



*SERVING THE CONGRESS  
AND THE NATION*

Parts of this plan have been revised.  
Clicking within this box will allow you  
to scroll through the revisions.

# GOVERNMENTWIDE MANAGEMENT REFORMS

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE PLAN 2000-2002





# GAO'S MISSION

GAO exists to support the Congress in meeting its Constitutional responsibilities and to help improve the performance and accountability of the federal government for the benefit of the American people.

## CORE VALUES

### ACCOUNTABILITY

describes the nature of GAO's work. GAO helps the Congress oversee federal programs and operations to ensure accountability to the American people. GAO's evaluators, auditors, lawyers, economists, public policy analysts, information technology specialists, and other multidisciplinary professionals seek to enhance the economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and credibility of the federal government both in fact and in the eyes of the American people. GAO accomplishes its mission through a variety of activities, including financial audits, program reviews, investigations, legal support, and program analyses.

### INTEGRITY

describes the high standards that GAO sets for itself in the conduct of its work. GAO takes a professional, objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, nonideological, fair, and balanced approach to all of its activities. Integrity is the foundation of reputation, and GAO's approach to its work ensures both.

### RELIABILITY

describes GAO's goal for how its work is viewed by the Congress and the American public. GAO produces high-quality reports, testimony, briefings, legal opinions, and other products and services that are timely, accurate, useful, clear, and candid.

## FOREWORD

In fulfilling its mission, GAO examines the use of public funds; evaluates federal programs and activities; and provides analyses, options, recommendations, and other assistance to help the Congress make effective oversight, policy, and funding decisions. In this context, GAO works to continuously improve the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of the federal government through the conduct of financial audits, program reviews and evaluations, analyses, legal opinions, investigations, and other services. Most of this work is based upon original data collection and analysis.

To ensure that GAO, in serving the Congress, targets the right issues, provides balanced perspectives, and develops practical recommendations, GAO regularly consults with the Congress and maintains relationships with a variety of federal, state, academic, and professional organizations. GAO also obtains the perspectives of applicable trade groups and associations and attends professional conferences. Moreover, GAO regularly coordinates its work with CRS, CBO, and agency Inspector General offices. Throughout, GAO's core values of accountability, integrity, and reliability are guiding principles.

In keeping with its mission and responsibilities, GAO has developed a strategic plan that includes four strategic goals and 21 related strategic objectives. To ensure that GAO's resources are directed to achieving its goals, a separate strategic plan underlies each objective. Bolstering GAO's goal of supporting the transition to a more results-oriented and accountable government, this strategic plan describes the performance goals GAO will use in facilitating governmentwide management and institutional reforms needed to build and sustain high-performing organizations and more effective government.

This plan covers a 3-year period; however, because unanticipated events may significantly affect even the best of plans, GAO's process allows for updating this plan to respond quickly to emerging issues. If you have questions or desire information on additional or completed work related to this strategic objective, please call or e-mail us or the contact persons listed on the following pages.

Nancy Kingsbury  
Acting Assistant  
Comptroller General  
General Government Division  
(202) 512-2700  
kingsburyn.ggd@gao.gov

Jeffrey C. Steinhoff  
Acting Assistant  
Comptroller General  
Accounting and Information  
Management Division  
(202) 512-2600  
steinhoffj.aimd@gao.gov

# SERVING THE CONGRESS GAO'S STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK



## MISSION

GAO exists to support the Congress in meeting its Constitutional responsibilities and to help improve the performance and accountability of the federal government for the benefit of the American people.

## GOALS

PROVIDE TIMELY, QUALITY SERVICE TO THE CONGRESS AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

SUPPORT THE TRANSITION

MAXIMIZE THE VALUE OF GAO



TO ADDRESS CURRENT AND EMERGING CHALLENGES TO THE WELL-BEING AND FINANCIAL SECURITY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

TO RESPOND TO CHANGING SECURITY THREATS AND THE CHALLENGES OF GLOBAL INTERDEPENDENCE

TO A MORE RESULTS-ORIENTED AND ACCOUNTABLE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

BY BEING A MODEL ORGANIZATION FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

## THEMES

Demographics

Globalization

Quality of Life

Security

Technology

Government Performance and Accountability

## OBJECTIVES

Health care needs and financing  
Retirement income security  
Social safety net  
Education/workforce issues  
Effective system of justice  
Community investment  
Natural resources use and environmental protection  
Physical infrastructure

Diffuse security threats  
Military capabilities and readiness  
Advancement of U.S. interests  
Global market forces

Fiscal position of the government  
Government financing and accountability  
**GOVERNMENTWIDE MANAGEMENT REFORMS**  
Economy, efficiency, and effectiveness improvements in federal agencies

Client relations  
Strategic and annual planning  
Human capital  
Core business and supporting processes  
Information technology services

## CORE VALUES

Accountability

Integrity

Reliability

SUPPORT THE  
TRANSITION



TO A MORE  
RESULTS-ORIENTED AND  
ACCOUNTABLE FEDERAL  
GOVERNMENT

Fiscal position of the  
government

Government financing and  
accountability

**GOVERNMENTWIDE  
MANAGEMENT REFORMS**

Economy, efficiency, and  
effectiveness improvements  
in federal agencies

## FACILITATE GOVERNMENTWIDE MANAGEMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS NEEDED TO BUILD AND SUSTAIN HIGH-PERFORMING ORGANIZATIONS AND MORE EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT

Over the last decade, the Congress has established a statutory framework intended to create high-performing organizations across government. This framework contains major reform legislation related to performance, financial management, information management technology, and procurement. While progress is being made, legislative expectations in these areas have not yet been realized. In another critical management area, human capital, consensus has not yet emerged on fundamental structural or policy changes.

GAO's strategic plan identifies six multiyear performance goals to achieve the strategic objective of facilitating governmentwide management and institutional reforms needed to build and sustain high-performing organizations and more effective government. The following pages discuss the significance of the performance goals, the key efforts that will be undertaken, and the potential outcomes.

### *Performance Goals*

- Analyze and Support Efforts to Instill Results-Oriented Management Across the Government
- Identify Needed Improvements to the Government's Financial Management Infrastructure
- Help Build the Government's Capacity to Manage Information Technology to Improve Performance
- Enhance Efforts to Manage the Collection, Use, and Dissemination of Government Information in an Era of Rapidly Changing Technology
- Identify and Facilitate the Implementation of Human Capital Practices That Will Improve Federal Economy, Efficiency, and Effectiveness
- Improve Acquisition Policies and Practices



---

## *Analyze and Support Efforts to Instill Results-Oriented Management Across the Government*

### *Significance*

In recent years, the federal government has been moving toward a results-oriented management approach. This approach shifts the focus of decisionmaking from activities to the results of those activities. Many agencies face long-standing and substantial challenges to becoming results-oriented. These challenges are to focus on results, align organizational structures within and across agencies, effectively employ management flexibilities and incentives, and use credible results-oriented performance information systems for decisionmaking and accountability. GAO's work has shown that these challenges can be overcome when agencies employ such results-oriented approaches as planning better how mission-critical challenges and risks are addressed, coordinating crosscutting programs, considering the performance consequences of budget decisions, integrating human capital and performance planning, and building the capacity to gather and use performance information. Also, GAO's work needs to help the Congress use the results of the Government Performance and Results Act as it carries out its appropriations and oversight roles.



### *Key Efforts*

Monitor agencies' progress in making implementation of the Government Performance and Results Act an integral part of their operations

Assess how accountability and performance information issues are addressed when third parties are the service providers

Examine how different program tools, strategies, and organizational arrangements can be used to maximize results

Assess management of governmentwide strategic planning activities and the leadership role of the Office of Management and Budget

Determine whether executive and legislative branch regulatory reform initiatives are achieving their intended objectives and improving program results

### *Potential Outcomes*

Agencies' providing more objective information to congressional decisionmakers on achieving statutory objectives and the relative effectiveness and efficiency of federal programs and spending

Improved management of federal programs by establishing a focus on results, service quality, and customer satisfaction

Increased accountability of federal agencies for achieving program objectives

More effective regulatory strategies that impose less burden on regulatory entities



## *Identify Needed Improvements to the Government's Financial Management Infrastructure*

### *Significance*

While an unqualified audit opinion is essential to providing an annual public scorecard on accountability, the end goal is reliable, useful, and timely day-to-day information to support ongoing management and accountability. Financial management reform legislation set the framework and expectations for agencies to (1) use effective financial management human capital practices and create effective financial management organizations; (2) develop and deploy modern financial management systems; (3) routinely produce sound cost and operating performance information; and (4) design results-oriented reports on the government's financial condition by integrating budget, accounting, and program information. These legislative expectations are not yet fulfilled.



### *Key Efforts*

Identify and document best practices covering the range of financial management issues

Identify needed improvements in agency financial management organizations, recruitment, skills, and training

Track agencies' progress in implementing federal accounting standards and financial systems and other requirements, as required by the Federal Financial Management Improvement Act (FFMIA), and analyze financial systems plans

Work to ensure that cost accounting systems effectively capture the costs of program activities

Assess internal controls and recommend improvements to ensure cost-effective internal controls are in place and operating as intended

Evaluate computer security for financial management systems

Identify and promote ways to link budget, financial, and program results information, such as demonstrating how the results of financial statement audits affect the reliability of financial results presented in the President's budget

Analyze financial management issues such as the collectibility of receivables and debt collection improvement efforts, accountability for major assets, the magnitude and causes of improper payments, estimating the cost of federal credit programs, and the financial viability and financial condition of key government entities and functions, including IRS and selected aspects of DOD's financial management such as inventory control and business operations

### *Potential Outcomes*

Improved auditability of agency-level financial statements

Reliable, useful, and timely financial information routinely available to manage daily operations and properly implement a results-oriented government

Stronger systems of internal controls to help deter waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement

Improved computer security to reduce the risk of fraudulent activity associated with financial management systems

Assistance to the Congress in analyzing and interpreting reported financial information

Reliable cost information available to support systematic performance measurement

Budget, financial, and program results information that is linked and can be used for decisionmaking and oversight

Enhanced agency efforts to improve financial management organizations by publishing best practices of world-class financial organizations

Facilitated congressional oversight of agencies' progress in implementing federal accounting standards and financial systems and other requirements through our annual reporting to the Congress required by FFMIA

Advancement of the concept of accountability reporting first pilot-tested under the Government Management Reform Act



---

## *Help Build the Government's Capacity to Manage Information Technology to Improve Performance*

### *Significance*

As our country moves beyond the Year 2000 computing challenge and toward greater use of technology, it is important that the government act to ensure the safety and security of the automated systems and electronic data that support virtually all important operations and assets. It is also important to ensure that the federal government's \$38 billion in annual obligations in information technology is better managed to help achieve greater program effectiveness and service delivery as well as improved economy and efficiency in government operations.



### *Key Efforts*

Identify key lessons learned from the Year 2000 computing challenge and assess Year 2000 failures

Continue to build on efforts to review the integrity of key systems and processes

Assess federal efforts to develop and implement governmentwide improvements to computer security and critical infrastructure protection initiatives

Continue to develop best practice evaluations of specific elements of information technology management and make available guidance and methodologies based on these studies

Apply these guidelines and methodologies to further our assessment of government performance and accountability

Assess agencies' ability to do complex multiyear modernization efforts needed to serve government and the public

### *Potential Outcomes*

Improved information security based on lessons learned from the Year 2000 problem and best practices

Enhanced agency capability to detect, protect against, and respond to computer intrusions

Facilitate and support evaluating the risk and vulnerability of interconnected systems

Improved agency management and engineering capability to develop and acquire information technology systems that support mission and performance objectives

Analyses to support the Congress on pressing appropriations and oversight decisions needed for major planned and ongoing information technology investments

Improved service delivery and greater economy and efficiency of critical government operations

Increased return on the federal government's information technology investments

Expanded and consistent governmentwide application and implementation of information technology management reforms established by the Paperwork Reduction Act and the Clinger-Cohen Act.

---

CONTACTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Jack L. Brock, Director, Governmentwide and Defense Information Systems Issues, (202) 512-6240, [brockj.aimd@gao.gov](mailto:brockj.aimd@gao.gov); Joel C. Willemsen, Director, Civil Agencies Information Systems Issues, (202) 512-6408, [willemsenj.aimd@gao.gov](mailto:willemsenj.aimd@gao.gov); David L. McClure, Associate Director, Governmentwide and Defense Information Systems Issues, (202) 512-6240, [mcclured.aimd@gao.gov](mailto:mcclured.aimd@gao.gov); Keith A. Rhodes, Director, Office of Computer and Information Technology Assessment, (202) 512-6412, [rhodesk.aimd.gao.gov](mailto:rhodesk.aimd.gao.gov)





## *Enhance Efforts to Manage the Collection, Use, and Dissemination of Government Information in an Era of Rapidly Changing Technology*

### *Significance*

Thomas Jefferson wrote that “to give information to the people is the most certain, and most legitimate function of government.” Today, government information has become a valuable national resource. In addition to providing the basis for sound public policy and private sector decisionmaking, it is the “currency of democracy,” providing citizens with the knowledge about their society to ensure accountability to the people. Information the government collects, uses, stores, and disseminates is vital to the healthy performance of the economy and managing the business of government. Information produced by the more than 70 federal statistical agencies is used to apportion representation in legislatures, assist agencies in measuring their performance, and help businesses and individuals make a myriad of decisions that can have wide-ranging effects. A change in the Consumer Price Index, for example, can have an immediate effect on interest rates and on the stock market and can alter the amount of individuals’ Social Security benefits and tax payments.

Because of the breadth of the government’s information activities and the value of government information to the entire nation, the effective, efficient, and economical management of this resource is of continuing importance to the citizenry and the public and private sectors. The government’s organization for and ability to manage its information resources is a long-standing issue that has been debated in all recent sessions of Congress. Furthermore, technological advances such as the Internet have generated new issues about the best means of collecting, storing, and disseminating all types of information. Traditional information issues such as data integrity, respondent burden, paperwork reduction, records management, access to records, and privacy take on a new light in the evolving digital environment.



### *Key Efforts*

Examine issues related to the oversight of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 and reauthorization of OMB’s Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs

Assess agencies’ strategies and plans to guide the government’s transition to conducting business electronically

Monitor the management of the 2000 census and highlight lessons learned for the 2010 census

Assess the government’s progress using technology to store and preserve public records

Review the government’s ability to efficiently and effectively disseminate government information using traditional methods and new electronic technologies

Examine the government’s efforts to provide the public efficient and responsive access to publicly supported research and government records, with appropriate privacy restrictions

### *Potential Outcomes*

An updated set of national policies on statistics, privacy, access, burden, data sharing, and storage in an electronic environment, and a renewed charter for OMB’s Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs

Less costly and more responsive transactions between government agencies and the public

A more accurate and less costly census in 2010

Improved records management programs

A managed transition as the government moves away from printing as the primary means for disseminating information to the public

Less costly and more responsive ways to provide the public access to government records and a better understanding of the balance between the competing demands of public access and privacy

CONTACT FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Linda D. Koontz, Associate Director, Governmentwide and Defense Information Systems, (202) 512-6240, koontzl.aimd@gao.gov



---

## *Identify and Facilitate the Implementation of Human Capital Practices That Will Improve Federal Economy, Efficiency, and Effectiveness*

### *Significance*

Among federal agencies' assets, one of the most important is their workforce. For agencies, building and maintaining an effective workforce—their human capital—is critical both to the accomplishment of their missions and to economical, efficient, and effective use of taxpayer funds. However, while financial management, information management, contracting, and performance management have all been the subject of major reform legislation in the 1990s, no consensus has emerged on the fundamental structural or policy changes that may be needed to address agencies' management of their human capital.

At its core, sound human capital management requires a well-grounded analysis that continually links an agency's human capital policies and practices to its mission and strategies. Yet strategic workforce planning has often been neglected in federal agencies. For example, despite an explicit requirement that agencies take human capital into account in developing their strategic plans under the Results Act, the majority of plans show little evidence that this has been done. The implications of poor human capital management are clear; not having enough staff with the necessary skills has limited several agencies' ability to perform essential functions.



### *Key Efforts*

Develop and promulgate a human capital self-assessment guide

Identify best practices for human capital management in leading private and public entities

Evaluate alternative models for identifying and developing executives

Evaluate retirement challenges facing federal agencies

Assess selected agencies' human capital management practices

### *Potential Outcomes*

Improved human capital planning at agencies, as evidenced in their Results Act plans

Consideration of best practices alternatives for such human capital activities as attracting, retaining, developing, managing, and rewarding talented employees

Information for the Congress identifying major human capital issues facing key federal agencies

Consensus on fundamental structural or policy reforms for federal human capital management

---

CONTACTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Nancy Kingsbury, Acting Assistant Comptroller General, General Government Division, (202) 512-2700, [kingsburyn.ggd@gao.gov](mailto:kingsburyn.ggd@gao.gov); Michael Brostek, Associate Director, Federal Management and Workforce Issues, (202) 512-8676, [brostekm.ggd@gao.gov](mailto:brostekm.ggd@gao.gov)



## *Improve Acquisition Policies and Practices*

### *Significance*

Acquisition refers to the process of obtaining goods and services for use by the government. All too often, the goods and services the government acquires cost too much, are delivered late, and fail to perform as expected. The federal government spends over \$200 billion each year on supplies, equipment, services, and construction projects and has become increasingly reliant on contractors to perform its functions. Less than half of the \$200 billion goes for supplies and equipment, which can range from major acquisitions, such as the B-2 bomber and international space station, to small everyday items, such as paint and paperclips. Service and construction contracts account for more than half of the expenditures. The government now spends more for services, such as operating government-owned facilities and obtaining assistance in improving business practices, than any other acquisition. Construction contracts are about \$16 billion annually and cover government facilities, including embassies, office buildings, and prisons.

GAO's Office of General Counsel provides an independent forum for the resolution of protests concerning awards of federal contracts. By adding transparency to the acquisition process, bid protests ensure contracting agencies' accountability and protect the integrity of the procurement process.



### *Key Efforts*

Determine whether acquisition programs realize desired outcomes and identify systemic and institutional problems

Assess agencies' human capital, technological, and organizational capacity to plan, manage, and control acquisitions

Evaluate current public and private acquisition approaches, including implementation of recently enacted reforms, and identify best practices for federal agencies

Evaluate how agencies decide whether to perform services in-house, acquire them, or use public-private partnerships

Provide, in the context of bid protest decisions, consistent governmentwide interpretations of procurement statutes and regulations and determine whether contracting agencies, in the protested procurements, acted lawfully

### *Potential Outcomes*

Better, faster acquisitions at best value

Less costly acquisition systems

Fewer acquisition failures

More effective information technology acquisitions

Reduced vulnerability to fraud, waste, and abuse

Appropriate adoption of commercial business practices and other best practices

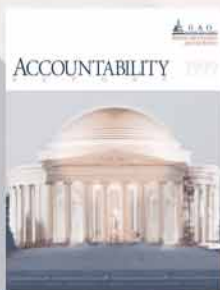
Reduced barriers to accomplishing objectives for acquisition systems

Contracting agencies correct violations of procurement statutes and regulations identified in GAO bid protest decisions

---

CONTACTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Bernie L. Ungar, Director, Government Business Operations Issues, (202) 512-8387, [ungarb.ggd@gao.gov](mailto:ungarb.ggd@gao.gov); David Cooper, Associate Director, Defense Acquisitions Issues, (202) 512-4841, [cooperd.nsiad@gao.gov](mailto:cooperd.nsiad@gao.gov); Anthony H. Gamboa, Senior Associate General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, (202) 512-5207, [gamboaa.ogc@goa.gov](mailto:gamboaa.ogc@goa.gov)

*The full set of GAO's strategic planning, performance, and accountability documents are listed below. All of these documents, as well as other GAO reports and documents, may be obtained electronically on our website, [www.gao.gov](http://www.gao.gov).*



**Accountability Report for fiscal year 1999**

**Strategic Plan, 2000-2005**

*Strategic Plan Executive Summary*

*Strategic Plan Framework*

**Strategic Objective Plans**

*Health Care Needs and Financing*

*Retirement Income Security*

*Social Safety Net*

*Education/Workforce Issues*

*Effective System of Justice*

*Community Investment*

*Natural Resources Use and Environmental Protection*

*Physical Infrastructure*

*Diffuse Security Threats*

*Military Capabilities and Readiness*

*Advancement of U.S. Interests*

*Global Market Forces*

*Fiscal Position of the Government*

*Government Financing and Accountability*

*Governmentwide Management Reforms*

*Economy, Efficiency, and Effectiveness*

*Improvements in Federal Agencies*

*Maximize the Value of GAO*

**Performance Plan Fiscal Year 2001**



GOVERNMENTWIDE  
MANAGEMENT REFORMS  
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE PLAN 2000-2002