



DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Addressing Management Challenges That Face Immigration Enforcement Agencies

Highlights of [GAO-05-664T](#), a testimony before the Subcommittee on Immigration, Border Security, and Claims, Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives

Why GAO Did This Study

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) assumed responsibility for the immigration programs of the former Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) in 2003. The three DHS bureaus with primary responsibility for immigration functions are U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS). This testimony focuses on CBP and ICE, which took over the immigration enforcement function. CBP is responsible for functions related to inspections and border patrol, and ICE is responsible for functions related to investigations, intelligence, detention, and removal.

The Subcommittee on Immigration, Border Security, and Claims, House Committee on the Judiciary, held a hearing to discuss management challenges and potential structural changes. Some research organizations have suggested structural changes to address management challenges, including a merger of CBP and ICE.

This testimony addresses the following questions: (1) Have ICE and CBP encountered similar management challenges to those encountered at INS? (2) What factors might be considered in addressing some of the management challenges that exist at ICE and CBP?

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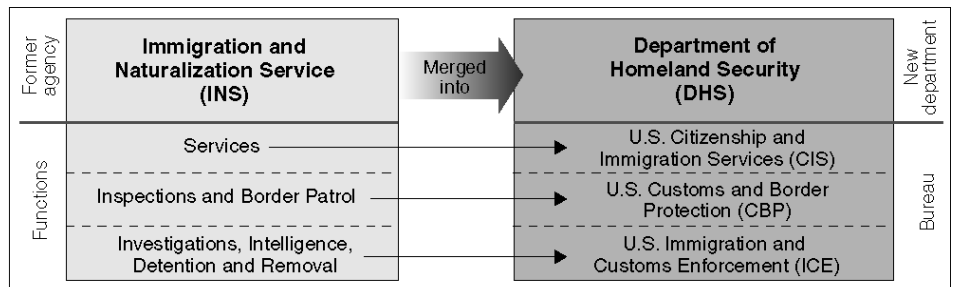
To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Richard Stana at (202) 512-8777 or stanar@gao.gov.

What GAO Found

A number of similar management challenges that had been experienced by INS have continued in the new organizations now responsible for immigration enforcement functions. In 2001, GAO testified that, while restructuring may help address certain management challenges, INS faced significant challenges in assembling the basic systems and processes that any organization needs to accomplish its mission. These include clearly delineated roles and responsibilities, policies and procedures that effectively balance competing priorities, effective internal and external communications and coordination, and automation systems that provide accurate and timely information. In March 2003, the functions of the INS were transferred to the new DHS and placed in the newly-created ICE and CBP. In 2004, we reported that many similar management challenges we found at INS were still in existence in the new bureaus.

In evaluating solutions to ICE and CBP management challenges, including potential structural changes, several factors might be considered. The first factor is whether ICE and CBP currently have good management frameworks in place. Such a management framework, among other items, would include a clear mission, a strategic planning process, good organizational alignment, performance measures, and leadership and accountability mechanisms. The second factor is whether ICE and CBP have developed systems and processes to support the management frameworks they may have in place. The third factor is that the management challenges in these two bureaus exist in the larger context of the creation and evolution of DHS. The transformation and integration activities at DHS can take 5-7 years to accomplish, and some management challenges might be resolved in this process.

Reorganization of INS into DHS



Source: GAO analysis of DHS data.