OSHA has taken important steps toward targeting its enforcement resources on hazardous worksites, measure its accomplishments, and enhance the professionalism of its staff. However, these systems could be strengthened by better information and mechanisms that would make targeting efforts more efficient, measurement more precise, and training efforts more effective.

OSHA’s targeting processes have not fully ensured that it identifies hazardous worksites for priority inspection because its worksite-targeting programs lack the necessary data to effectively identify high-hazard worksites or those with hazards under OSHA’s jurisdiction. Also, OSHA’s measurement efforts did not accurately demonstrate its impact on workplace safety and health because, for example, it used national data on injuries and illnesses to measure its progress in achieving strategic goals even though only 31 states are covered by these goals. Finally, OSHA’s efforts to enhance the quality of its inspection workforce have the potential to improve enforcement, but the anticipated outcomes could be jeopardized by a lack of necessary mechanisms, such as a training directive that reflects current plans, or a comprehensive database that tracks training or skills obtained by inspection staff.

While OSHA expressed concerns about some of the material in the report, it generally agreed to act on our recommendations.