

## Department of Justice



Highlights of [GAO-03-105](#), a report to Congress included as part of GAO's Performance and Accountability Series

## Why GAO Did This Report

In its 2001 performance and accountability report on the Department of Justice, GAO identified five major management challenges. Justice has since made progress on (1) developing measurable performance targets in reducing illegal drugs and (2) improving management of its asset forfeiture program. However, three challenges remain and a fourth—managing the FBI's transformation—was added. GAO prepared this report to bring these major challenges to the attention of the Congress and Justice. This is part of a special series of reports on governmentwide and agency-specific issues.

## What Remains to Be Done

GAO believes Justice should

- manage the FBI's transformation,
- improve enforcement of immigration laws and the provision of immigration services,
- better manage programs that support state and local crime reduction efforts, and
- achieve financial accountability for fiscal year 2002 and beyond.

[www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-03-105](http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-03-105).

To view the full report, click on the link above. For more information, contact Norman J. Rabkin at 202-512-9110 or [rabkinn@gao.gov](mailto:rabkinn@gao.gov).

## What GAO Found

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, changed the nation forever and drew the country's attention to the mission of the Department of Justice (Justice). In fulfilling its mission, Justice and its components confront several performance and accountability challenges in 2003. Congress recently passed legislation calling for the new Department of Homeland Security to absorb certain functions currently performed by Justice—such as some information analysis and infrastructure protection capabilities and immigration enforcement and services. Regardless of which agency has responsibility for such functions, management challenges will persist.

- **Transform the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI):** After September 11, 2001, the FBI began transforming its culture to be more proactive and preventive in responding to terrorism. The FBI faces several challenges in reorganizing, including realigning staff to address terrorism, building analytic capabilities, improving information sharing and information technology, recruiting employees with specialized skills, and managing the ripple effect of reorganization on the law enforcement community. Although the Department of Homeland Security will absorb some of the FBI's information analysis and infrastructure protection capabilities, the FBI still faces challenges that will require considerable attention.
- **Enforce Immigration Laws and Provide Immigration Services:** In carrying out its enforcement and service functions, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) faces many challenges, including unfocused or ineffective efforts at combating benefit fraud, unauthorized employment, and alien smuggling; and problems with workload and information technology management. Although the INS will be transferred to the new Department of Homeland Security, these organizational, management, and programmatic challenges will remain.
- **Support State and Local Efforts to Reduce Crime:** While the Office of Justice Programs has taken steps to achieve more effective grant management procedures and systems, it has not resolved long-standing problems with monitoring grant programs, including data collection and sufficiently rigorous impact evaluation studies.
- **Achieve Financial Accountability:** Although Justice achieved an unqualified audit opinion on its fiscal year 2001 financial statements, material weaknesses remain in general and application controls over financial management systems, recording financial transactions, and preparing financial statements.