



Highlights of [GAO-07-681T](#), a testimony before the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, U.S. Senate

## Why GAO Did This Study

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is developing the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) to ensure that only workers that do not pose a terrorist threat are allowed to enter secure areas of the nation's transportation facilities. This testimony is based primarily on GAO's December 2004 and September 2006 reports on the TWIC program and interviews with TSA and port officials conducted in March and April 2007 to obtain updates on the TWIC program. Specifically, this testimony addresses (1) the progress TSA has made since September 2006 in implementing the TWIC program; and (2) some of the remaining challenges that TSA and the maritime industry must overcome to ensure the successful implementation of the TWIC program.

## What GAO Recommends

GAO has previously recommended that TSA develop a comprehensive plan for managing the TWIC program, conduct additional testing of the TWIC program to ensure that all key components work effectively, strengthen contract planning and oversight practices, and develop a plan for communicating and coordinating with stakeholders. TSA agreed with these recommendations.

[www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO--07-681T](http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO--07-681T).

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Norm Rabkin, 202-512-8777, [rabkinn@gao.gov](mailto:rabkinn@gao.gov).

# TRANSPORTATION SECURITY

## TSA Has Made Progress in Implementing the Transportation Worker Identification Credential Program, but Challenges Remain

### What GAO Found

Since we issued our report on the TWIC program in September 2006, TSA has made progress toward implementing the TWIC program and addressing several of the problems that we previously identified regarding contract oversight and planning and coordination with stakeholders. Specifically, TSA has

- issued a TWIC rule that sets forth the requirements for enrolling workers and issuing TWIC cards to workers in the maritime sector;
- awarded a \$70 million dollar contract for enrolling workers in the TWIC program;
- developed a schedule for enrolling workers and issuing TWIC cards at ports and conducting a pilot program to test TWIC access control technologies;
- added additional staff with program and contract management expertise to help oversee the TWIC enrollment contract; and
- developed plans to improve communication and coordination with maritime stakeholders, including plans for conducting public outreach and education efforts.

TSA and maritime industry stakeholders still face several challenges to ensuring that the TWIC program can be implemented successfully:

- TSA and its enrollment contractor need to transition from limited testing of the TWIC program to successful implementation of the program on a much larger scale covering 770,000 workers at about 3,500 maritime facilities and 5,300 vessels.
- TSA and its enrollment contractor will need to educate workers on the new TWIC requirements, ensure that enrollments begin in a timely manner, and process numerous background checks, appeals, and waivers.
- TSA and industry stakeholders will need to ensure that TWIC access control technologies will work effectively in the maritime environment, be compatible with TWIC cards that will be issued, and balance security with the flow of maritime commerce.

As TSA works to implement the TWIC program and begin enrolling workers, it will be important that the agency establish clear and reasonable time frames and ensure that all aspects of the TWIC program, including the TWIC access control technologies, are fully tested in the maritime environment.