Implementing the section 1107 Interagency Rotation Program has languished because there has been limited leadership and oversight of the program, including necessary actions to be taken by the departments, agencies, and other organizations to complete their assigned roles, responsibilities, and tasks. The Strategy and other documents specifically assign roles, responsibilities, and tasks to the Committee on National Security Personnel, OPM, the Communities of Practice, and the participating departments and agencies. For instance, OPM is tasked with issuing guidance on the rights and responsibilities of employees returning from rotational service, but OPM officials told GAO that they have not done so and could not give timeframes for completion. Similarly, participating departments and agencies are tasked with identifying particular positions and personnel for rotations, but they have not used the procedures laid out in the Strategy because officials said they needed further guidance from OPM. OPM officials stated that the departments and agencies do not need further guidance from them to proceed with their assigned roles, responsibilities, and tasks. Importantly, the Strategy specifically identifies that the Committee will work with OPM to implement the Strategy. Further, officials that GAO interviewed stated they perceive that OPM is the lead for the program. Officials also noted that differing opinions about next steps have resulted in action not being taken on some assigned roles, responsibilities, and tasks, including the issuance of guidance.

Without a clear leadership and oversight structure for the section 1107 program and efforts to identify and take action on next steps for implementation, it is unlikely that implementation of the program will move forward.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that OPM, in collaboration with the Committee, establish a clear leadership and oversight structure to guide implementation of the Interagency Rotation Program and work with the departments and agencies to identify and take action on necessary next steps for implementation. OPM generally concurred with the recommendations, but raised issues primarily about the roles and responsibilities that GAO addresses in the report.

View GAO-16-57. For more information, contact Brenda S. Farrell at (202) 512-3604 or farrellb@gao.gov