



Highlights of [GAO-08-672](#), a report to the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, U.S. Senate

Why GAO Did This Study

The safety and economic security of the United States depends on the secure use of the world's seaports and waterways. Homeland Security Presidential Directive-13 (HSPD-13, also referred to as National Security Presidential Directive-41) directs the coordination of U.S. maritime security policy through the creation of a *National Strategy for Maritime Security* and supporting implementation plans. GAO was asked to evaluate this strategy and its eight supporting plans. This report discusses: (1) the extent to which the strategy and its supporting plans contain desirable characteristics of an effective national strategy, and (2) the reported status of the implementation of these plans.

To conduct this work, GAO evaluated the *National Strategy for Maritime Security* and its supporting plans against the desirable characteristics of an effective national strategy that GAO identified in February 2004, reviewed HSPD-13 and supporting plans, and reviewed documents on the status of the plans' implementation.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is not making any new recommendations. However, it previously made recommendations to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) related to the key issues discussed in this report. DHS generally concurred with these earlier recommendations and is working to address them.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on [GAO-08-672](#). For more information, contact Stephen L. Caldwell at (202) 512-9610 or caldwells@gao.gov.

MARITIME SECURITY

National Strategy and Supporting Plans Were Generally Well-Developed and Are Being Implemented

What GAO Found

Of the six desirable characteristics of an effective national strategy that GAO identified in 2004, the *National Strategy for Maritime Security* and its eight supporting implementation plans address four and partially address the remaining two as shown in the table below.

Extent to Which the *National Strategy for Maritime Security* and Its Supporting Implementation Plans Address GAO's Desirable Characteristics

Desirable characteristic	Brief description of characteristic	Assessment
Purpose, scope, and methodology	Addresses why the strategy was produced, the scope of its coverage, and the process by which it was developed.	Addresses
Problem definition and risk assessment	Addresses the particular national problems and threats the strategy is directed towards.	Addresses
Organizational roles, responsibilities, and coordination	Addresses who will be implementing the strategy, what their roles will be compared to others, and mechanisms for them to coordinate their efforts.	Addresses
Integration and implementation	Addresses how a national strategy relates to other strategies' goals, objectives, and activities, and to subordinate levels of government and their plans to implement the strategy.	Addresses
Goals, objectives, activities, and performance measures	Addresses what the strategy is trying to achieve, steps to achieve those results, as well as the priorities, milestones, and performance measures to gauge results.	Partially addresses (does not include performance measures)
Resources, investments, and risk management	Addresses what the strategy will cost, the sources and types of resources and investments needed, and where resources and investments should be targeted by balancing risk reductions and costs.	Partially addresses (does not include information on the sources and types of resources needed)

Source: GAO analysis.

Documents provided by the Maritime Security Working Group—an interagency body responsible for monitoring and assessing the implementation of the maritime strategy—indicate that the implementation status of the eight supporting plans varies. For example, as of November 2007, implementation of one plan had been completed, while another has reached the assessment phase (e.g., lessons learned and best practices), and a third has reached the execution phase (e.g., exercises and operations). The other five plans remain primarily in the planning phase. The working group is monitoring the implementation of 76 actions across the plans, and reported 6 of these are completed and 70 are ongoing.