

July 2009

HOMELAND SECURITY

Federal Protective Service Should Improve Human Capital Planning and Better Communicate with Tenants



GAO

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Highlights of [GAO-09-749](#), a report to congressional requesters

Why GAO Did This Study

The Federal Protective Service (FPS), as part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is responsible for providing security services to about 9,000 federal facilities. In recent years, FPS downsized its workforce from 1,400 to about 1,000 full-time employees. In 2008, GAO expressed concerns about the impact that downsizing had on FPS's mission, and in fiscal years 2008 and 2009 Congress mandated FPS maintain no fewer than 1,200 employees.

GAO was asked to determine the extent to which (1) FPS has hired and trained new staff to address its mandated staffing levels, (2) FPS has developed a strategic human capital plan to manage its current and future workforce needs, and (3) FPS's customers are satisfied with the services it provides. To address these objectives, we reviewed relevant laws and documents, interviewed officials from FPS and other federal agencies, and conducted a generalizable survey of FPS's customers.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that FPS take steps to develop a strategic human capital plan to manage its current and future workforce needs, and clarify its roles and responsibilities to its customers. FPS concurred with our recommendations.

View [GAO-09-749](#) or key components. For more information, contact Mark Goldstein, (202) 512-6670, goldsteinm@gao.gov.

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What GAO Found

FPS did not meet its fiscal year 2008 mandated deadline of increasing its staffing level to no fewer than 1,200 full-time employees by July 31, 2008. This same mandate relating to FPS's staffing was included in DHS's fiscal year 2009 appropriations act. Although FPS currently has over 1,200 employees on board, it did not meet this mandate until April 2009, because of challenges in shifting its priorities from downsizing its workforce to increasing it, inexperience working with DHS's hiring processes, and delays in the candidate screening process. Also, not all of FPS's new law enforcement security officers have completed all required training. According to FPS officials, it expects to have all new hires fully trained by September 2009.

FPS does not have a strategic human capital plan to guide its current and future workforce planning efforts, including effective processes for training, retention, and staff development. Instead, FPS has developed a short-term hiring plan that does not include key human capital principles, such as determining an agency's optimum staffing needs. The lack of a human capital plan has contributed to inconsistent approaches in how FPS regions and headquarters are managing human capital activities. For example, FPS officials in some of the regions GAO visited said they implement their own procedures for managing their workforce, including processes for performance feedback, training, and mentoring. Additionally, FPS does not collect data on its workforce's knowledge, skills, and abilities. These elements are necessary for successful workforce planning activities, such as identifying and filling skill gaps and succession planning. FPS is working on developing and implementing a data management system that will provide it with these data, but this system has experienced significant delays and will not be available for use until 2011 at the earliest.

On the basis of GAO's generalizable survey of FPS customers, customers had mixed views about some of the services they pay FPS to provide. Survey results showed that 58 percent were satisfied, 7 percent were dissatisfied, 18 percent were neutral, and 17 percent were not able to comment on FPS's overall services. The survey also showed that many of FPS's customers did not rely on FPS for services. For example, in emergency situations, about 82 percent of FPS's customers primarily rely on other agencies such as local law enforcement, while 18 percent rely on FPS. The survey also suggests that the roles and responsibilities of FPS and its customers are unclear, primarily because on average about one-third of FPS's customers, i.e., tenant agencies, could not comment on how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with FPS's level of communication on its services, partly because they had little to no interaction with FPS officers. Although FPS plans to implement education and outreach initiatives to improve customer service, it will face challenges because of its lack of complete and accurate contact data. Complete and accurate contact information for its customers is critical for information sharing and an essential component of any customer service initiative.

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Abbreviations

BSA	building security assessment
CPDF	Central Personnel Data File
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
FLETC	Federal Law Enforcement Training Center
FPS	Federal Protective Service
GSA	General Services Administration
ICE	Immigrations and Customs Enforcement
LESO	law enforcement security officer
NPPD	National Protection and Programs Directorate
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
RAMP	Risk Assessment and Management Program

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United States Government Accountability Office
Washington, DC 20548

July 30, 2009

Congressional Requesters

In 2003, the Federal Protective Service (FPS), under the Homeland Security Act of 2002, was transferred from the General Services Administration (GSA) to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). FPS is the primary federal agency that is responsible for providing physical security and law enforcement services to about 9,000 facilities under the control and custody of GSA, and is funded by the security fees it collects from the agencies it protects. FPS conducts its mission by providing (1) physical security services—conducting threat assessments of facilities and recommending risk-based countermeasures aimed at preventing incidents at facilities—and (2) law enforcement services—proactively patrolling facilities, responding to incidents, conducting criminal investigations, and exercising arrest authority. FPS is also responsible for management and oversight of the approximately 15,000 contract security guards posted at GSA facilities. After its transfer to DHS, FPS experienced budget shortfalls and its staff decreased by about 20 percent, from a high of about 1,400 full-time employees at the end of fiscal year 2004, to a low of about 1,100 at the end of fiscal year 2008.¹ To address these budget shortfalls, FPS's security fee has increased over 100 percent since its transfer to DHS, from 30 cents per square foot in fiscal year 2003, to 66 cents per square foot in fiscal year 2009. In our June 2008 report, we expressed concerns about a number of changes FPS had made since transferring to DHS.² For example, we raised questions about the additional demands FPS's downsizing efforts would place on its workforce. We also identified several workforce-related challenges that FPS has faced since its transfer to DHS, including low morale among staff, increased attrition, and the loss of institutional knowledge. We reported that some of FPS's customers were concerned about the quality and cost of security provided by FPS since it transferred to DHS. In an effort to address these challenges, Congress mandated in the Fiscal Year 2008

¹FPS funds its operations through the collection of security fees charged to tenant agencies, FPS's customers, for security services. However, we reported in June 2008 that during fiscal years 2003 through 2006 these fees were not sufficient to cover FPS's operating costs.

²GAO, *Homeland Security: The Federal Protective Service Faces Several Challenges That Hamper Its Ability to Protect Federal Facilities*, [GAO-08-683](#) (Washington, D.C.: June 11, 2008).

Consolidated Appropriations Act that by July 31, 2008, FPS maintain no fewer than 1,200 full-time employees, including 900 in law enforcement positions.³ This same mandate relating to FPS staffing level was included in DHS's 2009 fiscal year appropriations act.⁴ However, concerns remain about FPS's ability to manage its current and future workforce needs and the impact changes to its workforce may have on the agency's ability to provide physical security and law enforcement services to GSA and its other customers in the 9,000 facilities it protects.

In response to your request and in light of recent concerns about the quality of service provided by FPS, we address three objectives:

1. To what extent has FPS hired and trained new staff to address its mandated staffing levels?
2. To what extent has FPS developed a strategic human capital plan to manage its current and future workforce needs?
3. To what extent are FPS's customers satisfied with the services it provides?

To address these objectives, we reviewed relevant laws and documents and interviewed officials from FPS, GSA, and DHS. Specifically, we interviewed FPS headquarters officials to understand the actions FPS took to meet the mandate, challenges in meeting the mandate, efforts to assess its overall workforce needs, and plans for future human capital needs. We reviewed and analyzed available FPS workforce and human capital plans and policies and compared FPS's efforts with Key Principles of Effective Strategic Workforce Planning identified by GAO.⁵ We conducted site visits to 5 of FPS's 11 regions; while the results of these visits are not generalizable, these 5 regions account for about 50 percent of the 9,000 facilities that FPS has responsibility for providing service. During our site visits, we met with FPS regional law enforcement and human capital managers as well as new and experienced law enforcement security officers to gain an understanding of how FPS's recent workforce changes

³Pub. L. No. 110-161, Division E, 121 Stat. 1844, 2051-2052 (2007).

⁴Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2009, Pub. L. No. 110-329, Division D, 122 Stat. 3574, 3659-3660 (2008).

⁵GAO, *Human Capital: Key Principles for Effective Strategic Workforce Planning*, [GAO-04-39](#) (Washington, D.C.: Dec. 11, 2003).

have affected FPS's operations, actions each region has taken to address these changes, and how regions determine workforce needs. We also discussed the regions' role in the agency's human capital planning.

For information about the level of service FPS provides its customers, we conducted a survey of building security committee chairpersons and designated officials in buildings under the control and custody of GSA. We focused on building security committee chairpersons and designated officials, because these officials are responsible for working with FPS at the building level to identify security issues and implement minimum security standards for their buildings.⁶ The survey sought information pertaining to FPS's law enforcement and physical security services and customers' perspectives on the quality of FPS's services. We surveyed a sample of 1,398 federal officials across all 11 FPS regions and in buildings with assigned security levels I through IV.⁷ We obtained an overall response rate of about 55 percent and used these sample data to produce estimates about the entire population of FPS customers. See appendix I for a more detailed discussion of our overall scope and methodology and appendix II for a copy of the survey and complete tabulations of the results.

We conducted this performance audit from July 2008 through July 2009 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

⁶For purposes of this report, we refer to these building security committee chairpersons and designated officials as FPS customers.

⁷The level of security FPS provides at each of the approximately 9,000 federal building it protects varies depending on the building's security level, which is determined by the Department of Justice's 1995 Vulnerability Assessment Guidelines. The guidelines designated security levels I through V for federal buildings and established 52 minimum standards, with level I buildings having 18 minimum standards and level V facilities having 39 standards. We excluded level V facilities from our analysis, because FPS does not have responsibility for protecting any level V buildings.

Results in Brief

FPS did not meet the fiscal year 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act requirement that it increase its staff to no fewer than 1,200 full-time employees by July 31, 2008. DHS's appropriations act for fiscal year 2009 contains the same requirement relating to FPS's staffing. Additionally, not all of FPS's new law enforcement security officers have completed all required training. Although FPS currently has 1,239 employees on board, including 929 law enforcement officers, it did not meet this mandate until April 2009, because of challenges in shifting its priorities from downsizing its workforce to increasing it to comply with the mandate, inexperience working with DHS's hiring service centers, and delays in the candidate screening process. FPS met its 2009 mandate by hiring 187 new law enforcement security officers (LESO) and converting 105 FPS police officers to LESOs for a total of 292 employees. As of May 2009, 46 percent of the 187 new hires have not completed the basic law enforcement training, and therefore are not permitted to conduct any law enforcement components of their jobs, including carrying firearms and exercising arrest and search authorities. Additionally, all 292 new law enforcement security officers are required to take physical security training. As of May 2009, 12 percent had not yet completed this training, which is required for them to conduct building security assessments (BSA). Conducting building security assessments is the core duty of the LESO position, and FPS uses these assessments to determine and recommend countermeasures to protect federal facilities. Despite this lack of training, in two of the five regions we visited, police officers who had been converted to LESOs told us they were conducting building security assessments with little or no oversight from senior staff. FPS officials told us the primary reason training has been delayed is that FPS had submitted and finalized its schedule with its training center over 1 year before it was mandated to increase its staff numbers, and adding additional classes was a challenge because of the center's limited space and instructors. According to FPS, depending on class availability, it expects to have all LESOs fully trained by September 2009.

FPS does not have a strategic human capital plan to guide its current and future workforce planning efforts. While FPS has started some human capital planning, its efforts have not culminated in a long-term strategic human capital plan. Instead, FPS has developed a short-term plan for hiring new law enforcement security officers that is not an adequate substitute for a human capital plan because it does not include key human capital principles, such as an approach for determining agency staffing needs or identifying gaps in critical skills needed to accomplish its mission. The lack of a current human capital plan has contributed to inconsistent approaches in how FPS regions and headquarters are

managing human capital activities for the agency. FPS officials in three of the five regions we visited said they implement their own procedures for managing their workforce, including processes for performance feedback, training, and mentoring. For example, one region we visited developed its own operating procedures for a field training program, and has also taken the initiative in several areas to develop specific guidance and provide employees with feedback on their performance in several areas. Additionally, FPS does not collect centralized and standardized data on the knowledge, skills, and abilities of its full-time employees. These data are necessary for workforce planning activities, such as identifying and filling skill gaps and succession planning. According to FPS officials, the agency is working on developing and implementing a data management system that will provide it with the necessary data to engage in long-term human capital planning, but this system has experienced significant delays and will not be available for use until fiscal year 2011 at the earliest.

According to our generalizable survey of FPS customers, customers had mixed views about some of the law enforcement and physical security services they pay FPS to provide. FPS's customers spent approximately \$187 million in fiscal year 2008 for basic security services, such as preparing building security assessments, responding to incidents, and providing advice and assistance to customers. Our survey asked FPS customers how satisfied they were with these services. Survey results showed that 58 percent were satisfied, 7 percent were dissatisfied, 18 percent were neutral, and 17 percent were not able to comment on FPS's overall services. However, our survey also showed that many of FPS's customers had different levels of reliance or could not comment on the services they pay FPS to provide. For example:

- About 82 percent of FPS's customers indicated they do not use FPS as their primary law enforcement agency in emergency situations and said they primarily rely on other agencies such as local law enforcement, the U.S. Marshals Service, or the Federal Bureau of Investigation, while 18 percent rely on FPS.
- About one-third of FPS's customers could not comment on how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with FPS's level of communication on various topics including building security assessments, threats to their facility, and security guidance, a response that suggests that the division of roles and responsibilities between FPS and its customers is unclear.

In addition, we found that GSA—the owner and lessee of many FPS protected facilities—has not been satisfied with the level of service FPS

has provided since FPS transferred to DHS. For example, according to GSA officials, FPS has not been responsive and timely in providing building security assessments for new leases. FPS has taken some steps to improve customer service through education and outreach initiatives; for example, it has conducted focus groups and distributed a newsletter to some of its customers. However, FPS will face additional challenges because of its lack of complete and accurate customer contact data. During the course of our review, we found that approximately 53 percent of the e-mail addresses and 27 percent of the telephone numbers for designated points of contacts was missing from FPS's contact database and the database required a substantial amount of revising. Complete and accurate contact information on its customers is critical for information sharing and an essential component of any customer service initiative.

Background

As the primary federal agency that is responsible for protecting and securing GSA facilities and federal employees and visitors across the country, FPS has the authority to enforce federal laws and regulations aimed at protecting federally owned and leased properties and the persons on such property. FPS conducts its mission by providing security services through two types of activities: (1) physical security activities—conducting threat assessments of facilities and recommending risk-based countermeasures aimed at preventing incidents at facilities—and (2) law enforcement activities—proactively patrolling facilities, responding to incidents, conducting criminal investigations, and exercising arrest authority. FPS is also responsible for management and oversight of the approximately 15,000 contract security guards posted at GSA facilities. To conduct its mission, FPS has 11 regional offices across the country and maintains a workforce of both law enforcement staff, and non-law enforcement staff. FPS's law enforcement staff is generally composed of three occupations—LESOs, who are also called inspectors; police officers; and special agents—each with different roles and responsibilities. As shown in table 1, LESOs are responsible for the majority of FPS's duties.

Table 1: General Overview of Roles and Responsibilities of FPS’s Law Enforcement Occupations

	Carry firearms	Arrest and search warrants	Criminal investigations	Building security assessments and countermeasure recommendations	Contract guard oversight and management
LESOs	x	x	x	x	x
Police officers	x	x			x
Special agents	x	x	x		

Source: GAO analysis of FPS data.

FPS funds its operations through the collection of security fees charged to FPS’s customers, that is, tenant agencies. However, during fiscal years 2003 through 2006, these fees were not sufficient to cover FPS’s operating costs. When FPS was located in GSA, it received additional support from the Federal Buildings Fund to cover the gap between collections and costs.⁸ Fiscal year 2004 was the last year that FPS had access to the Federal Buildings Fund, and despite increases in its security fee, FPS continued to experience a gap between its operational costs and fee collections. To mitigate its funding shortfalls, in 2007 FPS implemented many cost-saving measures, including restricting hiring and travel, limiting training and overtime, suspending employee performance awards, and reducing operating hours. FPS also took steps to reduce its staff levels through voluntary early retirement opportunities, and some staff were assigned on detail to other DHS offices. Also during this time, FPS did not replace positions that were lost to attrition. In June 2008, we reported that the funding challenges FPS faced and its cost-savings actions to address them resulted in adverse implications for its workforce, primarily low morale among staff and increased attrition.

To minimize the impact of its funding and operational challenges on its ability to conduct its mission, in early 2007 FPS adopted a new strategic approach to how it conducted its mission. Faced with the reduction of its

⁸Established in 1972 and administered by GSA, the Federal Buildings Fund is a revolving fund in the U.S. Treasury into which federal agency rent and certain other moneys are deposited. Moneys deposited into the fund are available, subject to congressional appropriation, for GSA’s real property management and related activities. See 40 U.S.C. § 592.

workforce to 950 full-time employees and the need to maintain its ability to protect federal facilities, FPS announced the adoption of a “LESO-based” workforce model. The model was intended to make more efficient use of its declining staffing levels by increasing focus on FPS’s physical security duties and consolidating law enforcement activities. FPS’s goal was to shift its law enforcement workforce composition from a mix of about 40 percent police officers, about 50 percent LESOs, and about 10 percent special agents—its composition when it was transferred to DHS in fiscal year 2003—to a workforce primarily composed of LESOs and some special agents, with the police officer position being gradually eliminated. To achieve this, FPS began eliminating its police officer position by offering existing police officers the option of applying for LESO positions, which incorporate physical security duties into their existing law enforcement responsibilities. Additionally, FPS eliminated police officers through attrition, and as police officers separated from FPS, their positions were not replaced.

In December 2007 the fiscal year 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act was enacted; it mandated that FPS’s security fees be adjusted to ensure that collections are “sufficient to ensure [that FPS] maintains, by July 31, 2008, not fewer than 1,200 full-time equivalent staff and 900 full-time equivalent [law-enforcement staff] who, while working, are directly engaged on a daily basis protecting and enforcing laws at Federal buildings.” To address this mandate, FPS began a large-scale hiring effort to bring on new LESOs by the legislated deadline. Although FPS was no longer working toward reducing the size of its workforce, it did not reverse its strategic direction of maintaining a LESO-based workforce. Appropriations are presumed to be annual appropriations and applicable to the fiscal year unless specified to the contrary. The requirement for no fewer than 1,200 full-time-equivalent staff, including 900 full-time law enforcement staff in DHS’s 2008 appropriations act was effective for 2008. DHS’s appropriations act for 2009 contains the same requirement relating to FPS’s staffing level and is effective for fiscal year 2009. The President’s budget for fiscal year 2010 requests that a staffing level of 1,225 be maintained in 2010; it also proposes relocating FPS from the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) component of DHS to the National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD) of DHS.

FPS Experienced Challenges with Hiring and Training New LESOs

Delays in FPS's Hiring Process Affect Its Ability to Bring Staff On Board in a Timely Manner

While FPS is currently operating at its mandated staffing level, its hiring process met with delays and challenges. FPS was required to have at least 1,200 full-time employees, including 900 law enforcement employees, on board by July 31, 2008. This same requirement for FPS was included in DHS's fiscal year 2009 appropriations act, and FPS met this staffing level in April 2009, with 1,239 employees on board, including 929 law enforcement staff, by hiring 187 new LESOs. According to human capital officials, FPS did not experience any problems recruiting for its LESO position, receiving over 6,000 applications. However, officials told us that FPS was not able to meet the July 31, 2008, mandate because of the challenges related to shifting its priorities from downsizing its workforce to increasing it to comply with the mandate, inexperience working with DHS's shared service center, and delays in its candidate screening process. Since transferring to DHS, FPS has been in a period of strategic transition—not only reducing its workforce size, but also changing its composition to a LESO-based workforce. Faced with funding challenges, FPS's human capital efforts were aimed at cutting costs and reducing the size of its workforce to a total staffing level of 950 full-time employees. FPS was on its way to achieving this goal, and had reduced its workforce to 1,061 employees in February 2008 when it changed course to respond to the mandate and increase its workforce to 1,200. According to FPS, these continual shifts affected the agency's ability to meet the staffing level mandated in the 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act.

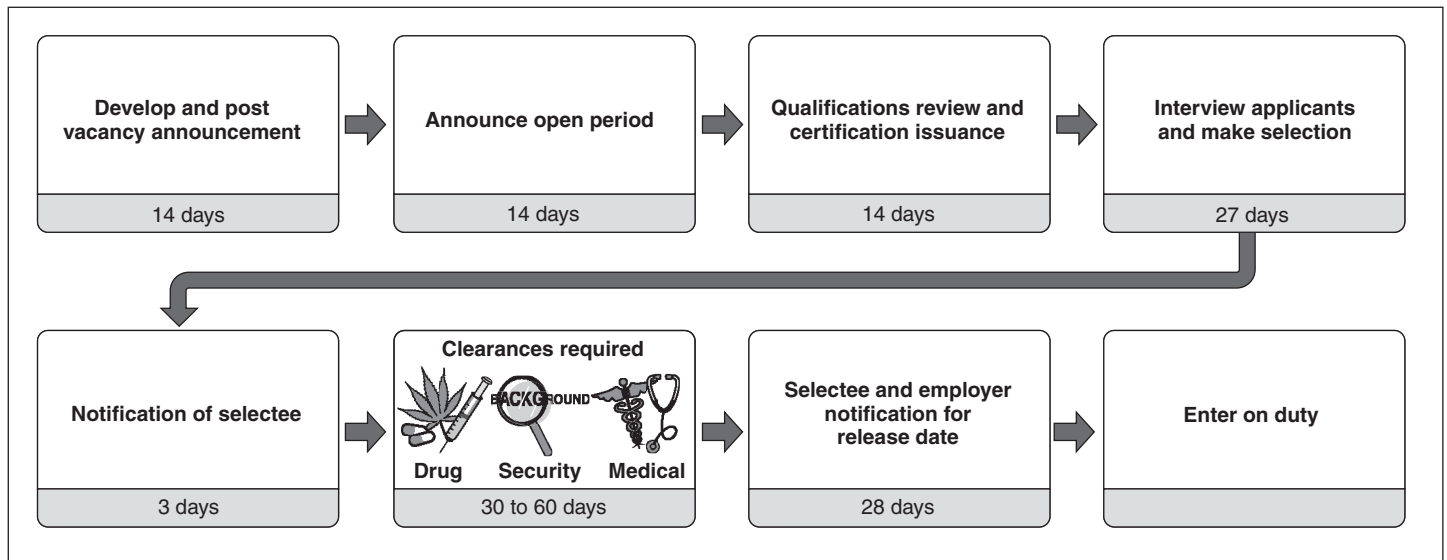
FPS's ability to meet the mandate was also affected by its inexperience in working with DHS's shared service center. After transferring to DHS, the majority of FPS's hiring requirements are contracted out to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Human Resources Management Center in Laguna Niguel, California (Laguna), which provides human resource services to all components of ICE through DHS's administrative shared services program. Laguna is responsible for providing a full range of human resource services to FPS, including processing actions related to

employee hiring, separation, benefits, and job classification.⁹ According to officials at Laguna, there have been some challenges working with FPS; primarily, officials told us that it is unclear what FPS's human capital needs are and where the agency is headed. Additionally, officials at Laguna said that FPS changes its human resource needs on a day-to-day basis and is constantly changing its priorities, causing Laguna to expend a lot of time and manpower in trying to meet the agency's needs. Additionally, officials said the high turnover in FPS management in its headquarters office has contributed to this lack of understanding.

Finally, FPS also experienced delays in the candidate screening process that hampered its ability to meet the mandate. According to FPS officials, its hiring process can take 5 to 6 months to complete; however, under the mandate it was given 7 months to bring new staff on board; thus it was challenged to meet this mandate. Consequently, it experienced significant delays in screening potential candidates, particularly delays in the medical screening component, which Laguna contracts out to a private company. The screening process—which consists of drug testing, a background security clearance, and a medical screening—should take approximately 30 to 60 days. FPS officials told us that delays in the medical portion of the screening caused the process to take 90 to 100 days. According to FPS officials, they are working with the contractors to address problems. For example, FPS officials are working to determine if it is possible for candidates recently separated from the military to receive a waiver for the medical screening if they have recently undergone a military medical examination. See figure 1 for a timeline of the FPS hiring process.

⁹Laguna drafts vacancy postings for available FPS positions, posts them online at www.usajobs.gov (the federal government hiring portal), certifies applicant eligibility for open positions, and refers eligible candidates to FPS for interviews. Once FPS receives a list of certified candidates from Laguna, it schedules and conducts interviews and selects candidates for offers of employment. Laguna then makes employment offers to candidates, and upon acceptance coordinates the new hire's date for reporting for duty.

Figure 1: Timeline of LESO Hiring Process



Source: GAO representation of CBP data.

We have identified human capital management, including the hiring process, as an area in which DHS has significant management challenges. In our 2007 progress report on DHS’s management challenges, we found that DHS had made limited progress in managing its human capital.¹⁰ With regard to a timely hiring process, we found that while DHS has developed a 45-day hiring model, and provided it to all of its component agencies, DHS does not assess the component agencies against this model. The prolonged time it takes to select and hire FPS LESOs further demonstrates the limited progress DHS’s components have made in meeting the goals of this model.

Some Newly Hired LESOs Are Not Fully Trained

FPS has experienced delays in its LESO training program. Almost 16 months after FPS began hiring new LESOs, almost half of them have not completed the required law enforcement training and therefore are not permitted to conduct any law enforcement components of their jobs, including carrying firearms or exercising arrest and search authorities. Of these 187 new LESOs, almost all—95 percent—have completed the

¹⁰GAO, *Department of Homeland Security: Progress Report on Implementation of Mission and Management Functions*, GAO-07-454 (Washington, D.C.: Aug. 17, 2007).

physical security training that is required to conduct a BSA. Conducting BSAs is the core function of the LESO position, and BSAs are used by FPS to determine and recommend countermeasures to protect federal facilities. In addition to hiring new LESOs, FPS converted 105 police officers to the LESO position, and while all police officers are already trained in law enforcement, 25 percent of the 105 police officers FPS promoted to LESO positions have not completed physical security training, and therefore are not eligible to conduct BSAs or recommend countermeasures, their key responsibilities. This training is essential to support FPS's new strategic direction, and in his June 2008 testimony, the Director of FPS indicated physical security responsibilities, such as completing BSAs, will account for 80 percent of a LESO's duties. According to FPS, depending on class availability, it expects to have all new hire and converted LESOs fully trained by September 2009. According to FPS officials, LESOs that have not completed the physical security training are assisting experienced LESOs in completing their BSAs. During our site visits to FPS's regions, we were told that not having all LESOs fully trained caused a strain on FPS's resources, with LESOs taking on increased workloads. We also spoke with new LESOs in two regions who told us that while they have not received physical security training, they were conducting BSAs with little or no oversight from senior staff.

FPS officials told us the reason training has been delayed is that it had submitted and finalized its training schedule with the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) over 1 year before it was mandated to increase its staff numbers, and adding additional classes after this time was a challenge because of limited space and instructors at FLETC. Officials said that FLETC is doing its best to accommodate the number of new hires and converts FPS is sending for training. According to FPS officials, FLETC is holding its Physical Security Training Program once every month back to back. Each class has a maximum of 24 students, and in the past, at most FLETC held three Physical Security Training Programs each year.

Moreover, FPS has taken limited steps to provide ongoing physical security training to existing LESOs, a fact that limits the functionality of experienced LESOs. FPS is currently in the process of developing a biannual physical security training program to ensure that LESOs are current in their knowledge of physical security standards and technology. LESOs and regional officials we met with during our site visits told us they did not feel the current level of physical security training was adequate. According to FPS officials, the design and methodology for the new Physical Security Refresher Training Program have been completed, and a

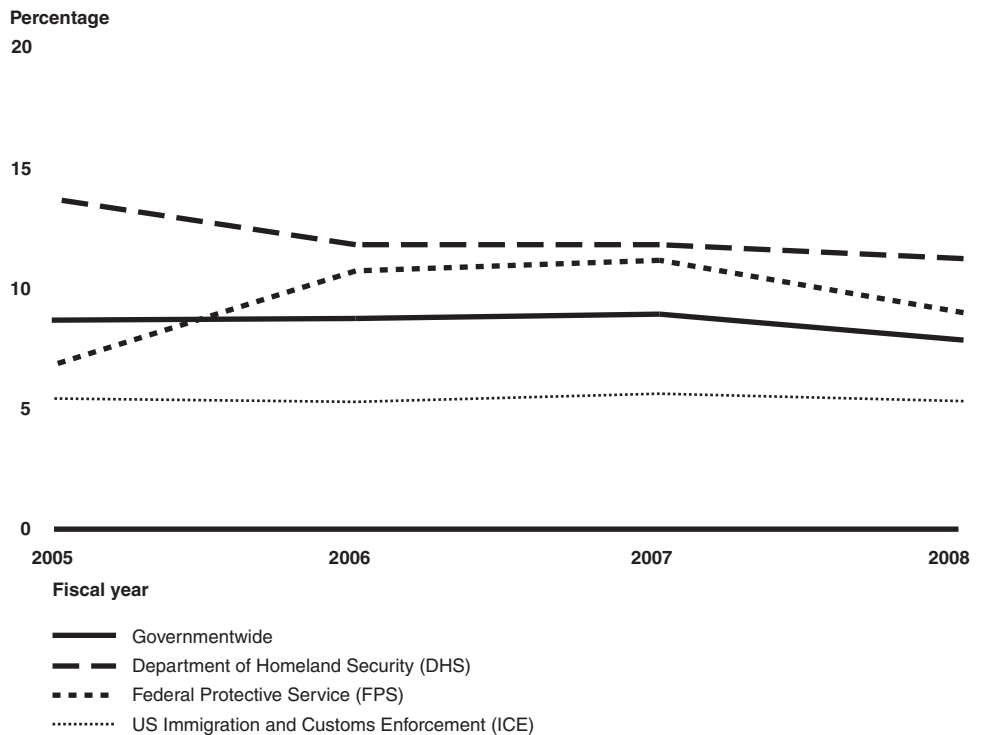
headquarters position dedicated to managing the agency's training program has been created, but the program has not been implemented and as of July 2009 there is no expected date for implementation.¹¹

FPS's Attrition Rate Emphasizes the Need for Ongoing Hiring and Training Programs

While FPS has reached the mandated staffing levels, FPS continues to have a high attrition rate, and about 30 percent of its employees are eligible to retire in the next 5 years. Since fiscal year 2005, it has experienced increases in its overall attrition rate. As we previously reported, FPS experienced funding challenges in the first few years of its transition to DHS, and took steps to mitigate these challenges by reducing the size of its workforce. For example, FPS offered its employees Voluntary Early Retirement Authority, as well as detailing employees to other DHS components. FPS's attrition rate peaked at over 11 percent in fiscal year 2007, and while it began declining once FPS halted its downsizing efforts, in fiscal year 2008 it was 9 percent, which was higher than the average rate of the federal government and ICE, but lower than DHS's. In addition, about 30 percent of FPS's workforce—360 employees—are eligible to retire by 2014, a fact that when combined with its attrition rates could place additional demands on FPS's hiring process. See figure 2 for a comparison of FPS's attrition rates with those of the federal government and DHS.

¹¹According to FPS officials, it established FPS Directive 08-010 in December 2008, standardizing all field training and evaluations, and has taken steps to provide ongoing in-house training to LESOs to compensate for delays at FLETC.

Figure 2: Comparison of FPS, ICE, DHS, and Federal Government Attrition Rates



Source: GAO analysis of OPM data.

Note: Attrition rate was calculated by the sum of all separations divided by the average of the number of employees at the beginning of the fiscal year plus the number at the end of the fiscal year. For the purposes of this report, DHS's attrition rates were calculated omitting ICE's attrition rate (including FPS), and ICE's attrition rates were calculated omitting FPS's attrition.

FPS Does Not Have A Strategic Human Capital Plan to Guide Its Current and Future Workforce Planning Efforts

FPS currently does not have a strategic human capital plan to guide its current and future workforce planning efforts. Our work has shown that a strategic human capital plan addresses two critical needs: It (1) aligns an organization's human capital program with its current and emerging mission and programmatic goals, and (2) develops long-term strategies for acquiring, developing, and retaining staff to achieve programmatic goals. In 2007, FPS took steps toward developing a Workforce Transition Plan to reflect its decision to move to a LESO-based workforce and reduce its workforce to about 950 employees. These steps included the following:

- identifying skill sets needed to transition employees, including conducting focus groups with senior managers to determine what skills are needed in regions and headquarters and establishing a core curriculum and a career

path for FPS occupations in categories of mission support, law enforcement, and supervisory positions;

- identifying the number of employees who meet current skill set requirements and those who require training and type of training needed; and
- establishing a project plan to transition employees, including determination of employees eligible for retirement; establishing strategies for use of human capital flexibilities such as bonuses and relocation allowances; and establishing recruitment and retention strategies.

However, in 2008, FPS discontinued this plan because the objective of the plan—to reduce FPS staff to 950 to meet the President’s Fiscal Year 2008 Budget—was no longer relevant because of the congressional mandate to increase its workforce to 1,200 employees. FPS subsequently identified steps it needed to take in response to the mandate. However, we found that these efforts do not include developing strategies for determining agency staffing needs, identifying gaps in workforce critical skills and competencies, developing strategies for use of human capital flexibilities, or strategies for retention and succession planning.

Additionally, the lack of a current human capital plan has contributed to inconsistent approaches in how FPS regions and headquarters are managing human capital activities for the agency. FPS officials in three of the five of the regions we visited said they implement their own strategies for managing their workforce, including processes for performance feedback, training, and mentoring. For example, one region we visited developed its own operating procedures for a field training program, and has received limited guidance from headquarters on how the program should be conducted. Officials in this region have also taken the initiative in several areas to develop specific guidance and provide employees with feedback on their performance in several areas. Another region we visited offers inspectors supplemental training in addition to required training. This region also requires new inspectors to complete a mentoring program in which they accompany an experienced inspector and are evaluated on all the aspects of their job. Similarly, a third region we visited has an informal mentoring program for the police officers that were promoted to inspectors. Each newly promoted inspector was paired with a senior inspector.

Additionally, we found FPS’s headquarters does not collect data on its workforce’s knowledge, skills, and abilities. Consequently, FPS cannot

determine what its optimal staffing levels should be or identify gaps in its workforce needs and determine how to modify its workforce planning strategies to fill these gaps. Effective workforce planning requires consistent agencywide data on the critical skills needed to achieve current and future programmatic goals and objectives. FPS's human capital activities are performed by a DHS shared service center managed by U.S. Customs and Border Protection Personnel Systems Division in Laguna Niguel, California. This shared service center provides FPS headquarters with biweekly reports on FPS's workforce statistics such as workforce demographics, and attrition and hiring data by occupation. These reports do not provide insight on FPS's workforce's knowledge, skills, and abilities—information that is key in identifying workforce gaps and engaging in ongoing staff development. In addition to the official data maintained by the shared service center, each FPS region maintains its own workforce data. Without the collection of centralized or standardized data on its workforce, it is unclear how FPS can engage in short- and long-term strategic workforce planning. FPS's Risk Assessment and Management Program (RAMP) system is intended to address some of these concerns, but this project has met with numerous delays, and according to FPS officials, data will not be available until fiscal year 2011.¹² Additionally, FPS's human capital challenges may be further exacerbated by the proposal in the President's 2010 budget to move FPS from ICE to NPPD. If the move is approved, it is unclear which agency will perform the human capital function for FPS, or how the move will affect FPS's operational and workforce needs.¹³

¹²RAMP will be the primary tool FPS staff will use to fulfill their mission. According to FPS, RAMP is intended to be a comprehensive, systematic, and dynamic means of capturing, accessing, storing, managing, and utilizing pertinent facility information. RAMP will replace several FPS systems, including its Security Tracking System and the Contract Guard Employment Requirements Tracking System, and may be integrated with other systems associated with the BSA program.

¹³According to FPS, since the announcement of the proposed shift of FPS from ICE to NPPD, a senior group from the three organizations has met to exchange initial information and establish communications. Additionally, FPS reported that working groups have been established including a FPS Transition Senior Working Group consisting of senior leaders from ICE, NPPD, and FPS with the purpose of producing a transition plan.

Strategic Human Capital Planning Is Necessary for Agency Leaders to Align Personnel with Agency Needs

GAO has developed a model of strategic human capital planning to help agency leaders effectively use their personnel and determine how well they integrate human capital considerations into daily decision making and planning for the program results they seek to achieve.¹⁴ Under the principles of effective workforce planning, an agency should determine the critical skills and competencies that will be needed to achieve current and future programmatic results. Then the agency should develop strategies tailored to address gaps in number, deployment, and alignment of human capital approaches for enabling and sustaining the contributions of all critical skills and competencies. GAO has identified five key principles that should be addressed in an agency's strategic human capital planning. See table 2 for key principles and examples of how an agency can implement these principles.

Table 2: Key Principles for Strategic Human Capital Planning and Examples of Implementation of Principles

Key principle	Examples of implementation of principle
Involve top management, employees, and other stakeholders in developing, communicating, and implementing the strategic workforce plan	Communicate new strategic direction through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishment—by top management—of the overall direction and goals for workforce planning, • involvement of employees and other stakeholders in developing and implementing future workforce strategies, and • establishment of a communication strategy to create shared expectations, promote transparency, and report progress.
Determine the critical skills and competencies that will be needed to achieve current and future programmatic results	Identify needed skills and competencies that are clearly linked to the agency's strategic direction by collecting and analyzing data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • from managers and employees on the factors influencing the agency's capability to acquire, develop, and retain critical skills and other competencies, and • on trends in attrition rates, projected retirement rates, fluctuations in workload, and geographic and demographic trends.

¹⁴GAO, *A Model of Strategic Human Capital Management*, [GAO-02-373SP](#) (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 15, 2002).

Key principle	Examples of implementation of principle
Develop strategies that are tailored to address gaps in number, deployment, and alignment of human capital approaches for enabling and sustaining the contributions of all critical skills and competencies	Develop strategies to eliminate gaps and improve critical skills and competencies that are required for current and future workforce, including strategies for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hiring, • training, • staff development, • succession planning, • performance management, and • use of flexibilities.
Build the capability needed to address administrative, educational, and other requirements important to support workforce strategies	Take advantage of existing and new human capital authorities by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • educating managers and employees on the availability and use of flexibilities, • streamlining and improving administrative processes, and • building transparency and accountability into the system.
Monitor and evaluate the agency's progress toward its human capital goals and the contribution that human capital results have made toward achieving programmatic goals	Design performance measures that gauge success in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progress toward reaching human capital goals, and • the contribution of human capital activities toward achieving programmatic goals.

Source: GAO.

FPS's Customers Have Mixed Views on Its Services

FPS Customers Generally Had Mixed Views about Its Law Enforcement and Physical Security Services, but Some Could Not Evaluate FPS Services

On the basis of our generalizable survey of building security committee chairs and designated officials in facilities protected by FPS, we found that FPS customers had mixed views about the law enforcement and physical security services they paid FPS to provide. In order for FPS to carry out its mission of protecting federal buildings and the people in those buildings, FPS is authorized to collect security fees from the agencies it protects for law enforcement and physical security services. In fiscal year 2008, FPS's customers paid approximately \$187 million for basic security services, such as preparing BSAs, responding to incidents, and providing advice and assistance to building security committees. Our survey, which ended in May 2009, asked FPS customers how satisfied they were with a variety of services they pay FPS to provide. Overall, survey results showed that 58 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with FPS's current level of service,

7 percent were dissatisfied, 18 percent were neutral, and 17 percent were not able to comment on FPS's current level of service.¹⁵ However, our survey also showed that some of FPS's customers could not evaluate specific services. For example, according to our survey, an estimated 28 percent of FPS's customers were satisfied with FPS's response time to emergencies at their facility, while 6 percent were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, 11 percent were neutral, and 55 percent indicated that they could not comment, to some extent because there may not have been such an incident at their facility. Additionally, our survey suggests that some of FPS's customers may not be satisfied with FPS's decision to eliminate its police officer position and move to a LESO-based workforce, since 22 percent of FPS customers thought there were too few patrols of their facility by FPS police officers or LESOs, while no customers indicated that there were too many, 21 percent said about right, and 57 percent were unable to comment. (See app. II for complete questionnaire tabulations.)

Our survey also suggests that the communication between FPS and its customers about roles and responsibilities is unclear, in part because on average one third of FPS's customers could not comment on how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with FPS's level of communication on its services, as shown in table 3. For example, an estimated 35 percent of FPS customers could not evaluate FPS's level of communication about services it can offer tenant agencies and 12 percent were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

¹⁵Unless otherwise noted all percentage estimates based on the FPS customer survey have 95 percent confidence intervals of within plus or minus 5 percentage points of the estimate itself.

Table 3: Survey Results on Customer Satisfaction with FPS’s Level of Communication on Various Topics

Question	Percentage of total respondents			
	Satisfied or very satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	Could not evaluate
How satisfied are you with FPS’s current level of communication with respect to the following?				
a. Services FPS can offer tenant agencies, such as guidance on security issues and crime prevention training	33	20	12	35
b. Information related to building security assessments and security countermeasures	38	21	11	30
c. Threats to your facility	36	19	10	35
d. Security-related laws, regulations, and guidance	31	23	9	37
e. Information related to the security guards at your facility	25	17	9	50
f. General security information	38	24	9	29

Source: GAO survey of FPS customers.

Note: Percentages may not total 100 because of rounding. Numbers listed have been adjusted to exclude missing values.

Additionally, an estimated 36 percent of FPS customers had no basis to report on the frequency with which FPS officials attended meetings about the security of their facility, while about 22 percent indicated that FPS never attends and 18 percent reported rare attendance. Respondents that provided comments on our survey indicated they could not evaluate FPS’s services mainly because they had little to no interaction with FPS. For example:

- A respondent commented that he/she had little or no contact with FPS, because the closest FPS office is approximately 150 miles away; additionally this official noted that he/she was not aware of any services provided by FPS.
- A respondent in a leased facility commented that FPS has very limited resources and the resources that are available are assigned to the primary federally owned building in the region.
- A respondent commented that during his/her tenure of 12 years, this official remembered only one visit from an FPS officer.

With the exception of meetings to discuss BSA reports, which should occur at least every 2 to 4 years, depending on the security level of the facility, according to FPS officials, FPS does not have policies regarding

the frequency with which FPS LESOs should visit or patrol a customer's facility.¹⁶ However, according to our survey, an estimated 12 percent of FPS customers indicated that FPS had not conducted a BSA within the past 5 years and about 24 percent did not know if one had been conducted, and of those customers who indicated a BSA had been conducted, not all of them were briefed on the results.¹⁷

Many FPS Customers Do Not Rely on FPS for Services, and Some Were Not Fully Aware of the Services It Provides

Our survey also found that many customers do not rely on FPS for law enforcement and physical security services. Specifically, regarding law enforcement services, the majority of FPS's customers, about 82 percent, do not rely on FPS as their primary provider in emergency situations that require an immediate response, though 18 percent rely on FPS. Most of the customers that did not indicate FPS as their primary provider for emergency situations reported that they rely on local law enforcement agencies, but some also used other federal agencies, such as the U.S. Marshals Service, Custom and Border Protection, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. For nonemergency situations, such as enforcing laws and regulations, approximately 51 percent relied on local law enforcement or others for service, while 49 percent of FPS customers relied on FPS. Our survey also showed that about 48 percent of FPS's customers rely on FPS as their primary provider of physical security, which includes BSAs that FPS is required to provide customers and which has been FPS's primary focus since 2007, but the remaining 52 percent relied on other sources, including their agency's own internal security group, for physical security,

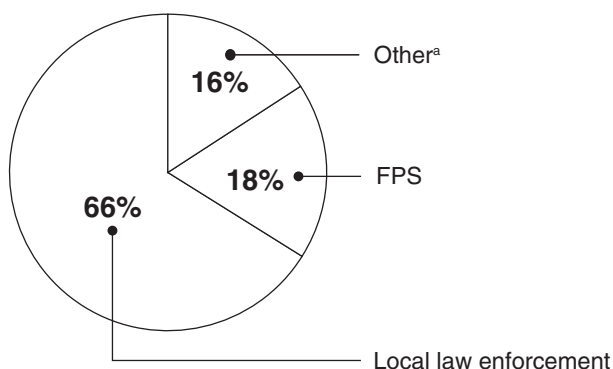
¹⁶Until 2008, FPS followed the Department of Justice guidance for completing BSAs, which requires BSAs to be completed every 2 to 4 years, depending on the security level of the building. For example, a BSA for a level IV building is completed every 2 years and every 4 years for a level I building. On March 10, 2008, the Interagency Security Committee, an organization composed of representatives from nonmilitary government agencies, published new standards for determining the security level of federal facilities, which superseded the Department of Justice's guidance and standards. Under the new standards, assessments will be conducted at least every 5 years for level I and II facilities and at least every 3 years for level III, IV, and V facilities. Additionally, although FPS established a policy in March 2009 regarding minimum standards for the frequency of visits by FPS LESOs to conduct guard post inspections, this policy does not include requirements for FPS LESOs to interact with FPS customers, namely the facilities' building security committee chairs, during these inspections.

¹⁷We did not take steps to determine if building security assessments were completed for all buildings in our sample, because as noted in June 2008, we reported on the weaknesses of FPS's data systems, which made it difficult for FPS to accurately track and monitor performance measures, such as completion of BSAs and responses to incidents.

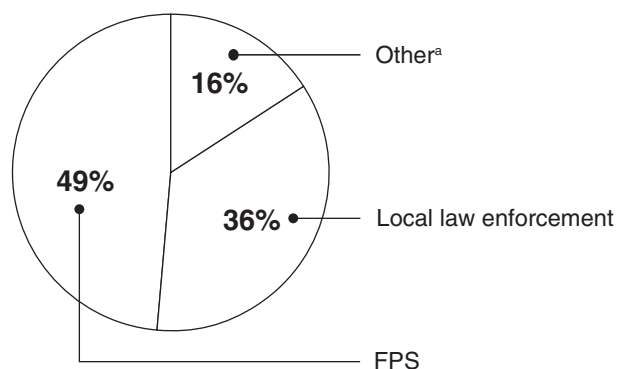
and a few noted contracting with private sector companies for services.¹⁸ See figure 3 for a summary of survey results about primary providers of law enforcement and physical security services.

Figure 3: Survey Results For Primary Providers of Law Enforcement and Physical Security Services at GSA-Controlled Facilities

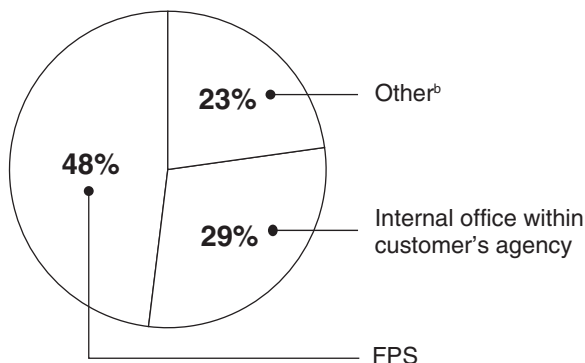
Emergency situations



Nonemergency situations



Physical security services



Source: GAO survey of FPS customers.

Note: Percentages shown are estimates and have margins of error of within plus or minus 5 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

¹⁸Our survey question regarding the primary provider of physical security provided an example of such services as an on-site evaluation and analysis of security of their facility, which FPS refers to as building security assessments; see appendix II question 10 for further details.

^aOthers for this category include state law enforcement agencies and federal agencies such as the U.S. Marshals Service, Customs and Border Protection, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

^bOthers for this category include the General Services Administration's Building Security and Policy Division, other federal agencies such as the U.S. Marshals Service and U.S. Postal Service Inspection Services, and private contractors.

Although FPS and GSA have an agreement that outlines the services FPS will provide customers in GSA facilities, some customers were not aware of the services FPS provides and the fees that they paid for such services. For instance, a customer in a federally owned building in a remote location did not know that FPS provided 24-hour alarm-monitoring services, because FPS had not visited the office in over 2 years; as a result the customer purchased an alarm system that was not compatible with FPS's monitoring system. Another customer we spoke to in leased facilities told us that he/she had less of a need for FPS, because he/she was in a leased facility and relied on either law enforcement officers or physical security specialists from his/her own agency. When we followed up with 10 customers who could not comment on FPS's services, we found that 6 of the 10 customers were unaware of the fees they paid FPS, and 4 of the 10 reported that FPS does not provide their facility services.¹⁹ For example, one customer we spoke to told us that she did not know what FPS's role was with respect to the security of her facility and did not realize that her agency paid FPS a security fee. GSA officials also told us that they have received complaints from customers that they do not know what services they were getting for the basic security fees they paid FPS. For instance, a customer at a large government-owned complex was not satisfied with FPS's security recommendation to add security guard posts at the facility for a fee of up to \$300,000 in addition to the approximately \$800,000 in basic security fees the customer was already paying FPS annually, because the customer reported never seeing FPS officers as part of the basic security fees they paid, according to a GSA official.²⁰

In addition to our survey findings about the extent customers relied on FPS for services, others have found that while FPS is the primary federal agency responsible for protecting GSA facilities, federal agencies were

¹⁹We did not take steps to determine the actual level of service FPS provided customers, because in June 2008 we reported on the weaknesses of FPS's data systems and oversight of FPS's performance was beyond the scope of our review.

²⁰In addition to the basic security fee FPS charges each tenant agency, other security services such as contract guard service and the maintenance of security systems (e.g., closed circuit cameras) can also be provided on a building or facility basis for an additional charge, known as building specific charges.

taking steps to meet their security needs using other sources. GSA officials told us that some federal agencies have not been satisfied with FPS's building security assessments and have started conducting their own assessments. A few agencies have also requested delegations of authority for their buildings from FPS, including the National Archives and Records Administration and the Office of Personnel Management, according to GSA. Specifically, although the U.S. Marshals Service has delegated authority for building security of federal courthouses, according to officials from the Marshals Service, it started a perimeter security pilot program in October 2008 for courthouses in six cities, because of concerns with the quality of service provided by FPS contract guards at federal courthouses. Additionally, a 2006 study by ICE found that federal agencies were actively seeking delegations of authority because of increased overhead costs and agencies wanted more control over the security within their buildings. However, even with delegations of authority for security from FPS, agencies are still expected to pay FPS's fee for basic security services. Moreover, the Office of Management and Budget's 2007 assessment of FPS found that the services provided by FPS were redundant and duplicative of other federal efforts, because many federal agencies—including the U.S. Marshals Court Security, Secret Service, and the Capitol Police—had their own security offices.²¹

GSA Has Not Been Satisfied with FPS's Performance

GSA has not been satisfied with the level of service FPS has provided and expressed some concerns about its performance since it transferred to DHS. As GSA owns and leases over 9,000 facilities FPS protects, GSA officials told us that they have a vested interest in the security of these facilities. According to GSA officials, FPS has not been able to provide the level of service GSA expects based on the existing memorandum of agreement between the two agencies. For example, GSA officials said FPS has not been responsive and timely in providing assessments for new leases, a fact that delayed negotiations and procurement of space for tenant agencies. According to FPS, it does not consistently receive notification of pre-lease assessments from GSA, and although FPS is working on developing an interface as part of RAMP to ensure that information is received and appropriately routed for action, this program has been delayed. GSA officials were also concerned about the lack of

²¹Office of Management and Budget, *Program Assessment Rating Tool: Federal Protective Service 2007 Assessment*. See www.whitehouse.gov/omb/expectmore (last accessed January 17, 2009).

consistency in the BSA process. Specifically, GSA officials told us that the quality of a BSA can vary depending on the LESO conducting the assessment.

While FPS and GSA have taken steps to improve information sharing, communication and coordination continue to be a challenge for them. As we recently reported, at the national level, FPS and GSA have established some formal channels for sharing information such as holding biweekly meetings, serving on working groups focused on security, and forming a joint Executive Advisory Council, which provides a vehicle for FPS, GSA, and customers to work together to identify common problems and devise solutions.²² However, GSA officials have been frustrated with FPS's level of communication. Specifically, these officials said that although the frequency of communication has increased, meetings with FPS are not productive because FPS does not contribute to planning the discussions, bringing up issues, or following up on discussion items as promised. Additionally, while FPS's Director views GSA as a partner, GSA officials said communication with FPS staff at levels below senior management has remained difficult and unchanged. Furthermore, FPS and GSA have not been able to reach an agreement about revisions to their current agreement, which according to GSA officials, does not include requirements regarding communication and measures that ensure the needs of customers are met.

FPS Does Not Have Complete and Accurate Customer Contact Data to Increase Customer Awareness about Services

Although FPS is responsible for the protection of over 9,000 facilities owned and leased by GSA, it does not have complete and accurate contact data for the customers in these facilities who are responsible for working with FPS to identify security issues and implement security standards for their facility, typically the building security committee chair or a designated official. During the course of our review, we found that approximately 53 percent of the e-mail addresses and 27 percent of the telephone numbers for designated points of contacts were missing from FPS's contact database. Additionally, while FPS was able to provide us a sufficient amount of contact information to conduct our survey, some of the customer data we received for our survey sample were either outdated or incorrect. For example, approximately 18 percent of the survey

²²GAO, *Homeland Security: Greater Attention to Key Practices Would Improve the Federal Protective Service's Approach to Facility Protection*, GAO-09-644, (Washington, D.C: July 29, 2009).

notification e-mails we sent to customers in our sample were returned as undeliverable. When we attempted to obtain correct e-mail addresses, we found that some of the contacts FPS provided had retired or were no longer with the agency. In some instances, we found that the e-mail address FPS provided was incorrect, because of human errors such as the misspelling of the customer's name. Additionally, our follow-up calls to over 600 sample customers to check on the status of the survey found that FPS did not have the correct telephone numbers for about one-third of these customers, and more than 100 customers provided us with updated contact information.

While FPS acknowledges that it needs to improve customer service and has developed some initiatives to increase customer education and outreach, it will continue to face challenges implementing these initiatives without complete and accurate customer contact information. Specifically, one of FPS's three guiding principles in its strategic plan is to foster coordination and information sharing with stakeholders and strive to anticipate stakeholder needs to ensure it is providing the highest level of service and has taken steps to achieve this goal. For instance, in 2007, FPS conducted four focus group sessions to solicit customer input, but this effort was limited to 4 of 11 FPS regions, with a total of 22 customers participating in the discussion. Additionally, FPS developed and distributed four stakeholder newsletters as a result of the focus group sessions. According to FPS, the newsletter was distributed to members of FPS and GSA's Executive Advisory Council as well as to 201 other director-level officials from various federal agencies. FPS's marketing and communications strategy identifies initiatives focused on improving customer service. For example, FPS plans to administer its own customer satisfaction survey with assistance from GSA. FPS's RAMP system is also expected to help improve customer service and allow LESOs to be more customer focused. In particular, RAMP will include a customer relations module that will allow FPS LESOs to better manage their relationship with customers by enabling them to input and access customer information such as building contacts and preferences for meeting times. However, it will be difficult for FPS to implement these or any customer service initiatives before taking steps to ensure it has complete and accurate contact information for all the facilities it protects. Furthermore, our prior work has shown that effective security requires people to work together to implement policies, processes, and procedures.²³ Therefore without

²³GAO, *National Preparedness: Technologies to Secure Federal Buildings*, GAO-02-687T, (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 25, 2002).

existing information to contact building security committees or officials responsible for security issues, FPS cannot effectively work with customers to ensure federal buildings are secure by communicating critical policies or emergency information such as threats to facilities.

Conclusion

In recent years FPS's human capital efforts have primarily focused on downsizing its workforce and reducing costs. In December 2007, FPS's funding challenges were mitigated and it began increasing its workforce to meet a mandated deadline. While FPS's short-term hiring efforts met with some success, because of its attrition rates and number of employees eligible to retire in 5 years, FPS needs to continue to focus on improving its hiring and training processes. We have identified human capital management as a high-risk issue throughout the federal government, and particularly within DHS. FPS's hiring challenges further serve as an example of the importance of improving these processes. Without a long-term strategy for managing its current and future workforce needs, including effective processes for hiring, training, and staff development, FPS will be challenged to align its personnel with its programmatic goals. The President's 2010 budget proposes to transfer FPS from ICE to DHS's National Protection and Programs Directorate and presents FPS with a prime opportunity to take the initial steps required to develop a long-term strategic approach to managing its workforce. However, until FPS begins collecting data on its workforce's knowledge, skills, and abilities, FPS will not be able to start and complete this process.

While FPS customers paid about \$187 million dollars in fiscal year 2008 for law enforcement and physical security services, and given the fact that our survey showed some customers are unaware of or do not use the services they are paying for, it is particularly important that FPS enhance its interaction with its customers. FPS acknowledges the need for improvement in its customer service, and has taken some initial steps toward improvement. Until benefits of these actions are realized by customers—something that cannot occur until FPS collects complete and accurate contact data for the facilities it provides service to, and establishes a process for reaching out to and educating customers on the services they should be receiving—customers will continue to raise questions about the quality of service they are receiving.

Recommendations for Executive Action

To facilitate effective strategic management of its workforce, we recommend that the Secretary of Homeland Security direct the Director of FPS to take the following actions:

- improve how FPS headquarters collects data on its workforce's knowledge, skills, and abilities to help it better manage and understand current and future workforce needs, and
- use these data in the development and implementation of a long-term strategic human capital plan that addresses key principles for effective strategic workforce planning, including establishing programs, policies, and practices that will enable the agency to recruit, develop, and retain a qualified workforce.

To improve service to all of its customers, FPS should

- collect and maintain an accurate and comprehensive list of all facility-designated points of contact, as well as a system for regularly updating this list, and
- develop and implement a program for education and outreach to all customers to ensure they are aware of the current roles, responsibilities, and services provided by FPS.

Agency Comments

We provided a draft of this report to DHS and GSA for review and comment. DHS concurred with the report's findings and recommendations, and provided us with technical comments. GSA had no comment. DHS's comments can be found in appendix III.

We are sending copies of this report to appropriate committees, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and other interested parties. In addition, the report will be available at no charge on GAO's Web site at <http://www.gao.gov>. If you or your staff have any questions about this report, please contact me at (202) 512-2834 or goldsteinm@gao.gov. Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this report. GAO staff who made major contributions to this report are listed in appendix IV.



Mark L. Goldstein
Director, Physical Infrastructure

List of Requesters

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
Chairman

The Honorable Susan M. Collins
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security
and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate

The Honorable Bennie Thompson
Chairman

The Honorable Peter King
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security
House of Representatives

The Honorable James L. Oberstar
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Committee on Transportation
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The Honorable Daniel K. Akaka
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Subcommittee on Oversight of Government
Management, the Federal Workforce
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Committee on Homeland Security
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United States Senate

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
Chairwoman

Subcommittee on Public Buildings,
Economic Development,
and Emergency Management
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
House of Representatives

Appendix I: Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

This report examines the workforce and human capital processes and planning efforts of the Federal Protective Service (FPS). Specifically, our objectives were to provide information (1) on the extent that FPS has hired and trained new staff to address its mandated staffing levels, (2) on the extent that FPS has developed a strategic human capital plan to manage its current and future workforce needs, and (3) on the satisfaction of FPS's customers with its services. Our work was initially designed to address congressional concerns about FPS's staffing composition and level since it transferred to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and its human capital policies and procedures for hiring and retaining a qualified workforce. Since this work was requested, DHS's 2008 and 2009 appropriations acts mandated FPS to ensure fee collections were sufficient to maintain no fewer than 1,200 full-time equivalents, including 900 law enforcement positions.¹ We also reported that some tenant agencies and stakeholders were concerned about the quality and cost of security provided by FPS since it transferred to DHS.² Our findings raised questions about equity in which FPS has been providing services to customers across the country in facilities with different security needs. In light of these events and our recent findings, we expanded the focus of our review to include an assessment of FPS's efforts to meet the congressional mandate, steps it has taken to address customer concerns, and FPS's customer satisfaction with its services.

To respond to the overall objectives of this report, we interviewed officials from FPS, DHS, and the General Services Administration (GSA). We also reviewed relevant laws, and FPS, DHS, and GAO documents related to workforce planning and human capital management. We conducted site visits at 5 of FPS's 11 regional offices; while the results of these visits are not generalizable, these 5 site visits accounted for about 50 percent of the 9,000 facilities FPS is responsible for providing service. During our site visits, we met with FPS regional law enforcement and human capital managers as well as new and experienced law enforcement security officers (LESO) to gain an understanding of how FPS's recent workforce changes have affected FPS's operations, actions each regional office has taken to address these effects, and how regional offices determine

¹Pub. L. No 110-161, Division E, 121 Stat 1844, 2051-2052 (2007), and Pub. L. No 110-329, Division D, 122 Stat 3574, 3652-3691 (2008).

²GAO, *Homeland Security: The Federal Protective Service Faces Several Challenges That Hamper Its Ability to Protect Federal Facilities*, [GAO-08-683](#) (Washington, D.C.: June 11, 2008).

workforce needs. We also discussed the regions' role in the agency's human capital planning.

To assess the extent to which FPS is fully operational and has met staffing levels required by Congress, we interviewed officials in FPS's headquarters and officials from DHS Customs and Border Protection Human Resources Management Center in Laguna Niguel, California (Laguna), who were responsible for managing, overseeing, and implementing personnel actions for FPS, to understand the actions FPS took, and challenges faced, to meet the mandate. We also reviewed and analyzed FPS workforce data, such as hiring, attrition, separation, and retirement eligibility, by using the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Central Personnel Data File (CPDF). We also identify trends in attrition data for FPS employees from fiscal years 2005 through 2008 and compared that information with that of the rest of the federal government and DHS during the same time period. To assess the reliability of OPM's CPDF, we reviewed GAO's prior data reliability work on CPDF.³ We also requested attrition and other workforce data from Laguna, which administers FPS's personnel actions, to determine the extent to which CPDF data matched the agency's data. When we compared the CPDF data with the data provided by Laguna on FPS personnel, we found that data provided by Laguna were sufficiently similar to the CPDF data and concluded that the CPDF data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of our review. However, we did not independently verify the workforce data we received from Laguna.

To calculate the attrition rates for each fiscal year, we divided the total number of separations from each agency or DHS component by the average of the number of employees in the CPDF at the beginning of the fiscal year plus the number at the end of the fiscal year. To place the overall attrition rates for FPS in context, we compared FPS's rates with those for federal employees in the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) a component agency within DHS, DHS as a whole, and the rest of government. For the purposes of this report, DHS's attrition rates were calculated omitting ICE's attrition rate (including that for FPS), and ICE's attrition rates were calculated omitting FPS's attrition.

³GAO, *OPM's Central Personnel Data File: Data Appear Sufficiently Reliable to Meet Most Customer Needs*, GAO/GGD-98-199 (Washington, D.C.: September 1998). Also in a document dated February 28, 2008, an OPM official confirmed that OPM continues to follow the CPDF data quality standards and procedures contained in our 1998 report.

To determine the extent to which FPS has developed a plan to manage its current and future workforce needs, we reviewed and analyzed FPS and ICE documents related to human capital planning, vacancies for critical positions, and workforce models. We interviewed FPS officials regarding efforts to (1) develop and implement a long-term strategic human capital plan, (2) identify and fill critical vacancies, (3) and analyze current and future workforce needs. We then compared FPS's efforts with Key Principles of Effective Strategic Workforce Planning identified by GAO.⁴

To assess FPS's customer satisfaction with its services, we reviewed the existing memorandum of agreement between DHS and GSA, which outlines the services FPS provides GSA and other federal customers in GSA-controlled buildings. We also met with GSA officials in its central and regional offices to determine their level of satisfaction with FPS's services and specific actions FPS and GSA have taken to ensure effective communication and coordination. Additionally, we reviewed FPS documents related to customer communication and outreach.

In addition, we conducted a Web-based survey of FPS customers in GSA-owned and leased buildings. For the purpose of our survey, we defined FPS customers as building security committee chairpersons and designated officials. We focused on building security committee chairpersons and designated officials, because these officials are responsible for working with FPS to identify security issues and implement minimum security standards for their buildings. The survey sought information pertaining to FPS's law enforcement and physical security services, customers' perspectives on the level of service FPS has provided, and observed changes in services over the past 5 years.

To identify the appropriate officials to respond to the survey, we constructed our population of FPS customers in GSA-owned and leased facilities from GSA's facilities database as of October 2008, an action that resulted in over 9,000 GSA-controlled facilities, and matched customer contact information from FPS's database using GSA-assigned building numbers. We excluded about 670 facilities with data errors or anomalies pertaining to the security level of the facility as well as security level V facilities, because FPS does not have responsibility for protecting any level V buildings. On the basis of our discussions with GSA officials about the

⁴GAO, *Human Capital: Key Principles for Effective Strategic Workforce Planning*, GAO-04-39 (Washington, D.C.: Dec. 11, 2003).

types of facilities in their inventory, we also excluded approximately 1,900 facilities that generally had either (1) few to no occupants; (2) limited use; or (3) no need for public access, such as warehouses, storage, and parking facilities, and this resulted in a study population of about 6,422 facilities. We selected a stratified random sample of 1,398 facilities from this study population where the strata were defined by region. Table 4 summarizes the sample and sample disposition for each of the strata.

Table 4: FPS Customer Survey Sample and Response Rates

FPS Region	Number	Response	Out of scope ^a	Response rate percentages
1. New England	99	56	0	57
2. Northeast & Caribbean	102	51	0	50
3. Mid-Atlantic	112	68	0	61
4. Southeast	183	106	6	59
5. Great Lakes	122	60	3	50
6. Heartland	97	57	0	59
7. Greater Southwest	188	91	6	50
8. Rocky Mountain	112	65	1	58
9. Pacific Rim	168	82	0	49
10. Northwest/Arctic	108	71	5	67
11. National Capital	107	53	5	52
Total	1,398	760	26	55

Source: GAO.

^aA total of 26 properties in our sample were determined to be out of scope for this survey, generally because the facility was closed or otherwise not part of our study population.

As summarized in table 4, we received responses from customers at 760 of the selected facilities (26 of which were out of scope, leaving 734 respondents belonging to our study population), for an overall weighted response rate of approximately 55 percent.

We attributed this response rate as mainly due to outdated or inaccurate FPS contact data. Our initial survey notification e-mail to customers in our sample of 1,398 customers resulted in approximately 18 percent undeliverable e-mails. Our attempts to obtain e-mail addresses for these customers showed that FPS's data were outdated and inaccurate, because some customers had retired or left the agency. In addition, when we attempted to contact customers to encourage their participation in our survey, we found that FPS did not have the correct telephone numbers for

over 200 of the 683 customers that did not respond to our survey. In addition to examining the response rates by sampling strata, we also examined the weighted response rates for other subgroups of the population and did not find wide variations in response rate by a building's security level, whether or not it was leased, or whether it was a single or multitenant building.

We used the information gathered in this survey to calculate estimates about the entire study population of FPS customers in GSA-owned and leased buildings. Because we followed a probability procedure based on random selections, our sample is only one of a large number of samples that we might have drawn. Since each sample could have provided different estimates, we express our confidence in the precision of our particular sample's results as a 95 percent confidence interval. This is the interval that would contain the actual population value for 95 percent of the samples we could have drawn. As a result, we are 95 percent confident that each of the confidence intervals in this report will include the true values in the study population. All percentage estimates from this survey have 95 percent confidence intervals of within plus or minus 5 percentage points of the estimated percentage, unless otherwise noted.

In addition to the reported sampling errors, the practical difficulties of conducting any survey may introduce other types of errors, commonly referred to as nonsampling errors. For example, differences in how a particular question is interpreted, the sources of information available to respondents, or the types of people who do not respond can introduce unwanted variability into the survey results. We included steps in both the data collection and data analysis stages for the purpose of minimizing such nonsampling errors. For example, we met with security officials from GSA who were knowledgeable about the roles and responsibilities of FPS and building security committees to gain an understanding of the types of services FPS should be providing customers and to discuss the feasibility of surveying customers in different types of buildings (i.e., leased versus government owned). We also pretested the questionnaire with five building security chairs to ensure the questions were consistently interpreted and understandable.

We also corresponded with over 100 customers who contacted us to provide updated contact information. During these conversations, we discussed the relationship between FPS and building security committees/designated officials, including FPS's roles and responsibilities. In addition, we also followed up with 10 more customers who had no basis to judge FPS's overall level of service to gain an understanding of their

responses to our survey questions and to gather information on aspects of FPS's awareness and outreach efforts. Specifically, we asked them about the types of information they receive from FPS about changes to its services and fee structure as well as actions FPS has taken to solicit their input. A copy of the survey questions and a complete tabulation of the results can be found in appendix II.

Appendix II: Survey of Federal Protective Service Customers

The questions we asked in our survey on FPS's services are shown below, and the percentages in parentheses indicate the proportion of respondents that chose that particular answer. Unless otherwise noted, all percentages shown are survey estimates that have 95 percent confidence intervals of within plus or minus 5 percentage points of the estimate itself.

Background Information

Please answer all questions based your experience with the security at [BUILDING ADDRESS], with building number [BUILDING NUMBER]. If you normally seek advice or support from Security/Law Enforcement/Physical Security Specialists to fulfill your duties as the Building Security Committee Chairperson or Designated Official, please feel free to seek their input to respond to this survey.

1. What agency do you work for?

[OPEN ENDED]

2. **Which personnel function best describes your primary position within your agency?** *(Select one.)*

1. Security personnel (12%)
2. Human resources personnel (0%)
3. Finance personnel (1%)
4. Management (70%)
5. Other (17%)

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

[OPEN ENDED]

3. **How long have you been the Building Security Committee Chairperson/Designated Official for _____?** *(Select one.)*

1. Less than a year (13%)
2. More than 1, but less than 2 years (12%)
3. More than 2, but less than 5 years (32%)
4. 5 or more years (44%)

4. **What is the Department of Justice assigned security level at _____? Please indicate the security level at _____ under the 1995 Department of Justice standards, even if the facility has been re-assigned a new security level under the 2008 Interagency Security Committee Standards for Facility Security Level Determinations For Federal Facilities (Select one.)**

- 1. Level I (6%)
- 2. Level II (22%)
- 3. Level III (10%)
- 4. Level IV (10%)
- 5. Level V (1%)
- 6. Do not know (50%)

5. **Is _____ a government owned or a leased facility?¹ (Select one.)**

- 1. Government owned facility (19%)
- 2. Leased facility (80%)
- 3. Do not know (1%)

6. **Is _____ a single or multi-tenant agency facility? (Select one.)**

- 1. Single tenant (34%)
- 2. Multi-tenant (65%)
- 3. Do not know (1%)

7. **Does your agency have delegated authority for any of the following security services? (Please check all that apply.)**

	Security Service	Checked	Not Checked
1.	Contract security guard service	23%	87%
2.	Law enforcement services	10%	90%
3.	Perimeter security	10%	90%
4.	Interior security	18%	82%
5.	Other	6%	94%
6.	None of the above. My agency has no security delegation authority.	39%	61%
7.	Do not know	18%	82%

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

¹As of June 2009 the General Services Administration's inventory consists of 82 percent leased and 18 percent owned facilities.

[OPEN ENDED]

Law Enforcement and Physical Security Providers

8. **What law enforcement agency do you consider the primary provider of law enforcement services that require an immediate response to an emergency, such as responding to violent crimes and life threatening incidents, at _____? (Select one.)**
1. Federal Protective Service (uniformed police officers and inspectors) (18%)
 2. State law enforcement agency (3%)
 3. Local law enforcement agency (66%)
 4. Other (13%)

If you answered “Other” above, please specify:

[OPEN ENDED]

9. **What law enforcement agency do you consider the primary provider of law enforcement services that do not require an immediate response such as enforcing laws and regulations at _____? (Select one.)**
1. Federal Protective Service (uniformed police officers and inspectors) (49%)
 2. State law enforcement agency (5%)
 3. Local law enforcement agency (36%)
 4. Other (11%)

If you answered “Other” above, please specify:

[OPEN ENDED]

10. **What agency/organization do you consider the primary provider of physical security such as an on-site evaluation and analysis of security at _____? (Select one.)**
1. Federal Protective Service (uniformed police officers and inspectors) (48%)
 2. General Services Administration, Building Security & Policy Division (12%)
 3. My agency’s own internal office (29%)
 4. Other (11%)

If you answered “Other” above, please specify:

[OPEN ENDED]

11. In addition to the agency you indicated for Q10, what other agencies provide physical security such as an on-site evaluation and analysis of security at ____? (Please check all that apply.)

	Providers	Checked	Not checked
1.	Federal Protective Service (uniformed police officers and inspectors)	32%	68%
2.	General Services Administration, Building Security and Policy Division	26%	74%
3.	My agency's own internal office	32%	68%
4.	Other	10%	90%

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

[OPEN ENDED]

12. FPS Provided Private Security Guard Service

The following questions are about any service provided by private security guards stationed at your facility that are obtained through a contractual agreement with FPS. If there are no contract security guards provided by FPS at ____, answer NO to question 12 and skip to the next section.

13. Does the Federal Protective Service (FPS) provide private security guards at ____? (Select one.)

1. Yes (36%)
2. No - Skip to question 14. (61%)
3. Do not know - Skip to question 14. (3%)

14. **How satisfied are you with the service provided by the security guard(s) at _____? (Select one.)**

1. Very satisfied (42%)²
2. Satisfied (45%)³
3. Neutral (9%)
4. Dissatisfied (3%)
5. Very dissatisfied (0%)
6. No basis to judge/Not applicable (1%)

FPS Customer Service

*The following questions are about the **services provided by Federal Protective Service (FPS) police officers and inspectors.***

1. Overall, how satisfied are you with the current level of service provided by the FPS? (Select one.)

1. Very satisfied (25%)
2. Satisfied (34%)
3. Neutral (18%)
4. Dissatisfied (5%)
5. Very dissatisfied (2%)
6. No basis to judge/Not applicable (17%)

15. **In your opinion, how has the quality of the following FPS basic security services changed over the past 5-years? (Select one for each row.)**

a. Law enforcement services that require an immediate response to emergencies such as responding to crimes and incidents

- Greatly improved (3%)
- Improved (10%)
- Stayed about the same (37%)
- Declined (4%)
- Greatly declined (2%)
- No basis to judge/Not applicable (45%)

²The 95 percent confidence interval for this estimate is between 36 and 49 percent.

³The 95 percent confidence interval for this estimate is between 39 and 51 percent.

b. Other law enforcement services such as patrolling the facility and enforcing federal laws and regulations

Greatly improved (2%)
Improved (9%)
Stayed about the same (36%)
Declined (5%)
Greatly declined (3%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (45%)

c. Building Security Assessments

Greatly improved (3%)
Improved (18%)
Stayed about the same (44%)
Declined (4%)
Greatly declined (2%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (29%)

d. Assistance with security plans, such as Occupant Emergency Plans (OEP) and Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP)

Greatly improved (2%)
Improved (12%)
Stayed about the same (33%)
Declined (5%)
Greatly declined (3%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (45%)

16. In your opinion, how has the quality of the following FPS building specific services changed over the past 5-years? (Select one for each row.)

a. Management of security guards - acquisition and monitoring of guards from a private company contracted by FPS for security services

Greatly improved (3%)
Improved (9%)
Stayed about the same (24%)
Declined (4%)
Greatly declined (1%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (58%)

b. Installing, operating, maintaining, and/or repairing security equipment, such as x-ray machines, closed-circuit televisions and cameras, and alarm systems

- Greatly improved (2%)
- Improved (7%)
- Stayed about the same (17%)
- Declined (4%)
- Greatly declined (4%)
- No basis to judge/Not applicable (66%)

c. Consultation on security fixtures, such as vehicular barriers, gates, locks, parking lot fencing, and guard booths

- Greatly improved (2%)
- Improved (8%)
- Stayed about the same (22%)
- Declined (5%)
- Greatly declined (2%)
- No basis to judge/Not applicable (62%)

17. How often does FPS attend meetings regarding the security at _____, including meetings about Building Security Assessments and countermeasures? (Select one.)

- 1. Always (11%)
- 2. Sometimes (13%)
- 3. Rarely (18%)
- 4. Never (22%)
- 5. No basis to judge/Not applicable (36%)

18. How satisfied are you with FPS police officers' or inspectors' current ability to perform the following activities? (Select one for each row.)

a. Respond to incidents at your facility

- Very satisfied (11%)
- Satisfied (29%)
- Neutral (12%)
- Dissatisfied (6%)
- Very dissatisfied (3%)
- No basis to judge/Not applicable (39%)

b. Patrol your facility

Very satisfied (6%)
Satisfied (18%)
Neutral (15%)
Dissatisfied (6%)
Very dissatisfied (5%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (50%)

c. Provide crime prevention and security trainings for tenant agencies

Very satisfied (7%)
Satisfied (17%)
Neutral (17%)
Dissatisfied (6%)
Very dissatisfied (4%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (49%)

19. Over the past 5-years, how has FPS police officers' or inspectors' ability to perform to the following activities changed? (Select one for each row.)

a. Respond to incidents at your facility

Greatly increased (3%)
Increased (8%)
Stayed about the same (36%)
Decreased (4%)
Greatly decreased (2%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (47%)

b. Patrol your facility

Greatly increased (2%)
Increased (6%)
Stayed about the same (27%)
Decreased (6%)
Greatly decreased (2%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (57%)

c. Provide crime prevention and security trainings for tenant agencies

Greatly increased (3%)
Increased (7%)
Stayed about the same (27%)
Decreased (5%)
Greatly decreased (2%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (56%)

20. How satisfied are you with FPS's current level of communication with respect to the following? (Select one for each row.)

a. Services FPS can offer tenant agencies, such as guidance on security issues and crime prevention training

Very satisfied (7%)
Satisfied (26%)
Neutral (20%)
Dissatisfied (9%)
Very dissatisfied (4%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (35%)

b. Information related Building Security Assessments and security countermeasures

Very satisfied (8%)
Satisfied (30%)
Neutral (21%)
Dissatisfied (8%)
Very dissatisfied (3%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (30%)

c. Threats to your facility

Very satisfied (8%)
Satisfied (28%)
Neutral (19%)
Dissatisfied (7%)
Very dissatisfied (3%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (35%)

d. Security related laws, regulations, and guidance

Very satisfied (6%)
Satisfied (25%)
Neutral (23%)
Dissatisfied (6%)
Very dissatisfied (3%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (37%)

e. Information related to the security guards at your facility

Very satisfied (6%)
Satisfied (19%)
Neutral (17%)
Dissatisfied (6%)
Very dissatisfied (3%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (50%)

f. General security information

Very satisfied (7%)
Satisfied (31%)
Neutral (24%)
Dissatisfied (6%)
Very dissatisfied (3%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (29%)

21. **Over the past 5-years, how has the level of communication with FPS changed with respect to the following?** *(Select one for each row.)*

a. Services FPS can offer tenant agencies, such as guidance on security issues and crime prevention training

Greatly increased (3%)
Increased (14%)
Stayed about the same (34%)
Decreased (8%)
Greatly decreased (2%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (39%)

b. Information related Building Security Assessments and security countermeasures

Greatly increased (3%)
Increased (16%)

Stayed about the same (36%)
Decreased (7%)
Greatly decreased (2%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (37%)

c. Threats to your facility

Greatly increased (3%)
Increased (10%)
Stayed about the same (38%)
Decreased (5%)
Greatly decreased (1%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (43%)

d. Security related laws, regulations, and guidance

Greatly increased (2%)
Increased (9%)
Stayed about the same (38%)
Decreased (6%)
Greatly decreased (1%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (44%)

e. Information related to the security guards at your facility

Greatly increased (2%)
Increased (8%)
Stayed about the same (30%)
Decreased (5%)
Greatly decreased (2%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (53%)

f. General security information

Greatly increased (3%)
Increased (13%)
Stayed about the same (39%)
Decreased (5%)
Greatly decreased (1%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (38%)

22. Based on your experience, what, if any, were the main actions FPS took over the last 5-years that contributed to the change in quality of service during this period?

[OPEN ENDED]

FPS Law Enforcement Service

The following questions are about the law enforcement services provided by FPS police officers and inspectors.

23. How satisfied are you with FPS's response time to emergencies that occur at ____? (Select one.)

1. Very satisfied (11%)
2. Satisfied (17%)
3. Neutral (11%)
4. Dissatisfied (5%)
5. Very dissatisfied (1%)
6. No basis to judge/Not applicable (55%)

24. How satisfied are you with FPS's response time to non-emergencies that occur at ____? (Select one.)

1. Very satisfied (12%)
2. Satisfied (27%)
3. Neutral (13%)
4. Dissatisfied (3%)
5. Very dissatisfied (1%)
6. No basis to judge/Not applicable (44%)

25. How would you characterize the level of patrolling at ____ by FPS police officers or inspectors? (Select one.)

1. Too many (0%)
2. About right (21%)
3. Too few (22%)
4. No basis to judge/Not applicable (57%)

FPS Building Security Assessments

26. **Has FPS conducted a Building Security Assessment (BSA) at _____ within the last 5 years?** *(Select one.)*

- 1. Yes (64%)
- 2. No - Skip to question 34. (12%)
- 3. Do not know - Skip to question 34. (24%)

27. **Were you the designated official/BSC Chairperson while the last BSA was conducted by FPS at _____?** *(Select one.)*

- 1. Yes (83%)
- 2. No (17%)

28. **What documentation was the designated official/BSC Chairperson provided as a result of the BSA conducted by FPS at _____?** *(Please check all that apply.)*

	Documentation	Checked	Not checked
1.	Executive summary of BSA	35%	65%
2.	Full copy of BSA	36%	64%
3.	Other documentation of BSA	11%	89%
4.	No basis to judge/Not applicable	13%	87%

29. **For the most recent BSA conducted at _____, was the designated official/BSC Chairperson interviewed by the FPS inspector about security concerns or security posture for your facility?** *(Select one.)*

- 1. Yes (83%)
- 2. No (9%)
- 3. No basis to judge/Not applicable (8%)

30. **For the most recent BSA conducted at _____, how satisfied were you with the level of interaction you had with FPS on the BSA?** *(Select one.)*

- 1. Very satisfied (37%)
- 2. Satisfied (38%)
- 3. Neutral (15%)
- 4. Dissatisfied (3%)
- 5. Very dissatisfied (2%)
- 6. No basis to judge/Not applicable (5%)

31. **Thinking back to the most recent BSA conducted by FPS at _____, were you/your BSC briefed by FPS on the BSA results?** *(Select one.)*

1. Yes (82%)
2. No - Skip to question 34. (18%)

32. **Thinking back to the most recent presentation of BSA results by FPS at _____, how satisfied were you with the FPS inspector's overall presentation of the BSA results and recommendations?** *(Select one.)*

1. Very satisfied (40%)
2. Satisfied (44%)⁴
3. Neutral (12%)
4. Dissatisfied (2%)
5. Very dissatisfied (1%)
6. No basis to judge/Not applicable (1%)

33. **Thinking back to the most recent presentation of BSA results by FPS at _____, how strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:** *(Select one for each row.)*

a. The FPS inspector was knowledgeable about physical security standards, regulations, and guidelines.

- Strongly agree (39%)
Agree (49%)⁵
Neither agree nor disagree (7%)
Disagree (1%)
Strongly disagree (0%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (4%)

⁴The 95 percent confidence interval for this estimate is between 38 and 49 percent.

⁵The 95 percent confidence interval for this estimate is between 44 and 55 percent.

b. The FPS inspector provided useful information on the BSA process, including information about threats to the facility and how these threats are tied to the recommended countermeasures.

Strongly agree (30%)
Agree (43%)⁶
Neither agree nor disagree (15%)
Disagree (4%)
Strongly disagree (1%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (7%)

c. The FPS inspector provided useful information on various security countermeasures, including alternatives to recommended countermeasures.

Strongly agree (30%)
Agree (39%)
Neither agree nor disagree (16%)
Disagree (5%)
Strongly disagree (1%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (8%)

d. The FPS inspector provided cost estimates for various security countermeasures.

Strongly agree (12%)
Agree (21%)
Neither agree nor disagree (17%)
Disagree (11%)
Strongly disagree (3%)
No basis to judge/Not applicable (35%)

⁶The 95 percent confidence interval for this estimate is between 38 and 49 percent.

e. The FPS inspector took into consideration the budget cycle(s) of tenant agency(s).

- Strongly agree (8%)
- Agree (18%)
- Neither agree nor disagree (25%)
- Disagree (6%)
- Strongly disagree (2%)
- No basis to judge/Not applicable (40%)

f. The FPS inspector sufficiently responded to questions.

- Strongly agree (32%)
- Agree (48%)⁷
- Neither agree nor disagree (10%)
- Disagree (1%)
- Strongly disagree (2%)
- No basis to judge/Not applicable (7%)

34. Thinking back to the most recent presentation of BSA results by FPS at _____, to what extent did FPS prioritize recommended security countermeasures?

[Note: Because of an error in the response categories for this question, it was removed from the analysis of the FPS Customer Survey]

35. If you have any comments that on the BSA process or would like to expand on your responses to questions Q26-34, please enter them in the space provided below

[OPEN ENDED]

Completed

36. If you have completed the survey, please check the “Completed” circle below. Clicking “Completed” lets us know that you are finished and that you want us to use your answers. Your answers will not be used unless you have selected the Completed” option to this question. (Select one.)

1. Completed
2. Not completed

⁷The 95 percent confidence interval for this estimate is between 43 and 54 percent.

**Appendix II: Survey of Federal Protective
Service Customers**

If you would like to view and print your completed survey, continue to the next screen. Otherwise click on the Exit button below to exit the survey and send your responses to GAO's server.

Thank you!

Appendix III: Comments from the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528



**Homeland
Security**

July 21, 2009

Mr. Mark L. Goldstein
Director
Physical Infrastructure Issues
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Goldstein:

Re: Draft Report GAO-09-749, Homeland Security: Federal Protective Service Should Improve Human Capital Planning and Better Communicate With Tenants (GAO Job Code 543215)

The Department of Homeland Security (Department) appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the U.S. Government Accountability Office's (GAO's) draft report referenced above. The Department, particularly U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement under which the Federal Protective Service (FPS) currently is located, agrees with the recommendations.

In order to facilitate effective strategic management of the FPS workforce, GAO recommends that that Secretary direct the Director of FPS to:

Recommendation 1: Improve how FPS Headquarters collects data on its workforce's knowledge, skills and abilities to help it better manage and understand current and future workforce needs.

Response: In early FY 2008, FPS undertook an ambitious effort, Phase 1 of the FPS Workforce Skills/Knowledge/Abilities Assessment Initiative, to standardize the position descriptions (PD) of its workforce. One finding from that effort was that FPS needed to improve its processes for capturing and conducting job task analyses and for improving its systems for storing and retrieving that information. Currently, 80 percent of the workforce is on standard PDs and it is anticipated that percentage will reach 90 percent by the end of FY 2009. The FPS Workforce Skills/Knowledge/Abilities Assessment Initiative will result in the design of a system that will capture, analyze, and validate the skills, knowledge, and abilities required for the accomplishment of tasks of various FPS positions. Phase 2 will involve the development or purchase of a skill mapping template to determine and document the skills, knowledge, and abilities required to accomplish the various tasks of the FPS workforce.

**Appendix III: Comments from the Department
of Homeland Security, Immigration and
Customs Enforcement**

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Recommendation 2: Use this data in the development and implementation of a long-term strategic human capital plan which addresses key principles for effective strategic workforce planning including establishing programs, policies, and practices that will enable the agency to recruit, develop, and retain [a] qualified workforce.

Response: FPS has undertaken a Workforce Skills/Knowledge/Abilities Assessment Initiative, a three phase plan that will ultimately result in the use of data in the recruitment, development, and retention of a qualified workforce. As previously noted, Phase 1 of the FPS Workforce Skills/Knowledge/Abilities Assessment Initiative involves the standardization of the position descriptions of the FPS workforce. Phase 2 will involve the development or purchase of a skill mapping template to determine and document the skills, knowledge, and abilities required to accomplish the various tasks of the FPS workforce. Phase 3 of the initiative will involve the creation and implementation of a standardized process for the identification of training, training delivery methods, and assessment tools to assist FPS in the recruitment, development, and retention of a qualified workforce.

To improve service to all FPS customers, GAO recommended that FPS:

Recommendation 3: Collect and maintain an accurate and comprehensive list of all facility designated points of contact, as well as a system for regularly updating this list.

Response: The FPS Risk Assessment and Management Program (RAMP) will serve as the central point of information on the facilities protected by FPS. A key component of RAMP will be its contact management features. The system will store detailed information for multiple points of contact for each facility. This will include Facility Security Committee chairs, tenant representatives, GSA Property Managers, FPS personnel associated with the facility, and local law enforcement and emergency services contacts. FPS personnel will be able to make updates to facility contacts remotely, which will facilitate the process of maintaining accurate contacts, because RAMP will be deployed on rugged laptops with mobile connectivity. Further, personnel using RAMP will utilize these points of contact to schedule meetings and interviews as part of the Facility Security Assessment Process, which will also serve as a means to update contact information as necessary. This phase of RAMP should be deployed in November 2010.

Recommendation 4: Develop and implement a program for education and outreach to all customers to ensure they are aware of the current roles, responsibilities, and services provided by FPS.

Response: ICE agrees that additional outreach is needed; however, ICE disagrees with the GAO suggestion that there is "widespread dissatisfaction with communication with FPS." In their responses to survey questions concerning communications (Question 20), 13 percent or less of the respondents indicated dissatisfaction with FPS's current level of communication related to services FPS can offer tenant agencies, information related to Building Security Assessments and security countermeasures, threats to particular facilities, and security related laws, regulations and guidance. Less than 11 percent of the respondents (Question 21) indicated a decline in levels of communication with FPS over the past five years in the same areas. Respondents were also asked if the FPS inspector sufficiently responded to their questions. In their responses to this question (Question 33f), only 3 percent of the respondents indicated dissatisfaction with information provided.

**Appendix III: Comments from the Department
of Homeland Security, Immigration and
Customs Enforcement**

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FPS has actively engaged, and continues to engage, in outreach and communication programs to improve the understanding of FPS roles and responsibilities. In 2008, FPS conducted several outreach focus groups to provide information about products and services offered by FPS and to enhance current and future service offerings. In response to some of the feedback received during these meetings, FPS recognized a need to develop a guide that described security services provided to its customers. The guide was developed based on the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the FPS and the General Services Administration (GSA). This MOA defines in detail FPS offerings and responsibilities with regard to services provided to GSA controlled facilities.

FPS will also review, revise, and re-issue guidance to ensure that its customers are aware of the current roles, responsibilities, and services provided by FPS. Moreover, FPS will work with GSA senior officials to ensure that they communicate to their field staff the need to reinforce that FPS is their security provider and questions concerning FPS roles and responsibilities in providing security should be directed to their designated FPS inspector.

Sincerely,

for Michael E. McPoland

Jerald E. Levine
Director
Departmental GAO/OIG Liaison Office

Appendix IV: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contact

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Acknowledgments

In addition to the contact named above, Tammy Conquest, Assistant Director; Tida Barakat; Brandon Haller; Delwen Jones; Steven Lozano; Susan Michal-Smith; Josh Ormond; Mark Ramage; Kelly Rubin; Lacy Vong; and Greg Wilmoth made key contributions to this report.

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