

**Office of Inspector General  
U.S. Government Accountability Office  
*Report Highlights***

April 2012

**PROCUREMENT**

**Actions Needed to Enhance Training and Certification Requirements for Contracting Officer Representatives**

**What We Found**

Contracting Officer Representatives assist Contracting Officers in the proper procurement and administration of contracts and play a key role in ensuring that contractors abide by the contracts. The Office of the Inspector General assessed the extent to which GAO has developed the policies and programs necessary to ensure that GAO staff appointed as Contracting Officer Representatives are trained and certified.

Although GAO's current policy encourages, but does not require, certification training and continuous learning for Contracting Officer Representatives, the agency has efforts under way to expeditiously revise training and certification requirements based on the executive branch's risk-based certification program. This risk-based program has varying requirements for training, experience, and continuous learning for Contracting Officer Representatives in civilian agencies, depending upon the types of contracts being managed. To strengthen contract oversight, GAO has plans to require Contracting Officer Representatives take training this year. In addition, GAO executives have assigned a senior manager to further expedite the development of its revised policy. However GAO lacks a comprehensive plan that includes time frames, availability of training resources, and a method to track and monitor when staff complete training. Until the revised program is fully implemented, GAO is at risk that some Contracting Officer Representatives may not have the right skills and training to oversee contractors.

**What We Recommend**

This report recommends that GAO develop and implement a comprehensive action plan with milestones for revising its policy and processes for training and certifying Contracting Officer Representatives.

