



Highlights of [GAO-06-753](#), a report to the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives

Why GAO Did This Study

The 2006 Winter Games in Turin, Italy, were the second Olympic Games to take place overseas since September 11, 2001. The United States worked with Italy to ensure the security of U.S. citizens, and it expects to continue such support for future Games, including the 2008 Games in Beijing, China.

GAO was asked to (1) discuss the U.S. approach for providing security support for the 2006 Winter Games and how such efforts were coordinated, (2) identify the roles of U.S. agencies in providing security support for the Games and how they financed their activities, (3) review lessons learned in providing security support and the application of prior lessons learned, and (4) identify U.S. efforts under way for providing security support to the 2008 Beijing Games.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is recommending that the Secretary of State, in consultation with members of the interagency working group, (1) develop written guidance for providing U.S. government security support to future Games and (2) develop a finance subgroup within the interagency working group to help agencies plan and prepare for future support. State concurred with GAO's findings and recommendations and stated that it has begun taking steps to implement them.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-753.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Jess T. Ford at (202) 512-4128 or fordj@gao.gov.

OLYMPIC SECURITY

Better Planning Can Enhance U.S. Support to Future Olympic Games

What GAO Found

In 2004, the United States began planning to provide a U.S. security presence in Italy and security support to the Italian government, and based much of its security strategy on its understanding of Italy's advanced security capabilities. The United States provided Italy with some security assistance, mostly in the form of crisis management and response support. To coordinate U.S. efforts, the U.S. Mission in Italy established an office in Turin as a central point for security information and logistics, and to provide consular services to U.S. citizens during the Games. The U.S. Ambassador to Italy, through the U.S. Consulate in Milan, coordinated and led U.S. efforts in-country, while the Department of State-chaired interagency working group in Washington, D.C., coordinated domestic efforts. While the interagency working group has been a useful forum for coordinating U.S. security support to overseas athletic events, State and Department of Justice (DOJ) officials have indicated that formal guidance that articulates a charter; a mission; and agencies' authorities, roles, and responsibilities would help in planning for security support to future Games.

Nearly 20 entities and offices within several U.S. agencies provided more than \$16 million for security support activities for the Turin Games. The roles of these agencies—which included the Departments of State, Justice, Homeland Security, Defense, and Energy—included providing crisis management and response support through personnel, equipment, and training and providing security advice and other assistance to U.S. athletes, spectators, and commercial investors. The U.S. Embassy in Rome initially paid for lodging and other administrative support needs, which were reimbursed by the participating agencies, although it struggled to do so. State and DOJ officials indicated that an interagency mechanism for identifying costs and addressing potential funding issues would be useful in providing U.S. security support to future Games.

For the Turin Games, agencies applied key lessons learned from the 2004 Athens Games and identified additional lessons for future Games. Key lessons identified from the Turin Games included, the importance of establishing an operations center at the location of the Games, establishing clear roles and responsibilities for agencies in event planning and crisis response efforts, and planning early for several years of Olympic-related expenditures. These lessons learned were communicated by Washington, D.C.- and Italy-based personnel to their counterparts who are preparing for the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing. The United States is currently taking steps to identify the types of security support that agencies may provide to support China's security efforts for the 2008 Summer Games and to ensure the safety of U.S. athletes, spectators, and commercial investors.