



Highlights of GAO-10-13, a report to congressional requesters

### Why GAO Did This Study

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology (US-VISIT) program stores and processes biometric and biographic information to, among other things, control and monitor the entry and exit of foreign visitors. Currently, an entry capability is operating at almost 300 U.S. ports of entry, but an exit capability is not. GAO has previously reported on limitations in DHS's efforts to plan and execute its efforts to deliver US-VISIT exit, and made recommendations to improve these areas. GAO was asked to determine (1) the status of DHS's efforts to deliver a comprehensive exit solution and (2) to what extent DHS is applying an integrated approach to managing its comprehensive exit solution. To accomplish this, GAO assessed US-VISIT exit project plans, schedules, and other management documentation against relevant criteria, and it observed exit pilots.

### What GAO Recommends

GAO is augmenting its prior recommendations to the Secretary of Homeland Security aimed at strengthening US-VISIT exit planning and execution by recommending that the Secretary ensure that an integrated master schedule for the department's Comprehensive Exit project be developed and maintained in accordance with the key practices embodied in relevant guidance. DHS concurred with GAO's recommendation.

[View GAO-10-13 or key components.](#)  
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## HOMELAND SECURITY

### Key US-VISIT Components at Varying Stages of Completion, but Integrated and Reliable Schedule Needed

#### What GAO Found

DHS has established a Comprehensive Exit project within its US-VISIT program that consists of six components that are at varying stages of completion. These components and the status of each according to the project execution process of US-VISIT's system life cycle management methodology are summarized in the figure below.

**Comprehensive Exit Components and Status**

Component	Project execution life cycle phases						
	Plan	Analyze	Design	Build	Test	Deploy	Transition
Air/Sea Biometric Release 1	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	In progress	Not yet started	Not yet started
Reporting Phase 1	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete
Air Exit Pilots	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	N/A
Long-term Air/Sea	Not yet started	Not yet started	Not yet started	Not yet started	Not yet started	Not yet started	Not yet started
Temporary Worker Visa Exit Pilot	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	In progress	Not yet started	Not yet started
Long-term Land	Not yet started	Not yet started	Not yet started	Not yet started	Not yet started	Not yet started	Not yet started

Complete
  In progress
  Not yet started

Sources: GAO analysis of DHS data and information from program officials.  
Note: Because the Air Exit Pilots were decommissioned upon completion, they were not transitioned beyond the project execution process.

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To DHS's credit, the US-VISIT program office has established integrated project management plans for, and has adopted an integrated approach to, interacting with and involving stakeholders in its Comprehensive Exit project. However, it has not adopted an integrated approach to scheduling, executing, and tracking the work that needs to be accomplished to deliver a comprehensive exit solution. Rather, it is relying on several separate and distinct schedules to manage individual components and the US-VISIT prime contractor's work that supports these components. Moreover, neither of the two component schedules that GAO reviewed are reliable because they have not been derived in accordance with relevant guidance. Specifically, both the Air Exit Pilots schedule and the Temporary Worker Visa Exit Pilot schedule only fully meet one of nine key schedule estimating practices, and either partially, minimally, or do not meet the remaining eight. In contrast, the prime contractor's schedule is largely reliable, as it fully or substantially meets all nine practices.

Without a master schedule for the Comprehensive Exit project that is integrated and derived in accordance with relevant guidance, DHS cannot reliably commit to when and how the work will be accomplished to deliver a comprehensive exit solution to its almost 300 ports of entry, and it cannot adequately monitor and manage its progress toward this end.