



Highlights of [GAO-06-906](#), a report to congressional committees

### Why GAO Did This Study

Since 2001, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has been working to acquire the Electronic Records Archives (ERA) system, which is intended to address critical issues in the creation, management, and use of federal electronic records. As required by law, the agency submitted its fiscal year 2006 expenditure plan to the congressional appropriations committees, seeking the release of about \$22 million for the development of the system.

GAO's objectives in reviewing the expenditure plan were to (1) determine the extent to which the expenditure plan satisfied the legislative conditions specified in the appropriations act; (2) determine the extent to which NARA has implemented GAO's prior recommendations; and (3) provide any other observations about the expenditure plan and the ERA acquisition. We reviewed the expenditure plan and analyzed it against the legislative conditions and assessed NARA's progress in addressing prior recommendations.

### What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that the Archivist of the United States ensure that future expenditure plans include a sufficient level and scope of information for Congress to effectively oversee the program. In commenting on a draft of this report, the Archivist of the United States agreed with the results and recommendation.

[www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-906](http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-906).

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Linda D. Koontz at (202) 512-6240 or [koontzl@gao.gov](mailto:koontzl@gao.gov).

# ELECTRONIC RECORDS ARCHIVES

## The National Archives and Records Administration's Fiscal Year 2006 Expenditure Plan

### What GAO Found

NARA's fiscal year 2006 expenditure plan fully satisfies three of the six legislative conditions and partially satisfies the remaining conditions (see table).

Fiscal Year 2006 Expenditure Plan: Compliance with Legislative Conditions	
Legislative conditions	Status
1. Meet OMB capital planning and investment control review requirements	Partially satisfied
2. Comply with NARA's enterprise architecture	Partially satisfied
3. Conform to NARA's enterprise life cycle methodology	Partially satisfied
4. Comply with acquisition rules, requirements, guidelines, and system acquisition management practices of the federal government	Satisfied
5. Approval by NARA and OMB	Satisfied
6. Review by GAO	Satisfied

Source: GAO.

The agency continues to make progress in addressing prior GAO recommendations: the agency has fully implemented three of five and has partially implemented the remaining two. The agency has (1) strengthened information security by developing a program that includes agencywide assessments of information security risks; (2) developed and implemented a document review process to ensure that recommendations from reviewers are addressed and incorporated into acquisition policies and plans; and (3) improved federal records management by implementing strategies to raise agencies' awareness of records management principles, functions, and programs. However, while NARA has completed the development of an enterprise architecture, it lacks an agencywide board for reviewing information technology projects for conformance to the architecture, including projects that are interdependent with ERA. In addition, the agency revised four out of five key policies and plans to comply with industry standards. At the time of our briefing, the Risk Management Plan was under revision. It was completed in July 2006. Until the agency fully addresses all prior recommendations, risks remain to the successful implementation of the system.

NARA's expenditure plan does not contain the level and scope of information needed by Congress to understand the agency's plans and commitments relative to system capabilities, benefits, schedules, and costs. For example, it does not fully describe how the infrastructure elements that are to be procured will fit into the overall system design. Until the agency improves future expenditure plans to include information on system capabilities, benefits, schedules, and costs, Congress will not have the information needed to oversee plans and progress on the acquisition of the system. We performed our work at NARA's College Park, Maryland, location in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.