



KEY EFFORTS

**UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE**

Strategic Plan 2018–2023

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Note: GAO's 2018-2023 Strategic Plan consists of 3 parts: [Goals and Objectives](#) (GAO-18-1SP), [Key Efforts](#) (GAO-18-395SP), and [Trends Affecting Government and Society](#) (GAO-18-396SP).

FOREWORD

As part of the U.S. Government Accountability Office's (GAO) 2018–2023 Strategic Plan, the following Key Efforts denote substantial areas of focus and bodies of work that will contribute to the successful accomplishment of GAO's Performance Goals.

These Performance Goals, in turn, support GAO's Strategic Objectives across four major strategic goal areas.¹ GAO's Key Efforts are near-term priorities in support of our longer-term mission to provide the Congress with timely and fact-based analyses on the most important national issues.

These Key Efforts are provided as an integral part of our strategic plan with a view toward periodically updating them to reflect shifts in congressional priorities and GAO's expected areas of work.

GAO maintains an ongoing internal program of annual assessments to establish priority work areas in consultation with the Congress. This program will help inform these periodic updates of Key Efforts.

These Key Efforts are provided as an integral part of our strategic plan with a view toward periodically updating them to reflect shifts in congressional priorities and GAO's expected areas of work.

Further, rapidly changing external forces may also shift certain priorities of GAO from year to year.² The periodic updates to our Key Efforts over the 2018–2023 planning horizon will ensure GAO remains agile and responsive

to the areas of greatest national concern and usefulness to the Congress and the American people.

¹See GAO-18-1SP (<https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-18-1SP>).

²See GAO-18-396SP (<https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-18-396SP>) for GAO's trend papers that explore some of these forces.



ABBREVIATIONS

CIGIE	Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency
CMS	Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOD	Department of Defense
DOE	Department of Energy
DOJ	Department of Justice
GSA	General Services Administration
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development
IC	Intelligence Community
INTOSAI	International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions
IRS	Internal Revenue Service
IT	information technology
NIST	National Institute of Standards and Technology
NNSA	National Nuclear Security Administration
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
SBA	Small Business Administration
USPS	U.S. Postal Service
VA	Department of Veterans Affairs

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GOAL 1

Address Current and Emerging Challenges to the Well-Being and Financial Security of the American People

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.1

Financing and Programs to Serve the Health Needs of an Aging and Diverse Population

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.1.1

Assess trends and issues affecting the health care system.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Examine the drivers of health care costs.
- ◆ Assess the development and effects of integrated delivery systems on costs, quality, and access.
- ◆ Examine trends in consolidation and competition and the relationship of those trends to changes in health care costs, quality, and access.
- ◆ Analyze the availability, transparency, and usefulness of information for consumers about prices and quality of health care services.
- ◆ Evaluate public and private efforts to measure and improve health care quality while moderating spending.
- ◆ Examine the use of health information technology, including challenges to implementation and widespread adoption.
- ◆ Examine efforts to address the adequacy of the health care workforce and the provision of long-term care services.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.1.2

Assess trends, costs, and issues in public and private health insurance coverage and reforms.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Examine the effects of changes in health care laws and regulations on the provision and financing of health care at the federal and state

levels and effects on health insurance and health care delivery.

- ◆ Evaluate trends in health insurance coverage, including individual and group markets, long-term care insurance, the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program, and health insurance exchanges.
- ◆ Analyze costs and affordability of health plans available in the individual market, through health benefits offered by large or small employers, and in federally supported health care programs.
- ◆ Examine the use of provider networks and prescription drug formularies by public and private health plans, including their effects on encouraging cost-effective care and offering adequate availability of health care services.
- ◆ Examine the operations of the health insurance exchanges.
- ◆ Assess agencies' compliance with federal and state standards for health insurance and data security.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.1.3

Assess efforts to reduce improper payments and fraud, waste, and abuse in federal health care programs.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) efforts to improve program integrity of the Medicare program, including controls to prevent, detect, or reduce improper payments and fraud, waste, and abuse.
- ◆ Evaluate CMS's and states' efforts to improve program integrity of Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), including

controls to prevent, detect, or reduce improper payments and fraud, waste, and abuse.

- ◆ Examine the program integrity of other federal health care programs.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.1.4

Evaluate Medicare reform, financing, expenditures, operations, and program integrity.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate CMS's management of Medicare, including its implementation of legislative and regulatory changes and payment and delivery reforms.
- ◆ Assess the effects of Medicare eligibility coverage and payments on program expenditures and beneficiaries' out-of-pocket costs.
- ◆ Examine beneficiaries' access to and quality of health care services.
- ◆ Analyze Medicare's long-term financial condition and the potential effects of financing or structural reforms on program sustainability.
- ◆ Analyze CMS's efforts to communicate with beneficiaries about health care choices, costs, and quality of services, such as long term-care services.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.1.5

Evaluate Medicaid financing, expenditures, and oversight.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate CMS's oversight of state financing and service delivery arrangements and state and federal expenditures for Medicaid.
- ◆ Examine state Medicaid payments and CMS's oversight of payments, including supplemental payments, payments provided through demonstrations, and payments provided to Medicaid managed care.
- ◆ Assess the effects of Medicaid coverage and payments on program expenditures, quality of health care services, and beneficiaries' access to services.

- ◆ Assess the effects of Medicaid demonstrations on the federal liability for Medicaid as well as on beneficiaries' access to coverage and services.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.1.6

Assess state and federal efforts to provide health care for potentially vulnerable populations.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Analyze public and private payment and strategies to provide access to or to coordinate care for potentially vulnerable populations.
- ◆ Assess management and oversight of Indian Health Service (IHS) or federal programs other than Medicaid and Medicare that provide or fund health care to vulnerable populations.
- ◆ Review federal requirements and standards and their use in ensuring access to and quality of medical, oral health, and long-term services and supports for vulnerable populations, and providers' compliance with these requirements and standards.
- ◆ Evaluate programs for prevention, treatment, and recovery for behavioral health conditions, including mental health and substance abuse, such as opioid use.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.1.7

Assess actions and options for improving the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) and Department of Defense's (DOD) health care services.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate changes to the TRICARE Program, including its new TRICARE Select option, and the effects on the military health system and beneficiaries.
- ◆ Examine VA and DOD efforts to improve access to care, including care provided in the community, and the impact of these efforts on wait times and medical appointment utilization.
- ◆ Examine key systems, processes, and practices used to manage VA and DOD operations, including the availability of complete and accurate data and performance metrics.

- ◆ Examine VA and DOD efforts to improve the quality of care provided, including methods used to monitor provider performance and improve beneficiary experiences and satisfaction.
- ◆ Assess VA and DOD efforts to reduce waste, fraud, and abuse and improve operational efficiency and productivity.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.1.8

Evaluate the effectiveness of federal programs to promote and ensure public health, including the safety and efficacy of drugs and medical devices and prevent and respond to public health emergencies.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess agency activities to assure the availability of safe and effective medical devices, drugs (including specialty drugs), and other medical products and therapies.
- ◆ Evaluate the effectiveness of programs to attract and retain qualified scientists for public health agency programs.
- ◆ Evaluate the implementation of user fees that provide resources for U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) programs.
- ◆ Examine the review process of over-the-counter drug products.
- ◆ Assess the effectiveness of federal programs to ensure federal, state, and local governments' preparedness for emerging infectious diseases.
- ◆ Evaluate federal agencies' response to public health crises, such as in the aftermath of natural disasters.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.2

Lifelong Learning to Enhance U.S. Competitiveness

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.2.1

Assess policy and administrative challenges to improving school readiness and K-12 education to better prepare youths for college and the workforce.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate federal efforts to monitor state and local development and implementation of state plans under the Every Student Succeeds Act.
- ◆ Evaluate federal efforts to close the achievement gap in academic outcomes for disadvantaged students and address discrimination and disparities in K-12 education.
- ◆ Evaluate federal efforts to support high-quality school technology and facilities for all students.
- ◆ Examine the federal/state/local partnership in K-12 education regarding the cost, coordination, and performance of K-12 and early childhood programs.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.2.2

Identify opportunities to improve programs that provide postsecondary federal student aid.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate management and oversight of student aid programs.
- ◆ Evaluate programs and policies designed to promote postsecondary education access, affordability, and accountability for student outcomes.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.2.3

Identify ways to improve programs that facilitate job opportunities for workers, including veterans, and enhance their skills for occupations in demand in an evolving economy.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate federal and state efforts to collaborate and implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to provide integrated services to job seekers and employers.
- ◆ Evaluate federal efforts to oversee and manage employment and training programs in an evolving economy.
- ◆ Evaluate federal efforts to provide employment assistance for transitioning veterans.

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- ◆ Evaluate the impact of technology and automation on the workforce and the skills necessary to secure and keep a job.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.3
*Benefits and Protections for Workers,
Families, and Children*

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.3.1

Identify opportunities to improve programs that provide social services and economic and nutrition assistance to individuals, families, and children.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Determine whether social services and economic and nutrition programs appropriately direct resources and achieve their goals.
- ◆ Assess federal and state management and oversight of social services and economic and nutrition assistance programs to ensure program integrity.
- ◆ Analyze issues related to cost-effective service delivery, effects on special populations, and interactions among programs.
- ◆ Examine crosscutting issues for child welfare to ensure coordinated federal policies, effective programs, and efficient service delivery.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.3.2

Assess the effectiveness of strategies and safeguards to protect workers.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess coordinated federal and state efforts to ensure safety, health, and other protections and benefits for workers.
- ◆ Assess issues related to an inclusive workplace, including equal employment and equitable compensation.
- ◆ Assess federal and state management and oversight of unemployment protections to ensure program integrity.
- ◆ Examine federal and state policies that address labor force participation and working conditions in a changing economy.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.3.3

Identify ways to improve federal policies and support for people with disabilities.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess trends and emerging issues related to federal disability laws and programs, including implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the financial integrity of Social Security Disability Insurance.
- ◆ Monitor federal agencies' efforts to modernize eligibility criteria for cash benefit programs and improve coordination among programs that support employment for people with disabilities.
- ◆ Examine efforts to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and accessibility of services of federal disability programs while reducing fraud, waste, and abuse.
- ◆ Assess actions and options for improving VA and DOD services supporting service members and veterans with disabilities in the transition to civilian life.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.4
*Financial Security and Well-Being
of an Aging Population*

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.4.1

Assess the policy and administrative challenges to financing government benefits for older adults.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Analyze policies to ensure Social Security's financial stability to pay promised benefits and its ability to serve the growing baby boomer claimant population.
- ◆ Explore the experiences of international pension and labor market reforms to enhance retirement security.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.4.2

Assess the policies and administration of programs that could enable older adults to maintain their independence and ties to the community.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Examine federal efforts to develop a comprehensive system of home- and community-based services to enable older adults to age in place.
- ◆ Examine federal efforts to work with state and area agencies on aging to establish and sustain various models of aging-friendly communities.
- ◆ Compare the availability, accessibility, and use of home- and community-based services by older adults with facility-based long-term care.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.4.3

Assess the adequacy and effectiveness of private and public employer-sponsored retirement plans in providing security to older adults.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Examine efforts to improve the information and oversight of 401(k) plans and other account-based plans and address challenges related to investment services and risks and postretirement spending options.
- ◆ Analyze alternative designs and strategies that seek to expand retirement plan coverage.
- ◆ Explore international experiences with regulating account-based plans that could inform U.S. policy for increasing pension coverage and facilitating strategies that make accumulated retirement savings last for the remainder of a participant's life.
- ◆ Examine the nature and causes of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation's financial shortfall and efforts to develop a strategy for meeting its long-term funding obligations.
- ◆ Assess the challenges facing federal, state, and local governments in funding and managing the public retirement plans of their employees.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.4.4

Assess strategies and opportunities that help individuals improve their employment options, security, and preparedness for retirement.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Identify domestic and international strategies to extend older workers' labor force participation and to address barriers limiting their employment.
- ◆ Examine the role and effectiveness of tax-deferred and pretax retirement savings vehicles, such as individual retirement accounts and annuity contracts.
- ◆ Examine the effectiveness of policies to improve financial literacy regarding retirement planning and implementation.
- ◆ Explore strategies to protect older Americans from financial exploitation.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.5

A Responsive, Fair, and Effective System of Justice

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.5.1

Assess federal efforts to prevent, deter, investigate, and prosecute terrorism, violent crime, and cybercrime.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess federal efforts to address domestic terrorism, including efforts to assist local communities and enhance collaboration and information sharing among law enforcement and intelligence agencies.
- ◆ Assess the Department of Justice's (DOJ) efforts to assist communities with addressing violent crime, including crime that involves the use of firearms.
- ◆ Assess the effectiveness of federal efforts to reduce the supply and demand for illicit drugs, prevent drug use, and limit the diversion of legal drugs for illicit purposes.
- ◆ Assess federal efforts to combat technically complex crimes, such as white collar and cybercrime, including building the technical expertise to effectively investigate and prosecute these types of crimes.
- ◆ Assess DOJ's efforts to effectively manage its resources while safeguarding individual privacies and civil liberties.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.5.2

Assess federal efforts to protect vulnerable populations and ensure the rights of U.S. citizens.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess DOJ's efforts to implement and enforce laws intended to protect vulnerable populations, such as children, the elderly, whistleblowers, and crime victims, including victims of human trafficking and exploitation, as well as provide training, technical assistance, and other support to state and local jurisdictions that also implement and enforce these laws.
- ◆ Evaluate the judiciary's efforts to manage and resolve its growing and evolving workload.
- ◆ As appropriate, study practices and efforts to administer elections, including voter registration and voting systems and methods.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.5.3

Review the federal government's efforts to confine, rehabilitate, and monitor the release of convicted federal offenders.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess federal efforts to safely, effectively, and efficiently manage the federal prisoner and detainee population.
- ◆ Evaluate federal programs and activities to rehabilitate convicted offenders and prepare them for successful reentry into society.
- ◆ Review federal efforts to monitor convicted offenders after release, as well as efforts to prevent recidivism.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.5.4

Evaluate federal efforts to assist states and localities with ensuring a fair and effective criminal justice system through federal grants.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate the extent to which DOJ has sufficient controls in place to monitor grant recipients' use of funds.
- ◆ Assess DOJ's efforts to provide training and technical assistance to grant recipients.

- ◆ Review DOJ's efforts to evaluate the impact that its grant funding has had on improving a particular aspect of the criminal justice system and the extent to which DOJ requires recipients to conduct independent evaluations.
- ◆ Assess DOJ's efforts to share the information it collects on effective programs within and among its granting agencies, as well as with other DOJ components and with relevant federal, state, and local partners.
- ◆ Evaluate DOJ's ongoing efforts to ensure coordination among granting agencies and DOJ's efforts to limit unnecessary overlap and duplication of grant funding.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.6

Housing Finance and Viable Communities

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.6.1

Assess how the federal government can balance supporting homeownership and managing financial risk while reforming the federal role in housing finance.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate the effectiveness of federal efforts to support and sustain homeownership for traditionally underserved segments of the single-family housing market.
- ◆ Evaluate options for strengthening the financial soundness of federal programs that back single-family mortgages and mortgage-backed securities.
- ◆ Assess federal agency efforts to minimize duplication, overlap, and fragmentation in federal support of homeownership.
- ◆ Assess actions to determine the appropriate future role of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac in housing finance.
- ◆ Evaluate the implications of changes in mortgage regulations for borrowers, lenders, and other mortgage market participants.
- ◆ Assess Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) implementation of management functions that support its single-

family mortgage insurance programs, including performance planning and reporting, human capital management, and financial management.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.6.2

Examine how federal programs that support affordable rental housing meet their objectives, including managing the condition of assisted properties and improving the well-being of special populations.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess federal agencies' efforts to ensure that federally assisted rental housing is in good physical and financial condition and the rights of tenants are protected.
- ◆ Evaluate federal performance in overseeing housing agencies, property owners, and contractors responsible for administering federal housing assistance, including with regard to the Rental Assistance Demonstration program, which is converting public housing into private-sector properties, and the Moving to Work Demonstration program, which provides housing agencies with flexibilities in using program funds.
- ◆ Examine issues relating to affordable housing and the aging population as part of GAO's crosscutting initiative on implications of an ever-increasing older adult population to the federal government.
- ◆ Evaluate federal preparedness to address the needs of special populations, such as older adults, low-income citizens, and the homeless, when disasters strike.
- ◆ Continue to assess HUD's implementation of management functions that support its rental housing programs, including performance planning and reporting, human capital management, and financial management.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.6.3

Assess federal homeless assistance efforts and their effects on both homeless individuals and families.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Examine the state of homelessness in America, looking at the key challenges and successes in the effort to end homelessness.

- ◆ Assess the extent to which homelessness programs meet the needs of vulnerable populations, including the elderly, disaster victims, and veterans.
- ◆ Examine the current methods for determining the number of people experiencing homelessness and examine whether there are more appropriate methods.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.6.4

Monitor federal community and economic development assistance and its effect on communities.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Monitor federal agencies' initiatives to increase collaboration in administering programs in targeted communities.
- ◆ Assess federal agencies' efforts to collect accurate and complete program data that can be used to determine the effect of development initiatives on communities.
- ◆ Evaluate federal agencies' efforts to conduct program evaluations that address whether development programs effectively serve their intended purposes, meet their goals, and comply with requirements.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.6.5

Assess the effectiveness of federal initiatives to assist small businesses.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess Small Business Administration's (SBA) oversight of federal contracting programs and policies, including the 8(a) business development and HUBzone (Historically Underutilized Business zones) programs, to ensure that the programs serve eligible small businesses as intended.
- ◆ Assess SBA's actions to improve its internal control and fraud prevention measures, use of information technology, management of human capital, strategic planning and evaluations of its programs, management of enterprise risk, assessment of its organizational structure, and revisions or updates to the agency's procedural guidance.

- ◆ Evaluate the oversight and internal controls of SBA's small business loan guaranty programs to ensure the programs serve eligible businesses, especially those businesses least able to access credit markets.
- ◆ Assess the effectiveness of SBA's programs to achieve the agency's mission of meeting the needs of small businesses, including veteran-, service-disabled-, minority-, and women-owned businesses.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.7

A Stable Financial System and Sufficient Consumer Protection

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.7.1

Assess the ability of regulators to oversee the financial services industry and maintain a stable, competitive, and efficient financial system amid significant market, technological, and regulatory shifts.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Continue to evaluate whether changes in the overall regulatory structure and the role of financial regulatory agencies address the gaps in oversight, changes in market practices or structures, and financial institution ownership and organizational structures.
- ◆ Continue to evaluate whether regulators are taking appropriate steps to reduce the burden associated with regulatory compliance while preserving the benefits of regulations.
- ◆ Assess how regulators are monitoring and addressing potential sources of systemic risk through oversight of the financial services industry, such as financial firms that are increasingly global and interconnected or financial firms subject to less or no regulation, to promote financial stability nationally and globally.
- ◆ Monitor heightened and emerging risks and assess how well regulators respond to new

products, market participants, emerging threats, and new technologies—such as mobile payments and artificial intelligence—and their effects on safety, soundness, and competition in the financial services industry.

- ◆ Assess the effectiveness of regulatory programs and policies in deterring the use of financial institutions and products to commit financial crimes, particularly as new firms become active in traditional financial services like payments and lending.
- ◆ Assess how well regulators manage their operations, make effective use of technology, employ internal controls, protect sensitive data, and manage human capital.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.7.2

Assess federal oversight of consumer protection laws and regulations for financial services and products and for manufactured items.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess financial regulators' and institutions' efforts to promote consumer financial literacy, with an emphasis on managing finances, guarding against identity theft, preparing to meet retirement and other goals, using credit responsibly, and assessing and understanding risks.
- ◆ Assess whether current regulatory efforts, policies, and requirements are adequate to ensure that investors and consumers are sufficiently informed of the costs and risks of traditional and innovative financial products and services.
- ◆ Assess financial regulators' oversight and enforcement of consumer protection laws, such as the fair lending laws and securities investor disclosure requirements, their efforts to detect and punish violators and deter other illegal activity, and the extent to which they identify and address gaps in consumer protection and privacy interests.
- ◆ Assess the extent to which federal agencies are adequately ensuring that consumers are provided reasonable recourse when their personal information has been compromised, ensuring

that consumers are given the ability and tools to protect their identities, and overseeing entities such as credit reporting agencies that control personal information.

- ◆ Assess the potential changes in regulatory structures and organizations that monitor and enforce compliance with consumer protection laws.
- ◆ Assess consumer protections related to manufactured products and the Consumer Product Safety Commission's efforts to better ensure the safety of key imported and domestically produced manufactured items.
- ◆ Evaluate the costs and benefits of implementing new or revising existing consumer protection laws and regulations for financial services and products and manufactured items.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.8

Responsible Stewardship of Natural Resources and the Environment

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.8.1

Assess federal efforts to ensure affordable, reliable, and environmentally sound energy for current and future generations.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate management of energy development on federal and tribal lands.
- ◆ Evaluate federal efforts to promote and develop energy sources, including research and development and science.
- ◆ Assess energy market regulation and competition.
- ◆ Evaluate efforts to ensure the safety, reliability, physical security, resilience, and affordability of the energy supply and infrastructure.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.8.2

Assess federal strategies for sustainably managing our nation's land and water resources, including programs for Native communities.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate management of natural resources on federal lands, including forest and wildland fire management.
- ◆ Assess federal efforts to manage coastal, freshwater, and ocean resources.
- ◆ Assess federal efforts to oversee projects to store and manage water for a variety of purposes.
- ◆ Evaluate federal efforts to manage the sale and use of public natural resources.
- ◆ Evaluate federal programs for Native Americans and Alaska Natives.
- ◆ Assess federal management of threatened, endangered, and invasive species.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.8.3

Assess environmental protection strategies and programs.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate federal efforts to invest in and improve water quality and ensure safe drinking water.
- ◆ Evaluate federal efforts to assess and control toxic substances, including implementation of 2016 reform legislation.
- ◆ Evaluate federal efforts to improve air quality.
- ◆ Assess federal efforts to limit the federal government's fiscal exposure by better managing climate change risks.
- ◆ Evaluate strategies for cleaning up hazardous waste sites and responding to emergency contamination releases.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.8.4

Assess efforts to manage the federal government's environmental liabilities.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess efforts to address the cleanup of legacy and newly generated nuclear wastes from federal activities.

- ◆ Assess federal efforts to manage and dispose of commercial nuclear waste.
- ◆ Assess efforts to clean up legacy hazardous waste from federal facilities.
- ◆ Assess efforts to clean up federal environmental liabilities from abandoned commercial enterprises.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.8.5

Assess federal programs' ability to ensure a safe food supply and address agricultural risks and environmental impacts.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate federal efforts to ensure a safe food supply and guard against food-borne illness.
- ◆ Assess federal efforts to improve a fragmented food safety system and strengthen program management.
- ◆ Evaluate federal programs that help farmers manage environmental and agricultural risks.
- ◆ Evaluate federal programs that address the interaction of agriculture and the environment and mitigate potential impacts.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.9

A Viable, Safe, Secure, and Accessible National Physical Infrastructure

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.9.1

Assess federal investments, policies, and programs that support transportation infrastructure.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Review federal investments and technology in aviation and surface transportation to determine effectiveness, enhance performance, and increase accountability for results in such areas as NextGen to improve aviation operations and technology in surface transportation infrastructure to communicate with automated transportation systems.
- ◆ Assess the sustainability of alternative methods for funding and financing federal transportation

investments, including efforts to leverage federal dollars through financing mechanisms such as the federal Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act loan program and public-private partnerships.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.9.2

Assess federal regulation of transportation safety and efforts to fund improvements in safety.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess federal oversight of aviation and surface transportation safety, including highway, rail, pipeline, and other surface modes.
- ◆ Assess strategies, including the use of emerging technologies, to improve safety outcomes.
- ◆ Review federal safety grants to determine effectiveness and increase accountability for results.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.9.3

Evaluate federal policies to improve the mobility of people and goods and increase access to transportation systems.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess efforts to make transportation systems available to the U.S. population, including individuals with disabilities, older Americans, and those living in rural areas, including partnership efforts between transit agencies and private rideshare companies to enhance and improve service.
- ◆ Assess federal programs for improving the efficiency of freight and passenger movement and efforts to reduce congestion and improve reliability both within and across modes, including efforts to move toward a more performance-based highway and transit program and address bottlenecks in the nation's multimodal freight network.
- ◆ Assess efforts to mitigate environmental effects of transportation systems, enhance resiliency of transportation infrastructure to catastrophic events, and balance environmental protection with

improved mobility, including efforts to streamline project delivery and environmental reviews for new highway, transit, and rail projects.

- ◆ Evaluate federal efforts to oversee, raise awareness of, and identify resources for the use of emerging transportation technologies in existing systems, including intelligent transportation systems to improve the reliability of transit and vehicular traffic.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.9.4

Assess federal efforts to support and oversee telecommunications in the public interest.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess federal efforts to ensure the security and resiliency of the nation's communications networks through reviews of technology transitions, such as Internet Protocol and next generation networks, which are expected to support a diverse range of new applications, user requirements, and connected devices.
- ◆ Assess federal efforts to promote effective emergency communications through reviews of the First Responder Network Authority, the Emergency Alert System, and the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System.
- ◆ Assess federal efforts to spur broadband deployment in rural areas through reviews of federal programs, such as the Connect America Fund, to determine barriers that impede the efficient deployment of broadband infrastructure.
- ◆ Assess federal efforts to protect online consumer privacy and data given the proliferation of Internet-connected devices through reviews of regulations governing the collection, use, and securing of consumer data.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.9.5

Assess the U.S. Postal Service's efforts to ensure its viability and accomplish its mission.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess the U.S. Postal Service's (USPS) business model and plans for restructuring to address its

financial condition and outlook to help identify potential options for creating a strong postal ecosystem in the future and develop a body of work that lays out considerations and associated trade-offs.

- ◆ Evaluate USPS efforts to improve operational efficiency in the absence of comprehensive postal reform and how the efforts affect the overall national conditions of how people receive mail and packages.
- ◆ Monitor and evaluate the quality and availability of postal services to help the Congress understand whether USPS is making good decisions in the current operating environment.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 1.9.6

Assess federal efforts to manage and secure the government's real property portfolio.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess the federal government's efforts to strategically and cost-effectively acquire, manage, and dispose of real property assets, including implementation of the two real property reform laws passed in December 2016.
- ◆ Review federal efforts to protect the physical and cybersecurity of federal facilities, including efforts to improve security screening.





GOAL 2

Help the Congress Respond to Changing Security Threats and the Challenges of Global Interdependence

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.1

Protect and Secure the Homeland from Threats and Disasters

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.1.1

Assess federal homeland security management, resources, acquisitions, and stakeholder coordination.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess federal efforts to develop and implement homeland-security-related strategies and plans and facilitate federal stakeholder coordination.
- ◆ Assess the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) efforts to strengthen its core management functions—acquisition, information technology (IT), human capital, and financial management.
- ◆ Evaluate DHS's initiatives for improving employee engagement.
- ◆ Assess whether DHS is using a risk-based approach to allocate its resources and is being an effective steward of those resources.
- ◆ Evaluate DHS and its components' efforts to acquire goods—such as aircraft and security technologies, as well as services such as maintenance and IT support—and then manage and efficiently use their assets in accordance with best practices.
- ◆ Evaluate DHS's efforts to manage science and technology resources and assess homeland security technologies to prevent and respond to attacks and disasters.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.1.2

Assess efforts to strengthen border security and address immigration enforcement and services issues.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate DHS's programs and efforts to secure U.S. borders from terrorism, smuggling, and other illicit threats.
- ◆ Assess federal efforts to enforce immigration and customs laws within the interior of the United States.
- ◆ Evaluate DHS's processes and policies for reviewing, screening, and vetting applicants for visas and other immigration benefits.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.1.3

Assess efforts to strengthen the sharing of terrorism-related information.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess whether federal agencies' information-sharing roles and responsibilities have been clearly defined to help ensure effectiveness and minimize overlap or duplication.
- ◆ Determine federal, state, local, and tribal agencies' progress in sharing terrorism and law enforcement information, including technology innovations.
- ◆ Assess how federal, state, local, and tribal agencies balance sharing terrorism information with protecting privacy and civil liberties.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.1.4

Assess efforts to strengthen security in all transportation modes.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess federal government efforts to secure the aviation, surface, and maritime transportation sectors while facilitating the legitimate flow of people and commerce.
- ◆ Evaluate federal government efforts to allocate security resources efficiently based on risk and evidence of effectiveness.

- ◆ Evaluate the federal government’s impact on enhancing the security of integrated transportation networks involving federal, state, local, and private-sector stakeholders, through efforts such as information sharing and outreach.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.1.5

Assess U.S. national emergency preparedness and response capabilities and efforts to strengthen the nation’s resilience against future disasters.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess how the federal government’s assistance to state and local emergency management organizations is used to build and maintain the capabilities needed to respond to all disasters.
- ◆ Assess the extent and quality of integration of state assessments of emergency preparedness capabilities into DHS’s assessments of national emergency preparedness capabilities.
- ◆ Assess the efficiency, effectiveness, and cost of the federal government’s disaster response and recovery programs.
- ◆ Identify opportunities to more effectively invest and coordinate federal government resources to build national disaster resilience.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.1.6

Assess the cost, availability, and management of catastrophic insurance and disaster loan programs.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate solvency and sustainability of the National Flood Insurance Program and the Disaster Relief Fund in light of the large needs created by multiple natural disasters in 2017.
- ◆ Assess the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s management of program reforms contained in upcoming reauthorization legislation.
- ◆ Evaluate the costs and benefits of expanding or revising disaster-related insurance programs.
- ◆ Assess the availability and affordability of coverage and the efforts to increase private market provision of catastrophic insurance coverage.

- ◆ Assess SBA’s efforts to process financial assistance in a timely manner following multiple large-scale disasters.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.1.7

Assess efforts to strengthen the physical protection and cybersecurity of federal government assets and the nation’s critical infrastructure.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate federal agencies’ implementation and oversight of privacy and cybersecurity controls to protect government and personal information through agency-specific and crosscutting reviews, including assessments of the federal cybersecurity workforce, federal agencies’ approach to implementing information security, and federal cloud security initiatives.
- ◆ Assess physical and cyber threats to key sectors of our nation’s critical infrastructure, including oil and gas pipelines and the electricity grid.
- ◆ Assess federal efforts to enhance the resiliency of critical national assets, networks, and systems through reviews of the adoption of the National Institute of Standards and Technology’s (NIST) Cybersecurity Framework and the role of federal agencies in supporting the protection of key sectors within the nation’s critical infrastructure.
- ◆ Assess DHS’s efforts to manage and share information with public- and private-sector partners in protecting our nation’s critical infrastructures, including evaluating DHS’s efforts to remove personally identifiable information from shared cyber threat information.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.2

Effectively and Efficiently Utilize Resources for Military Capabilities and Readiness

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.2.1

Assess DOD’s ability to meet operational demands while rebuilding readiness and preparing for future missions.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess DOD processes for determining force structure and theater planning to meet evolving defense strategy.
- ◆ Assess DOD plans to rebuild readiness, including the need for clear goals, measures, timelines, and associated costs.
- ◆ Evaluate plans to modify or modernize force structure to meet future threats.
- ◆ Evaluate the preparation and application of U.S. forces to conduct and support military operations in geographic combatant command theaters.
- ◆ Evaluate training of individuals and units to conduct the full spectrum of military operations.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.2.2

Assess DOD's efforts to defend the homeland and respond to cyber and other unconventional threats.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate DOD's role and collaboration in homeland security and military homeland defense missions.
- ◆ Assess DOD's preparedness for unconventional and emerging threats, including improvised threats and chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats from state and nonstate actors.
- ◆ Assess DOD's plans and preparedness for cyber operations and improving cybersecurity.
- ◆ Assess DOD's protection of its forces, critical and cyber infrastructure, and assets worldwide.
- ◆ Evaluate DOD intelligence planning and efforts in support of military operations, including intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance and defense intelligence organizations and structures.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.2.3

Assess DOD's human capital management to ensure a high-quality total workforce of military personnel, federal civilians, and contractors.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess DOD's policies and programs to grow, acquire, and maintain a fully capable, efficient military workforce.

- ◆ Assess DOD's efforts to increase the efficiency of delivering health care and ensure the readiness of medical personnel.
- ◆ Assess DOD's policies and programs to acquire, maintain, train, compensate, budget for, and determine the costs for its civilian workforce.
- ◆ Assess DOD's efforts to help implement personnel security clearance reform, address cultural climate issues, and associated personnel protections.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.2.4

Assess the ability of weapon systems acquisition programs and science and technology development processes to achieve intended outcomes.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess the process by which DOD identifies gaps in capabilities and prioritizes investments to narrow or eliminate these gaps.
- ◆ Assess the performance of and budget requests for weapon programs.
- ◆ Analyze individual weapon programs—such as military space systems, the *Columbia* class submarine, missile defense programs, and the Long Range Strike bomber—to ensure that informed requirements, technologies, and design enable informed development or production decisions.
- ◆ Identify best practices to address the cost, schedule, and performance problems that consistently affect weapon programs.
- ◆ Assess DOD's software and cybersecurity efforts for major acquisition programs.
- ◆ Assess DOD's ability to manage science and technology development to deliver advanced capabilities to weapon programs.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.2.5

Assess DOD's progress in improving contract management.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Analyze DOD's efforts to use appropriate source selection procedures, encourage innovation, and

maximize competition in the procurement of goods and services.

- ◆ Assess the extent to which DOD effectively manages services acquisition and employs strategic sourcing approaches.
- ◆ Analyze DOD's development and use of tools, such as contract types, and data to negotiate better prices and improve contractor oversight.
- ◆ Assess the extent to which DOD has implemented an effective supplier vetting process and incorporated lessons learned into operational contract support policies and practices.
- ◆ Assess DOD's efforts to enhance and streamline processes associated with acquiring commercial items.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.2.6

Assess DOD's progress in improving the maintenance and sustainment of weapon systems throughout their life cycle and other logistics functions and activities.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate DOD's efforts to develop and implement strategies to address life-cycle sustainment challenges for major weapons systems.
- ◆ Evaluate efforts to identify and address critical skills gaps and potential workforce challenges in key logistics support functions.
- ◆ Assess DOD's requirements planning and established requirements for depot maintenance, including software sustainment.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.2.7

Assess DOD's management of the defense support infrastructure.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate DOD's progress in improving the accuracy of real property inventory information systems.
- ◆ Assess DOD's plans to improve its implementation of future Base Realignment and Closure rounds.
- ◆ Evaluate DOD's progress in improving the efficiency of installation operations.

- ◆ Evaluate DOD's progress in adapting its infrastructure for climate change to ensure continued installation viability.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.2.8

Assess efforts of DOE's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and DOD to maintain and modernize the nuclear security enterprise, nuclear force structure, and associated weapon systems.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess effectiveness of NNSA's efforts to modernize the infrastructure of the nuclear security enterprise.
- ◆ Evaluate ongoing NNSA and DOD efforts to manage the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile as it ages.
- ◆ Assess the efficiency and effectiveness of NNSA and DOD safety and security programs to protect nuclear weapons, materials, information, and workers.
- ◆ Evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of NNSA's human capital efforts, planning, and overall management systems.
- ◆ Assess DOE's and NNSA's progress in improving contract and project management in support of efficient and effective nuclear security enterprise modernization.
- ◆ Assess the costs, structure, organization, modernization, sustainment, and readiness of DOD's nuclear forces, including systems for delivery; support; and command, control, and communications.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.2.9

Assess DOD's business operations efforts to adapt and leverage organizational structures and management processes to maximize efficiencies and performance.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Analyze budget development for key military organizational structures, operations, and programs.
- ◆ Assess DOD's efforts to reform its structures and processes related to planning, programming, budgeting, and performance management.

- ◆ Evaluate DOD's efforts to drive and promote organizational change related to its business operations.
- ◆ Assess efficiencies in DOD business operations management, including areas of duplication, overlap, and fragmentation.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.3

Advance and Protect U.S. Foreign Policy and International Economic Interests

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.3.1

Analyze the implementation and results of U.S. and international efforts to counter threats to the United States and its foreign partners' national security.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate U.S. and multilateral security assistance and cooperation efforts to enhance and build foreign partner capacity and stabilize regions in conflict.
- ◆ Evaluate U.S. efforts to address arms proliferation, terrorism, and other transnational threats to stability and security emanating from abroad.
- ◆ Assess the effectiveness of U.S. efforts to protect overseas personnel, facilities, and interests, including counterintelligence efforts.
- ◆ Evaluate the implementation and impact of U.S. and multilateral sanctions on countries of concern.
- ◆ Assess the effectiveness of U.S. and international efforts to prevent proliferation of sensitive materials and technologies associated with nuclear, biological, and conventional weapons.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.3.2

Analyze the implementation and management of U.S. bilateral and multilateral foreign assistance, including development, humanitarian, and economic assistance and efforts to promote democracy and human rights.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Examine U.S. efforts to provide assistance in health, food aid, democracy, and other key areas.

- ◆ Analyze U.S. efforts to provide assistance in response to manmade or natural disasters.
- ◆ Assess agency performance, monitoring efforts, and financial and internal controls.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.3.3

Analyze how international trade programs serve U.S. interests and how the United States can influence the world economy.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Examine efforts to ensure and increase access to foreign markets and sources, including trade agreements, international procurement agreements, and export promotion programs.
- ◆ Assess the effectiveness of trade enforcement and import programs, including duty collections and trade remedies, against injurious or intellectual property right-infringing goods and other illicit trade.
- ◆ Analyze emerging trade policy issues and crosscutting trade management challenges, such as trade agreement effectiveness, enforcement, and reciprocity.
- ◆ Evaluate U.S. government export financing and investment guarantees.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.3.4

Assess the management and effectiveness of U.S. diplomatic efforts and membership in multilateral organizations.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate ongoing, multiyear efforts to achieve the optimal level of U.S. presence overseas and to construct embassy facilities where they are most needed.
- ◆ Analyze efforts to reduce duplication and overlap among foreign affairs agencies.
- ◆ Examine the effectiveness of U.S. participation in multilateral institutions.
- ◆ Assess the results of efforts to manage visa processing, screen refugees, and maintain passport security.

- ◆ Assess the Department of State's efforts to reorganize, realign, and rethink its business operations.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.3.5

Assess efforts to manage the effects of foreign investment and a global supplier base on U.S. national security interests.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate the effectiveness of U.S. government programs designed to protect critical technologies, such as export controls and intellectual property.
- ◆ Assess U.S. agencies' insight into and management of its global supplier base and efforts to attract nontraditional suppliers.
- ◆ Evaluate approaches to balance the effects of a global supplier base and foreign investments—for example, the sufficiency of efforts by the interagency Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States to preserve U.S. economic and national security interests.

- ◆ Assess the IC's policies and programs to grow, acquire, and maintain a fully capable, efficient workforce.
- ◆ Evaluate IC security clearance processes and impacts.
- ◆ Evaluate IC insider threat programs.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.4.2

Assess the IC's acquisition and contract management programs and processes.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Analyze individual IC acquisition programs to ensure that sufficient knowledge about costs, requirements, technologies, and design enable development decisions.
- ◆ Analyze IC efforts to use effective contracting strategies and improve contractor oversight.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.4.3

Evaluate the IC's planning and efforts that support military operations, diplomatic activities, and other government activities.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate intelligence planning and activities in support of military operations, including intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, as well as defense intelligence organizations and structures.
- ◆ Assess the IC's management of the defense intelligence enterprise, including service and defense agency intelligence organizations.
- ◆ Analyze the IC's intelligence collaboration with federal, state, local, tribal, international, and private-sector partners and customers.
- ◆ Evaluate intelligence planning and activities in support of diplomatic/foreign relations activities.
- ◆ Evaluate intelligence planning and activities to address terrorist and other transnational threats to stability and security emanating from abroad.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.4

Improve the Intelligence Community's (IC) Management and Integration to Enhance Intelligence Activities

PERFORMANCE GOAL 2.4.1

Analyze the Intelligence Community's (IC) business operations and efforts to integrate and leverage organizational structures and management processes to maximize efficiencies and performance.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Analyze funding and costs of IC organizational structures, operations, and programs.
- ◆ Assess the IC's efforts and identify alternative approaches to improve planning, programming, and budgeting.
- ◆ Evaluate the IC's efforts to provide leadership for the transformation of its business operations.
- ◆ Review IC facilities' management, maintenance, and modernization.





GOAL 3

Help Transform the Federal Government to Address National Challenges

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.1

Analyze the Government's Fiscal Condition and Opportunities to Strengthen Approaches to Address the Current and Projected Fiscal Gaps

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.1.1

Analyze factors affecting the federal short- and long-term budget outlook, debt management, and agencies' budget decisions and operations.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Examine key drivers of the long-term fiscal outlook and opportunities to reduce the gap between spending and revenue.
- ◆ Examine information, incentives, and exceptions related to congressional budget processes and controls and assess potential changes to enhance decision making, transparency, and fiscal control.
- ◆ Assess information used in agencies' budget processes, including projected user fee collections and the effects on resource allocation decisions, operations, and accountability.
- ◆ Examine Treasury debt management, including risk management and communication with market participants.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.1.2

Monitor and examine the federal government's response to state and local governments' short- and long-term fiscal condition.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Update GAO's model of the short- and long-term fiscal capacities of states and localities to pursue national objectives and assess options for identifying and monitoring early signs of fiscal distress.

- ◆ Monitor the fiscal capacity of states and municipalities and their potential implications for federal programs and funding.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.1.3

Assess the reliability of financial information, effectiveness of internal controls over financial reporting, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations related to the government's fiscal position and financing sources.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Annually audit the government's consolidated financial statements, related internal controls, and legal compliance and assess challenges that cause a disclaimer of opinion, including serious financial management problems at DOD.
- ◆ Audit financial statements, related internal controls, and legal compliance of various federal entities and components.
- ◆ Annually audit the Department of Treasury's revenue collections and federal debt activity and related balances.
- ◆ Assess whether efforts to improve federal financial management are effectively focused on providing useful financial data.
- ◆ Assess the financial statement audits of federal agencies conducted by other auditors.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.1.4

Help inform congressional deliberations on tax policy.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Analyze how changes in the tax system—including corporate taxes—affect equity, economic efficiency, simplicity, revenue, and administrability.

- ◆ Evaluate oversight of tax expenditures and the effectiveness and impact of specific tax expenditures, such as the Research Tax Credit and the Child Care Tax Credit, on tax revenue, taxpayers, and the economy.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.1.5

Identify opportunities to reduce the tax gap and further protect revenue.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) taxpayer service and its effects on taxpayer burden and the tax gap.
- ◆ Assess IRS enforcement and fraud detection programs and cybersecurity efforts in light of a changing U.S. and international economy, evolving technology, and the tax gap.
- ◆ Identify opportunities to leverage paid preparers, tax preparation software companies, and information return reporters to ensure timely, accurate filing of tax returns and further protect revenue against refund fraud.
- ◆ Assess IRS efforts to improve planning, resource allocation, and evaluation of operations, including using data to guide compliance programs and modernizing information systems.

- ◆ Evaluate federal entitlement and benefit programs and federal procurement efforts.
- ◆ Evaluate high-dollar federal programs that are at risk for improper payments.
- ◆ Refer cases of potential fraud and abuse identified to the relevant federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.2.2

Conduct investigations, controls testing, and security vulnerability assessments.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Investigate specific allegations of fraud, program mismanagement, or other serious wrongdoing.
- ◆ Test implementation of internal controls in high-dollar federal programs or agencies with potential vulnerabilities that pose a national security risk.
- ◆ Perform overt and covert testing of security-related systems and controls.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.2.3

Identify ways to strengthen accountability and internal controls for federal programs, assets, and operations.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Identify vulnerabilities in agencies' preventive and detective controls and recommend actions to strengthen them.
- ◆ Assess federal agencies' internal controls to identify opportunities to reduce risk of fraud, waste, and abuse.
- ◆ Analyze federal agencies' high-risk and other critical programs to identify opportunities to improve accountability for assets and operations.
- ◆ Review audit oversight of federal programs, grants, and other funds.
- ◆ Implement a strategic approach for using the Fraud Risk Framework to review federal fraud risk management efforts by identifying and prioritizing federal programs and other agency activities that are potentially susceptible to fraud.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.2

Support Government Accountability by Identifying Fraud, Waste, and Abuse and Needed Improvement in Internal Controls

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.2.1

Perform forensic audits to identify and address vulnerabilities to fraud, waste, and abuse.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Examine program data to assess agencies' enforcement of laws, regulations, and guidelines and stewardship of government resources.

- ◆ Assess federal agencies' implementation of the Fraud Reduction and Data Analytics Act of 2015.
- ◆ Assess agencies' progress in estimating improper payments, identifying their root causes, and developing effective preventive and detective controls, including an emphasis on recovery audits.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.2.4

Process and investigate allegations received through FraudNet.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate allegations received through FraudNet to identify potential trends in allegations.
- ◆ Use tips received through FraudNet to identify potential cases of fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement for investigation by GAO or referral to the appropriate entity.
- ◆ Conduct targeted reviews and analysis of allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement in federal programs received through FraudNet.
- ◆ Actively promote and advertise FraudNet as a means for the public to report allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement to GAO.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.3

Support Congressional Oversight of Crosscutting Issues, Major Management Challenges, and Program Risks

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.3.1

Highlight high-risk federal programs and operations and assess government-wide management reforms.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Update progress in addressing high-risk areas with every new Congress and identify areas, if any, to be newly designated as high risk.
- ◆ Assist congressional and presidential transitions by highlighting key challenges and recommendations to improve the performance and accountability

of the federal government and by assessing the administration's management agenda.

- ◆ Monitor implementation of government-wide management reform initiatives, including risk management and the Program Management Improvement Accountability Act.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.3.2

Assess efforts to improve results-oriented management across the government.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess how agencies use various policy tools (e.g., regulations, tax expenditures, grants) to drive improvements and better achieve results.
- ◆ Monitor and evaluate agency and Office of Management and Budget efforts to develop and use performance information, program evaluation, and government data sets to improve performance.
- ◆ Examine evidence-based strategies and processes federal agencies are using to determine and implement effective approaches to achieving outcomes.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.3.3

Analyze and assess efforts to develop an agile, skilled workforce essential to achieving the missions of a high-performing and collaborative federal government.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess the human capital management services that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) provides to agencies and OPM's funding model for shared services.
- ◆ Evaluate efforts to integrate workforce data analytics and organizational and strategic planning to ensure agencies have the proper critical skills mix to carry out their missions when managing changes in workforce size.
- ◆ Assess the federal government's efforts to attract, develop, and retain a workforce that

is flexible, motivated, and capable, including leading practices in recruiting for mission-critical occupations and examining federal hiring delays.

- ◆ Assess policies and practices designed to enhance individual performance and agency outcomes, create an inclusive environment, and leverage diversity, while respecting civil service protections.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.3.4

Identify ways to improve federal agencies' acquisition of goods and services.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate agencies' acquisition business processes and improve knowledge of the supplier base.
- ◆ Analyze agencies' efforts to improve competition, strategic sourcing, and use of effective contract strategies in the procurement of goods and services.
- ◆ Suggest ways to improve agencies' acquisition workforce development and management and oversight of contractor support.
- ◆ Maximize quality acquisition outcomes and mitigate risk across and within major agencies, such as the General Services Administration (GSA), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and VA.
- ◆ Assess the government's use of tools and data to promote sound contract pricing and management.
- ◆ Evaluate NASA's efforts to ensure that informed requirements, technologies, and designs enable development or production decisions for acquisition of space and satellite systems.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.3.5

Assess the management and results of the federal investment in science and technology, the effectiveness of efforts to protect intellectual property and encourage innovation, and the progress and implications of technological innovations.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Conduct evaluations, including technology assessments, of the status and implications of

science and technology for public policy and congressional decision making.

- ◆ Assess the management, coordination, and results of federal agencies' research and development efforts.
- ◆ Evaluate the effect of federal policies and funding on the protection of intellectual property, national competitiveness, and technological advancement.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.3.6

Assess the government's planning, implementation, and use of IT to improve performance and modernize federal programs and operations.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess and promote the application and use of best practices in IT investment management, portfolio management, and agile/incremental development across the government.
- ◆ Review federal agencies' management and effectiveness in carrying out the acquisition and integration of new systems as well as the replacement of legacy systems—including complex multiyear modernizations, such as Veterans Health IT, DOD Joint Information Environment, IRS systems, and Decennial Census Systems.
- ◆ Assess agency efforts to implement federal IT acquisition reform provisions, including Chief Information Officer authorities and data center consolidation.
- ◆ Review the management of government telecommunications and interconnected systems and federal agencies' effectiveness in providing secure and reliable Internet connections, including a focus on GSA's recent \$50 billion Enterprise Infrastructure Solutions contract.
- ◆ Evaluate federal progress in developing and retaining an effective IT workforce.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.3.7

Identify ways to improve the collection, dissemination, and quality of federal information.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess the Census Bureau's readiness for the 2020 Census and identify ways to improve the management and cost-effectiveness of the census.
- ◆ Assess the government's ability to protect the privacy of individuals' personal information by improving the oversight and protection of Medicare beneficiary data, enhancing oversight of federal student aid data, improving the use and protection of personal credit information, and removing personally identifiable information from shared cyber threat information.
- ◆ Review the government's effectiveness in collecting, storing, preserving, and disseminating federal records in light of evolving methods of communication and increasing use of social media.
- ◆ Assess federal agencies' effectiveness in handling Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.3.8

Identify ways to improve the administration and management of grants and other federal assistance across all levels of government.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Examine efforts to coordinate grant programs that cut across federal, state, and local levels of government to achieve efficiencies.
- ◆ Evaluate federal agencies' grant management policies, administrative procedures, and workforce training efforts across various programs, including those related to disaster recovery.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.3.9

Identify and assess efforts to reduce fragmentation, overlap, and duplication and to enhance collaboration.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess and identify opportunities and strategies to reduce or eliminate fragmentation, overlap, and

duplication in government programs and activities and achieve financial benefits.

- ◆ Identify opportunities to improve the coordination, collaboration, and governance of domestic and international networks of governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 3.3.10

Identify ways to promote innovation, transparency, and open government and evaluate implementation of the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014 (DATA Act).

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Evaluate the federal government's efforts to make publicly available performance and financial data to increase transparency and accountability.
- ◆ Assess federal efforts to more efficiently and effectively achieve results by engaging the public through open innovation strategies, such as competitions and crowdsourcing.
- ◆ Examine federal agencies' efforts to collect, measure, use, and make publicly available customer service data to improve the quality of service provided to the public.





GOAL 4

Maximize the Value of GAO by Enabling Quality, Timely Service to the Congress and by Being a Leading Practices Federal Agency

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.1

Empower GAO's Workforce to Excel through Strategic Talent Management

PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.1.1

Identify, attract, and retain a workforce with the skills necessary to achieve operational excellence.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess GAO's future workforce needs to determine required competencies, technological understanding, and expertise.
- ◆ Develop a talent acquisition plan that supports integrated annual workforce planning and diversity goals.
- ◆ Evaluate and expand the use of available flexibilities and incentives to attract, recruit, and retain a talented and diverse workforce.
- ◆ Create a talent management advisory committee to advise, assist, promote, and support the establishment, maintenance, and renewal of GAO's talent and learning management strategy.
- ◆ Implement and evaluate an expanded telework program in headquarters and enhance tools to ensure productivity and work quality.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.1.2

Develop the workforce using learning organization principles that instill multidisciplinary thinking, collaboration, and responsiveness.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Expand GAO's capacity as a learning organization and encourage multidisciplinary collaboration and cooperation to strengthen knowledge sharing and growth opportunities for staff.

- ◆ Provide employees learning and developmental opportunities to enhance their knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- ◆ Implement an integrated learning management system.
- ◆ Enhance GAO's Mentoring Program and create a complementary program to provide employees guidance on development and career planning.
- ◆ Expand virtual learning opportunities to provide just-in-time learning to address evolving needs.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.1.3

Enhance and sustain a culture that is fair, diverse, and inclusive and provides opportunities for all employees to excel.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Foster a culture where the leadership and employees aspire to model GAO people values—valued, respected, and treated fairly—through individual and organizational actions that, among other things, strive to achieve an inclusive and bias-free workplace.
- ◆ Promote practices that encourage and support employee engagement and connectedness using methods that enhance communication and inclusion efforts throughout the workplace.
- ◆ Assess the impact of an increasingly mobile workforce on organizational processes, programs, culture, and results including potential effects on employee engagement and connectedness.
- ◆ Maintain effective relationships and facilitate productive discussions with GAO's internal employee organizations to ensure employee needs, concerns, and suggestions are understood and taken into consideration during management decision making.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.2

Streamline GAO's Processes to Deliver Quality Results and Products, and Promote Knowledge Sharing, Government Standards, and Strategic Solutions

PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.2.1

Enhance outreach to broaden and preserve relationships with the Congress and audited entities.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Continually reach out to the Congress to ensure GAO can meet congressional priorities in a timely manner.
- ◆ Enhance GAO's understanding of client needs in terms of form, content, timing, mode of delivery, and available options for providing value-added results.
- ◆ Enhance employees' ability to develop and promote effective and productive working relationships with client and audited entities.
- ◆ Enhance access to executive branch facilities and records to facilitate timely completion of engagements.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.2.2

Enhance GAO's foresight and strategic planning capacity.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Help the Congress identify trends and emerging issues of national importance that will significantly affect government and society in the coming decades.
- ◆ Expand GAO's strategic foresight capacity and build an agency-wide horizon scanning system.
- ◆ Enhance the strategic planning process by integrating workshops, trend analysis, scenario planning, advisory boards, outside experts, and foresight tools.

- ◆ Develop and implement annual performance plans that identify stakeholders, major milestones, and level of effort.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.2.3

Develop and continually improve government internal control, evaluation, and auditing standards.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Develop and continually improve the standards for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls within the federal government.
- ◆ Communicate through formal outreach to the financial management and audit community pending changes to the internal control standards.
- ◆ Harmonize internal control standards with the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations and International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) standards and guidance.
- ◆ Develop and continually improve the standards for performing independent, high-quality government audit work.
- ◆ Work with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) to improve the methodology for performing financial statement audits of federal entities, including related information security issues.
- ◆ Develop interpretations of audit standards to address emerging practice issues.
- ◆ Perform outreach to help ensure consistent application of federal financial statement accounting and auditing standards.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.2.4

Enhance information sharing, training, and capacity building for the domestic and international accountability community.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Lead efforts to promote dialogue and action around critical domestic issues through Comptroller General advisory boards, the Domestic Working

Group and CIGIE-GAO Coordination meetings, as well as other work with intergovernmental groups.

- ◆ Lead efforts to promote dialogue and action around critical international issues through publication of the International Journal of Government Auditing and participation in INTOSAI Working Groups, such as the INTOSAI Working Group on Financial Modernization and Regulatory Reform and the Working Group on Public Debt.
- ◆ Provide training and technical assistance to the domestic and international accountability community through the Center for Audit Excellence, International Auditor Fellowship Program, national and regional intergovernmental audit forum meetings, and efforts with other accountability organizations.
- ◆ Advance implementation of the INTOSAI Donor Cooperation and Capacity Building Goal efforts.
- ◆ Pursue collaborations with public, private, and nonprofit sector accountability organizations to expand GAO's partner network.
- ◆ Provide leadership to strengthen public sector standards with domestic and international standards-setting organizations.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.2.5

Leverage data, technology, and process improvement to continually enhance GAO's products, processes, and programs.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Assess organizational performance against leading business and operational practices and industry standards to ensure operational excellence.
- ◆ Standardize practices for conducting engagements and operational processes to ensure efficient, consistent, measurable, and quality outcomes.
- ◆ Facilitate continuous improvement in the application of GAO's quality assurance framework by addressing suggestions from internal inspections and external peer review teams.

- ◆ Expand data-driven reviews of internal operations to assess progress toward goals, identify areas for improvement, develop collaborative solutions, and enhance accountability.
- ◆ Strengthen customer service practices to deliver increasing value to the Congress, internal customers, and stakeholders.
- ◆ Strengthen GAO's enterprise risk management program by integrating internal control and fraud risk activities to ensure emerging risks are appropriately managed.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.3

Provide Modern Integrated Tools and Systems in a Secure, Collaborative, and Mobile Environment

PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.3.1

Empower staff with collaborative, integrated tools to enhance business processes and increase efficiency.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Implement a modern enterprise content management solution that provides document and records management features along with business process management capabilities.
- ◆ Modernize and transform the processes supporting GAO's publishing work.
- ◆ Employ an end-to-end financial management solution for maintaining the life-cycle of financial data.
- ◆ Update the tools and manage contractual support for space and asset management.
- ◆ Enhance the use of the human capital management service solution by consolidating technologies and streamlining processes.
- ◆ Enhance the agility of acquisition systems and processes to better respond to customer needs.
- ◆ Enhance agency tools to support GAO's statutory responsibilities.

- ◆ Enhance customer service on administrative processes through improved communication and technology.
- ◆ Continue to enhance contract administration processes to ensure timely delivery of services at a fair and reasonable cost.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.3.2

Enhance tools that integrate crosscutting enterprise data to facilitate more agile, accurate, cost-effective, and data-driven decision making.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Expand analytical tools to integrate enterprise data, including unstructured data, to enhance analysis, reporting, and data-driven decision making.
- ◆ Use analytics and other technological advances to enhance products and information delivery strategies to expand access and meet the emerging needs of clients and customers.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.3.3

Enable a mobile, collaborative environment.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Ensure GAO's IT platform and the supporting infrastructure remain current to enable our ability to engage and connect effectively and efficiently.
- ◆ Provide a technical environment that enables staff to collaborate and communicate at any location, at any time, via any device, with identical capabilities.
- ◆ Provide an integrated communications and productivity solution that enhances teamwork and collaboration.
- ◆ Create space to enhance employee engagement, collaboration, and connectedness.

PERFORMANCE GOAL 4.3.4

Ensure a secure, robust, cost-effective physical and technological infrastructure.

KEY EFFORTS

- ◆ Maintain a modern physical infrastructure consistent with the building improvement plan by addressing deferred maintenance and repair backlog.
- ◆ Facilitate field office relocations and renovations over time to ensure employees have a professional, safe, and secure work environment in federally owned space.
- ◆ Identify and implement opportunities to increase revenue through leasing of space in the Headquarters building.
- ◆ Identify opportunities to enhance the Headquarters energy management program.
- ◆ Virtualize GAO's IT infrastructure and provide scalable solutions for current and new functions.
- ◆ Ensure that secure computing capabilities exist for on-site and remote computing requirements.
- ◆ Ensure GAO IT security architecture advances NIST cybersecurity standards, including privacy controls and security assessments.
- ◆ Implement security practices that enhance preparedness and resilience.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

IMAGE SOURCES

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Front cover: GAO (United States Capitol)

Page 3: GAO (United States Capitol)

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE DOCUMENTS

GAO's 2018-2023 Strategic Plan ([GAO-18-1SP](#)), Key Efforts ([GAO-18-395SP](#)), and Trends Affecting Government and Society ([GAO-18-396SP](#)) are available on GAO's [Strategic Planning website](#).

Documents related to GAO's [performance planning](#) and GAO's annual [performance reporting](#) are also available online.

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