

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-15-95](#), a report to congressional requesters

Why GAO Did This Study

DHS had approximately 29,000 employees earning AUCO, a type of premium pay intended to compensate eligible employees for substantial amounts of irregular, unscheduled overtime. DHS components' use of AUCO has been a long-standing issue since at least 2007, when reviews identified the inappropriate use of AUCO in DHS. GAO was asked to review DHS components' use and implementation of AUCO.

This report addresses, among other things, how much DHS spent on AUCO from fiscal year 2008 through March 2014 (the most current data available) and the extent to which DHS components implemented AUCO appropriately. GAO analyzed AUCO payments data from components that have regularly used AUCO, which included U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S. Secret Service, National Protection and Programs Directorate, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, and Office of the Chief Security Officer. When calculating annual averages, GAO used the last full fiscal year of available data (2013). GAO also analyzed component AUCO policies and procedures to assess compliance with federal regulations and guidance.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that DHS develop and execute a department-wide mechanism to ensure components implement AUCO appropriately. Congress should consider requiring DHS to report annually on components' progress remediating AUCO implementation deficiencies. DHS concurred with the recommendation.

View [GAO-15-95](#). For more information, contact David C. Maurer at (202) 512-9627 or maurerd@gao.gov.

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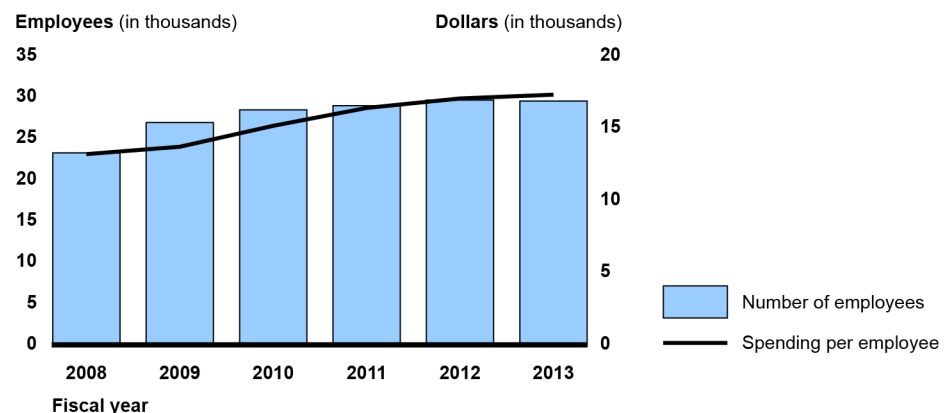
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Continued Action Needed to Strengthen Management of Administratively Uncontrollable Overtime

What GAO Found

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) components spent \$512 million on administratively uncontrollable overtime (AUCO) payments in fiscal year 2013 and \$255 million through March 2014, mostly on Border Patrol agents. DHS's AUCO expenditures increased from fiscal years 2008 through 2013, in part because of higher payments per earner. The average annual AUCO payment per employee increased by about 31 percent, or from about \$13,000 to about \$17,000 from fiscal years 2008 through 2013, as shown in the figure below.

Figure: Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Administratively Uncontrollable Overtime (AUCO) Total Earners and Average Amount Spent per Earner Fiscal Years 2008 through 2013



Source: GAO analysis of DHS AUCO payments data. | GAO-15-95

Some DHS component policies are not consistent with certain provisions of federal regulations or guidance, and components have not regularly followed their respective AUCO policies and procedures, contributing to widespread AUCO administration and oversight deficiencies. For example, components have not consistently reviewed hours claimed and employee eligibility for AUCO. In response, in 2014, DHS issued two memorandums. One required the suspension of AUCO for certain employees. The other required components to submit plans to address deficiencies, which most DHS components have done. DHS also plans to issue a department-wide AUCO directive and to monitor component implementation of corrective actions through its ongoing human resource office assessments every 3 to 4 years, among other things. However, this monitoring is too general and infrequent to effectively monitor or evaluate DHS components' progress. Given the department's long-standing and widespread AUCO administration and oversight deficiencies, developing and executing a department-wide oversight mechanism to ensure components implement AUCO appropriately on a sustained basis, and in accordance with law and regulation, could better position DHS to monitor components' progress remediating AUCO deficiencies. Further, DHS's reporting annually to Congress on the extent to which DHS components have made progress in remediating AUCO implementation deficiencies could provide Congress with reasonable assurance that DHS components have sustained effective and appropriate use of AUCO in accordance with law and regulation.