Better Coordination and Oversight Could Help Reduce Duplicative Investments

What GAO Found

OMB, cross-government committees, and individual federal agencies have taken actions to coordinate geospatial investments across agencies and with state and local governments. However, these efforts have not been fully successful for several reasons:

- A complete and up-to-date strategic plan is missing. The existing strategic plan for coordinating national geospatial resources and activities is out of date and lacks specific measures for identifying and reducing redundancies.
- Federal agencies are not consistently complying with OMB direction to coordinate their investments.
- OMB’s oversight methods have not been effective in identifying or eliminating instances of duplication. This has resulted from OMB not collecting consistent, key investment information from all agencies.

Consequently, agencies continue to independently acquire and maintain potentially duplicative systems. This costly practice is likely to continue unless coordination is significantly improved.

Conceptual Diagram of Multiple Geospatial Data Collections and Processing Associated with a Single Geographic Location

In its report, GAO recommends that the OMB Director and the Secretary of the Interior develop a current, comprehensive strategic plan for coordinating federal geospatial assets; and makes other recommendations to OMB. In their comments on a draft of the report, OMB and Interior agreed with GAO’s recommendations.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-04-824T.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Linda D. Koontz at (202) 512-6240 or koontzl@gao.gov.