



Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-04-40](#), a report to the Chairman, Committee on Government Reform, House of Representatives, and the Honorable Jim Turner

Why GAO Did This Study

A well-defined enterprise architecture (EA) is a blueprint for institutional modernization and evolution that consists of models describing how an entity operates today and how it intends to operate in the future, along with a plan for how it intends to transition to this future state. Such architectures are essential tools whose effective development and use are recognized hallmarks of successful organizations. Because of the importance of these architectures, GAO was asked to determine (1) what progress federal agencies have made in effectively developing, implementing, and maintaining their EAs and (2) the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) actions to advance the state of EA development and use across the federal government.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is reiterating open recommendations previously made to the Director of OMB, and it is making additional recommendations to the director that are aimed at advancing the state of EA management maturity across the federal government through improved EA leadership and oversight. OMB officials stated that they generally agreed with our recommendations.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-04-40.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Randolph C. Hite at (202) 512-3439 or hiter@gao.gov.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

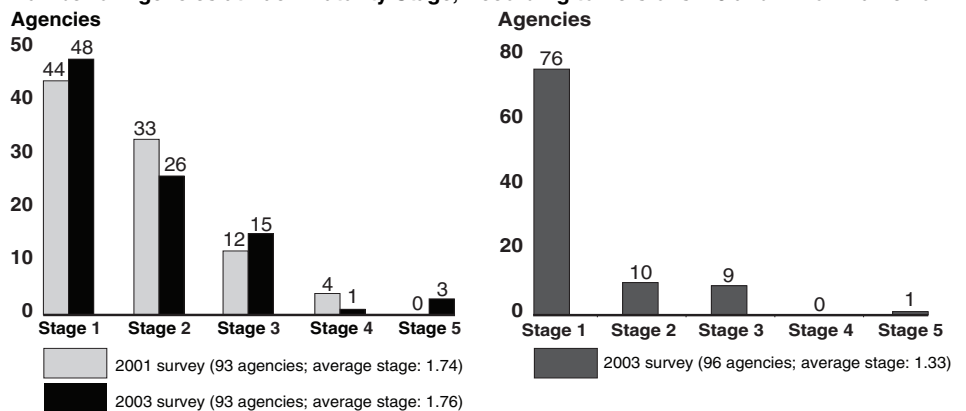
Leadership Remains Key to Agencies Making Progress on Enterprise Architecture Efforts

What GAO Found

Federal agencies' progress toward effective EA management is limited. GAO surveyed federal agencies on their EA programs and compared the results with those of a similar survey that GAO conducted in 2001 ([GAO-02-6](#)). To assign a maturity level to agencies, GAO used its EA management maturity framework, which is a five-stage model that defines criteria that govern where an EA program stands in its progression toward being effectively managed (with Stage 1 being ineffective and Stage 5 being highly effective). Comparing the 2001 and 2003 survey results revealed a very similar overall picture (see figure), in which slight increases in agencies achieving Stage 3 status were offset by slight increases in agencies being at Stage 1. In addition, when GAO assessed the 2003 survey results against a recent update of the framework ([GAO-03-584G](#)), agencies' average maturity was slightly lower. An exception to this is the Executive Office of the President, which is a Stage 5 agency under the latest version of the framework. Part of the reason for this limited progress across the federal government is that agencies continue to face long-standing EA challenges, such as limited executive understanding of EA and a scarcity of skilled architecture staff. Since 2001, more agencies now report these as significant challenges.

OMB has undertaken a variety of actions to advance the state of EA use across the federal government, such as collecting and analyzing architectures for major departments and agencies and requiring that major information technology (IT) investments comply with them. Additionally, OMB has developed parts of a governmentwide EA, and by requiring a mapping of agency architectures to this federal EA as part of the budget review process, it has called attention to the need for agencies to further their own architecture efforts. However, despite OMB's actions, the agencies' responses indicate that only about one-half are satisfied with OMB's leadership in addressing long-standing EA challenges. Until these challenges are effectively addressed, agencies' maturity levels as a whole are likely to remain stagnant, limiting their ability to effectively invest in IT.

Number of Agencies at Each Maturity Stage, According to Versions 1.0 and 1.1 of Framework



Source: GAO.