11. Operating ratios	32	27	61	69	63	45	48

**Appendix III  
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Performance Measures**

**III. MEASUREMENT DEVELOPMENT**

4. Does your organization currently have performance measures under development? (CHECK ONE.)

83 Yes ----> (CONTINUE WITH QUESTION 5.)

19 No -----> (SKIP TO QUESTION 6.)

5. For those performance measures currently under development in your organization, to what extent, if at all, are they being developed for the following reasons? (CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.)

	To a very great extent (1)	To a great extent (2)	To a moderate extent (3)	To some extent (4)	To little or no extent (5)	No basis to judge (6)
Self-initiated improvement efforts such as Total Quality Management (TQM), Management by Objective (MBO), etc.	41	22	9	9	2	2
OMB emphasis (e.g., Circular A-11)	4	9	16	16	30	6
Chief Financial Officer Act requirements	6	11	8	14	28	14
Other legislative requirements	4	11	12	18	22	14
Congressional oversight	4	16	13	24	18	7
Other (Please describe) *						
_____						
_____						

\* 22 "other" entries.

**Appendix III  
Survey of Federal Agency Program  
Performance Measures**

6. In your organization, to what extent, if at all, are performance measures generally developed by the following people or processes? (CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.)

	To a very great extent (1)	To a great extent (2)	To a moderate extent (3)	To some extent (4)	To little or no extent (5)	No basis to judge (6)
By staff managers	25	44	23	5	1	1
By line managers	29	43	15	9	3	1
By employee focus groups	4	9	28	22	26	10
By customer/client input	6	10	22	31	24	5
Other (Please specify) *						
_____						
_____						

\* 21 "other" entries.

**IV. USE OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES IN PROGRAM AND ORGANIZATIONAL PLANNING**

7. Please indicate whether your organization prepares written plan(s) that set long-term program or organizational goals, standards, or objectives? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.)

67     A single long-term plan that sets goals, standards, or objectives for the entire organization or program.  
(Please provide a contact name, title, and phone number for the person responsible for this plan.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

78     Individual long-term plans that set goals, standards, or objectives for the organization or program are prepared by the organization's sub-units.

8       No written plan(s) are prepared that set long-term program or organizational goals, standards, or objectives.

**Appendix III  
Survey of Federal Agency Program  
Performance Measures**

<p>8. Considering all of the goals, standards, or objectives contained in your plan(s), how many are written in terms that are measurable or quantifiable? (CHECK ONE.)</p> <p>10 All</p> <p>43 Most</p> <p>14 About half</p> <p>24 Some</p> <p>3 Few or none</p>	<p>11. To what extent, if at all, are the <u>goals, standards, or objectives</u> in your organization's plan(s) required to be reflected in SES or senior management performance contracts? (CHECK ONE.)</p> <p>19 To a very great extent</p> <p>32 To a great extent</p> <p>22 To a moderate extent</p> <p>13 To some extent</p> <p>6 To little or no extent</p>
<p>9. Considering all of the goals, standards, or objectives contained in your long-term plan(s), how many are translated into annual or semi-annual operating plans? (CHECK ONE.)</p> <p>28 All</p> <p>41 Most</p> <p>6 About half</p> <p>16 Some</p> <p>2 Few or none</p>	<p>12. To what extent, if at all, are the program <u>performance measures</u> in use by your organization required to be reflected in SES or senior management performance contracts? (CHECK ONE.)</p> <p>8 To a very great extent</p> <p>28 To a great extent</p> <p>28 To a moderate extent</p> <p>20 To some extent</p> <p>16 To little or no extent</p>
<p>10. How many of your organization's performance measures measure progress toward the goals, standards, or objectives of your plan(s)? (CHECK ONE.)</p> <p>11 All</p> <p>39 Most</p> <p>10 About half</p> <p>29 Some</p> <p>4 Few or none</p>	<p>13. Is there a central office in your organization that is responsible for managing or monitoring the collection or internal distribution of all or most program performance measures for the <u>entire organization</u>? (CHECK ONE.)</p> <p>54 No</p> <p>48 Yes ---&gt; Please provide the following:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Name of Central Office: _____</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Person responsible: _____</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Title: _____</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Phone Number: (____) _____</p>

**Appendix III  
Survey of Federal Agency Program  
Performance Measures**

**V. REPORTING AND USE OF MEASURES**

14. Are current program performance measures distributed internally as a single report to top organization management? (CHECK ONE.)

24 Yes --> How many times per year is the report issued?

\_\_\_\_\_ Times per year

69 No, there are multiple reports

8 No, there are no reports

If yes, number of times per year report is issued:

1 time . . . . . 5

4 times . . . . . 11

12 times . . . . . 6

Varies . . . . . 2

15. Which of the following comparisons of performance measures are conducted by your organization? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.)

59 We compare them to those in regions or other units within the organization.

90 We compare them to historical trends within the same program.

91 We compare them against program goals, standards, or objectives (e.g., in annual operating or strategic plans).

20 We compare them against alternative suppliers or similar operations (e.g., other agencies, the private sector, other countries, etc.).

11 Other (Please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

2 No comparisons are made

**VI. SATISFACTION WITH USE OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES IN MANAGEMENT PROCESS**

16. For the following four items, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your current performance measures as a tool to help your organization do the following? (CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.)

	Very satisfied (1)	Somewhat satisfied (2)	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3)	Somewhat dissatisfied (4)	Very dissatisfied (5)	No basis to judge (6)
Make budget decisions	25	45	12	16	1	1
Manage programs	18	61	8	9	3	1
Assure accountability	18	55	11	12	3	1
Measure program results or outcomes	18	60	8	7	4	2

**Appendix III  
Survey of Federal Agency Program  
Performance Measures**

17. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied is your organization with the timeliness, reliability, and level of detail of the information produced by your organization's current performance measures?  
(CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.)

	Very satisfied (1)	Somewhat satisfied (2)	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3)	Somewhat dissatisfied (4)	Very dissatisfied (5)	No basis to judge (6)
<b>Timeliness of the information produced by the measures</b>	17	65	6	7	3	2
<b>Reliability of the information produced by the measures</b>	21	63	6	7	1	2
<b>Level of detail of the information produced by the measures</b>	20	55	12	10	-	3

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Please remember to return your questionnaire by FAX  
to the number listed on page 1 of this questionnaire.



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