



Highlights of [GAO-06-559T](#), a testimony before the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; U.S. Senate

Why GAO Did This Study

The Subcommittee asked GAO to provide comments on the National Capital Region's (NCR) strategic plan. GAO reported on NCR strategic planning, among other issues, in May 2004 and September 2004, testified before the House Committee on Government Reform in June 2004, and testified before the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia in July 2005.

In this testimony, we addressed completion of the NCR strategic plan, national and regional priorities, and strengthening any plan that is developed.

What GAO Recommends

Although we include no new recommendations in this statement, GAO continues to recommend that the ONCRC work with the NCR jurisdictions to quickly complete a coordinated strategic plan to establish and monitor the achievement of regional goals and priorities.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-559T.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact William Jenkins, Jr., 202-512-8757, jenkinswo@gao.gov.

HOMELAND SECURITY

The Status of Strategic Planning in the National Capital Region

What GAO Found

Among its other statutory responsibilities, the Office of National Capital Region Coordination is charged with coordinating with NCR agencies and other entities to ensure adequate planning, information sharing, training, and execution of domestic preparedness activities among these agencies and entities. In May 2004 and again in July 2005, we recommended that the ONCRC complete a regional strategic plan to establish goals and priorities for enhancing first responder capacities that could be used to guide the effective use of federal funds.

Although work has continued on a NCR strategic plan for the past 2 years, a completed plan is not yet available. According to NCR officials, completion of the plan requires integrating information and analyses from other documents completed or nearly completed, and a plan may not be available before September or October of 2006.

The NCR's strategic planning should reflect both national and regional priorities and needs. The majority of the individual documents ONCRC provided to us as representing components for its strategic plan were developed in response to Department of Homeland Security fiscal year 2006 grant guidance to support the NCR's fiscal year 2006 grant application. It is appropriate and necessary that the NCR address national priorities, but the NCR's strategic plan should not be primarily driven by these requirements. It should integrate national and regional priorities and needs.

A well-defined, comprehensive strategic plan for the NCR is essential for assuring that the region is prepared for the risks it faces. A November 18, 2005, NCR PowerPoint presentation describes the NCR's vision, mission, goals, objectives, and priority initiatives. That presentation includes some elements of a good strategic plan, including some performance measures, target dates, and cost estimates. A completed NCR strategic plan should build on the current elements that the NCR has developed and strengthen others based on the desirable characteristics of a national strategy that may also be useful for a regional approach to homeland security strategic planning. As it completes its strategic plan, the NCR could focus on strengthening (1) initiatives that will accomplish objectives under the NCR strategic goals, (2) performance measures and targets that indicate how the initiatives will accomplish identified strategic goals, (3) milestones or timeframes for initiative accomplishment, (4) information on the resources and investments for each initiative, and (5) organizational roles, responsibilities, and coordination, and integration and implementation plans.