



Highlights of [GAO-04-38](#), a report to congressional requesters

RESULTS-ORIENTED GOVERNMENT

GPRA Has Established a Solid Foundation for Achieving Greater Results

Why GAO Did This Study

Now that the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) has been in effect for 10 years, GAO was asked to address (1) the effect of GPRA in creating a governmentwide focus on results and the government's ability to deliver results to the American public, (2) the challenges agencies face in measuring performance and using performance information in management decisions, and (3) how the federal government can continue to shift toward a more results-oriented focus.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) improve its guidance and oversight of GPRA implementation, as well as develop a governmentwide performance plan. GAO also believes Congress should consider amending GPRA to require that (1) agencies update their strategic plans at least once every four years, consult with congressional stakeholders at least once every new Congress, and make interim updates to strategic and performance plans as appropriate; and (2) the President develop a governmentwide strategic plan. OMB generally agreed with our recommendations, but stated that the President's Budget can serve as both a governmentwide strategic and annual plan. However, we believe the budget provides neither a long-term nor an integrated perspective on the federal government's performance.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-04-38.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Patricia A. Dalton at (202) 512-6806 or daltonp@gao.gov.

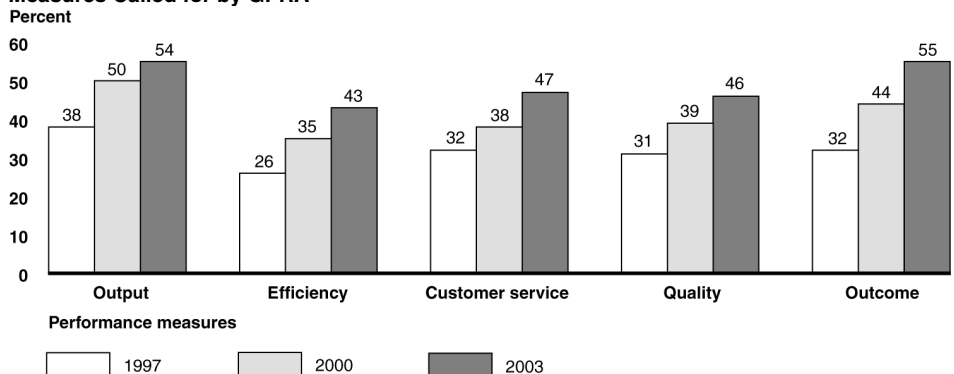
What GAO Found

GPRA's requirements have established a solid foundation of results-oriented performance planning, measurement, and reporting in the federal government. Federal managers surveyed by GAO reported having significantly more of the types of performance measures called for by GPRA (see figure below). GPRA has also begun to facilitate the linking of resources to results, although much remains to be done in this area to increase the use of performance information to make decisions about resources. We also found agency strategic and annual performance plans and reports we reviewed have improved over initial efforts.

Although a foundation has been established, numerous significant challenges to GPRA implementation still exist. Inconsistent top leadership commitment to achieving results within agencies and OMB can hinder the development of results-oriented cultures in agencies. Furthermore, in certain areas, federal managers continue to have difficulty setting outcome-oriented goals, collecting useful data on results, and linking institutional, program, unit, and individual performance measurement and reward systems. Finally, there is an inadequate focus on addressing issues that cut across federal agencies.

OMB, as the focal point for management in the federal government, is responsible for overall leadership and direction in addressing these challenges. OMB has clearly placed greater emphasis on management issues during the past several years. However, it has showed less commitment to GPRA implementation in its guidance to agencies and in using the governmentwide performance plan requirement of GPRA to develop an integrated approach to crosscutting issues. In our view, governmentwide strategic planning could better facilitate the integration of federal activities to achieve national goals.

Percentage of Federal Managers Who Reported Having Specific Types of Performance Measures Called for by GPRA



Source: GAO.