

Final Assessment Report 08-06, March 31, 2007, "Operating System Security for GPO's Passport Printing and Production System"

Enhanced border security has significantly increased the demand for U.S. passports. The Government Printing Office (GPO) has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of State for producing, storing, and delivering printed passports. GPO's Passport Printing and Production System (PPPS) includes various computer applications and operating systems that support the production of passports. GPO's Plant Operations Division administers PPPS computer applications while the GPO Chief Information Officer (CIO) is responsible for administering PPPS operating systems. If these operating systems are not configured securely, critical computer applications such as databases and custom applications are vulnerable and could be compromised. The risk associated with compromise to the operating systems hosting such critical applications could result in systems services being disrupted, sensitive information being divulged, or forgery. The OIG conducted an assessment to evaluate the security configuration for selected operating systems that support production of passports to determine whether GPO is enforcing an appropriate level of security. The OIG issued a sensitive report containing recommendations to not only help strengthen the security of the PPPS, but also reduce the risk of system compromise.