



Highlights of [GAO-10-318T](#), a testimony before the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, U.S. Senate

Why GAO Did This Study

Significant management challenges exist for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as it continues to integrate its varied management processes, policies, and systems in areas such as financial management and information technology. These activities are primarily led by the Under Secretary for Management (USM), department management chiefs, and management chiefs in DHS's seven components. This testimony summarizes a new GAO report (GAO-10-131) that examined (1) the extent to which DHS has developed a comprehensive strategy for management integration that includes the characteristics recommended in GAO's earlier 2005 report, (2) how DHS is implementing management integration, and (3) the extent to which the USM is holding the department and component management chiefs accountable for implementing management integration through reporting relationships. GAO reviewed DHS plans and interviewed DHS management officials.

What GAO Recommends

In the report, GAO recommended that once a management integration strategy is developed, DHS should establish performance measures for assessing management integration, and implement its performance management policies between the department and component management chiefs. DHS's USM commented that DHS is taking certain actions to address GAO's recommendations.

[View GAO-10-318T or key components.](#)

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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

A Comprehensive Strategy Is Still Needed to Achieve Management Integration Departmentwide

What GAO Found

DHS has not yet developed a comprehensive strategy for management integration as required by the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 and with the characteristics GAO recommended in a 2005 report. Although DHS stated at that time that it was developing an integration strategy it has not yet done so, in part because it has focused on building operations capacity within functional management areas. In the absence of a comprehensive management integration strategy, DHS officials stated that documents such as strategic plans and management directives address aspects of a management integration strategy and can help the department to manage its integration efforts. However, they do not generally include all of the strategy characteristics GAO identified, such as identifying the critical links that must occur among management initiatives. In addition, DHS has increased the number of performance measures for the Management Directorate, but has not yet established measures for assessing management integration across the department. Without these measures, DHS cannot assess its progress in implementing and achieving management integration.

In the absence of a comprehensive strategy, DHS's Management Directorate has implemented management integration through certain initiatives and mechanisms to communicate and consolidate management policies, processes, and systems. For example, DHS is in the process of consolidating its financial management, acquisition, and asset management systems. The directorate has also instituted a system of management councils and governance boards to communicate information and manage specific activities related to management initiatives.

The USM and department and component management chiefs are held accountable for implementing management integration through reporting relationships at three levels—between the Secretary and the USM, the USM and department chiefs, and the department and component chiefs—in which, among other things, the Secretary of Homeland Security, USM, and department chiefs are required to provide input into performance plans and evaluations. Performance management practices for management integration between DHS's department and component management chiefs are not consistently in place. Department chiefs are not consistently providing the guidance and input required by department management directives and in accordance with performance management leading practices. Without ensuring that the management chiefs provide input into component chiefs' performance plans and evaluations as required, the directorate cannot be sure that component chiefs are fully implementing management integration.