

July 1995

**Federal Management
Issue Area**

Active Assignments

Foreword

This report was prepared primarily to inform Congressional members and key staff of ongoing assignments in the General Accounting Office's Federal Management issue area. This report contains assignments that were ongoing as of July 6, 1995, and presents a brief background statement and a list of key questions to be answered on each assignment. The report will be issued quarterly.

This report was compiled from information available in GAO's internal management information systems. Because the information was downloaded from computerized data bases intended for internal use, some information may appear in abbreviated form.

If you have questions or would like additional information about assignments listed, please contact Nye Stevens, Director, on (202) 512-8676; or Charles (Bud) Patton, Associate Director, on (202) 512-3532.

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Federal Management

LINE AGENCY MANAGEMENT

TITLE: STATUTORY FRAMEWORK FOR FEDERAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (246079)

BACKGROUND : The Govt. Performance & Results Act & legislative initiatives from the Natl. Performance Review, as well as earlier laws aimed at improving fed. mngmt. & accountability, have raised concerns about the extent to which these laws are integrated. An emerging issue is how the laws can be better coordinated to ensure that fed. resources are fully leveraged to improve program performance.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What key laws govern management in the federal government? (2) How are these laws operationalized? (3) Do opportunities exist for aligning and streamlining the laws' requirements to provide a better framework for results-oriented management?

MANAGING FOR RESULTS

TITLE: SURVEY OF GOVERNMENT CORPORATIONS (246070)

BACKGROUND : This job is the first in a three-part series to address the requester's questions on government corporations (GC). Subsequent assignments will review OMB's role and the Government Corporation Control Act (GCCA).

KEY QUESTIONS : 1) How many government corporations (GCs) are in operation? 2) When were they created and for what purpose? 3) What are the budget, personnel, procurement, and oversight authorities for each corporation? 4) What proposals are being considered to create additional government corporations?

TITLE: EVALUATION OF FEDERAL AGENCIES' IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS ACT (246071)

BACKGROUND : The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) requires GAO to report, by June 1, 1997, on implementation of the act, including prospects for compliance by agencies not participating as pilots. Full implementation of the act's requirements will begin for all federal agencies on September 30, 1997. This report will provide interim assessment of progress to date.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) How are selected pilot and non-pilot agencies implementing the act's requirements? (2) What are the consequences of selected pilot and non-pilot implementation efforts? (3) What lessons can be learned about implementation of the act's requirements governmentwide?

MANAGING FOR RESULTS

TITLE: CONSULTATION ON OPM'S GPRA TRAINING PROGRAM (246080)

BACKGROUND : Section 9 of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 requires OPM to develop, in consultation with OMB and GAO, a strategic planning and performance measurement training program, as well as provide managers with an orientation on strategic planning and performance measurement. OPM has asked GAO for assistance in developing its GPRA training program.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What strategies and lessons learned--based on past and current GAO work--may be useful to OPM for Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) training? (2) What assistance can GAO provide OPM in meeting OPM's GPRA training requirement?

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

TITLE: WHAT IMPACT DO FEDERAL REGULATIONS HAVE ON BUSINESSES? (246066)

BACKGROUND : The requesters have asked GAO to collect descriptive, case-specific information regarding the cumulative burden imposed on businesses by different types of regulations. The requesters also asked GAO to determine which regulations businesses viewed as most burdensome.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What is the cumulative impact of the various kinds of regulations selected businesses face? (2) What regulations do businesses view as most burdensome? (3) What are federal regulators' views regarding these regulations and the cumulative burden? (4) What actions do businesses and federal regulators believe can be taken to address these concerns?

TITLE: DESCRIPTION OF REINVENTION LABORATORIES' EFFORTS TO REDUCE REGULATIONS AND IMPROVE CUSTOMER SERVICE (246072)

BACKGROUND : About 140 "reinvention laboratories" have been established by agencies as vehicles to implement major themes embodied in the National Performance Review (NPR) report. The labs are efforts to change government operations by cutting red tape and improving customer service. This job will be part of GAO's ongoing body of work examining the outcomes of the NPR.

KEY QUESTIONS : 1. What is the general status of all reinvention labs? 2. To what extent have performance measures been developed (both to measure performance before and after the implementation of the lab)? 3. What conditions have hindered or assisted the reinvention process of the lab? 4. What improved practices have been achieved by the labs?

Federal Management

FEDERAL STATISTICS

TITLE: COMPARISON OF U.S. AND CANADIAN STATISTICAL SYSTEMS (243062)

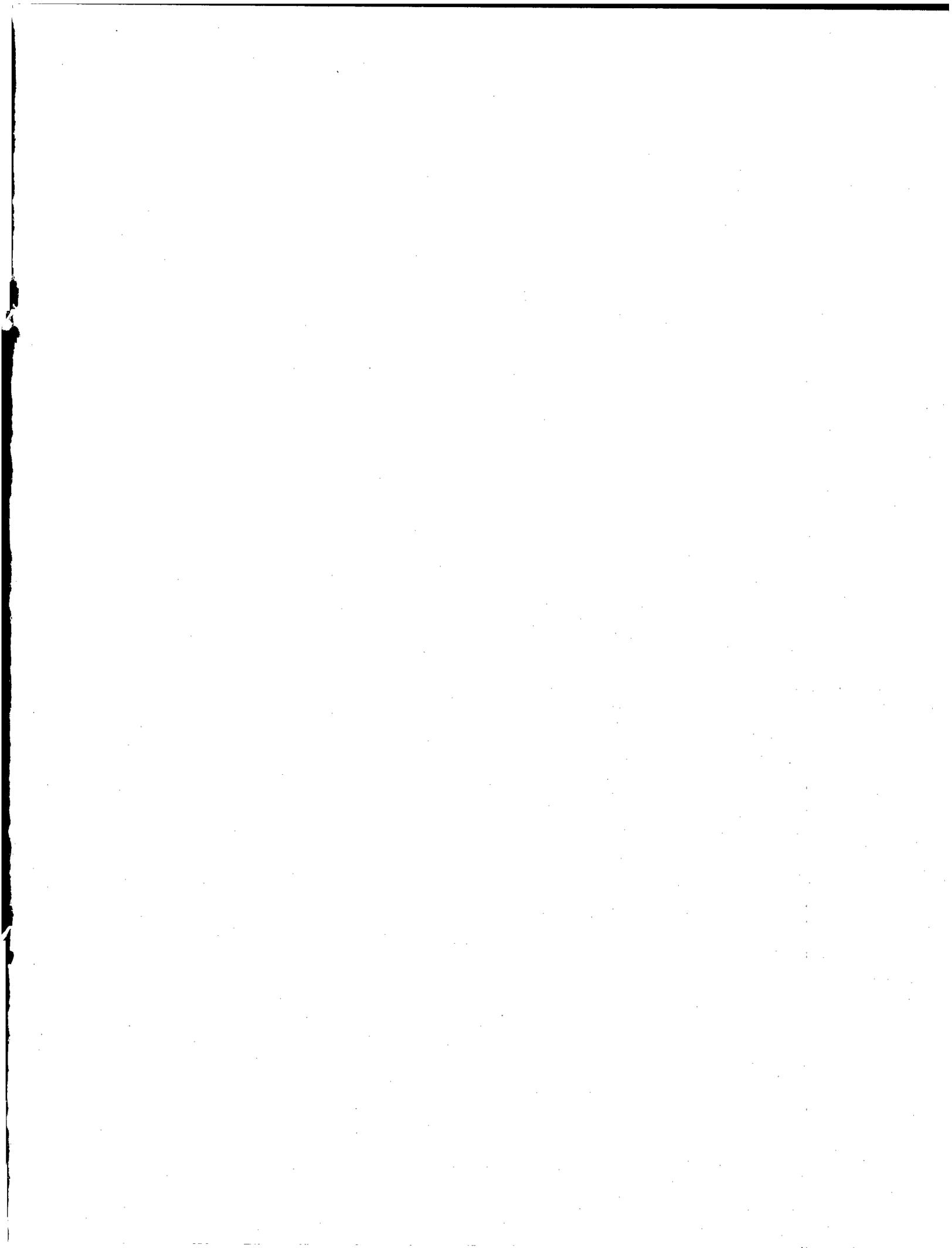
BACKGROUND : As Congress considers consolidating statistical agencies, comparisons are often made between the decentralized U.S. statistical system and the centralized Canadian system. In contrast to Statistics Canada, 72 agencies comprise the U.S. federal statistical system.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) How does the organization of the U.S. and Canadian statistical systems differ? (2) What governmental and socio-economic differences and similarities underlie comparisons between the U.S. and Canadian systems? (3) What are the strengths and weaknesses of switching to a consolidated system in terms of cost, data quality, and effect on data users and survey respondents?

TITLE: FEDERAL STATISTICAL AGENCIES' BUDGET APPROPRIATIONS (243063)

BACKGROUND : Congress is considering consolidating the 70 federal agencies that perform statistical services. The search for budget savings and concerns about duplication motivate this consideration. In FY 1995, agencies requested over \$2.5 billion for statistical programs.

KEY QUESTIONS : 1) What are the key federal statistical programs and the agencies responsible for them? 2) What is the primary mission of each agency? 3) What was the funding and source (direct appropriation, reimbursement from other federal agency or nonfederal customer) for these programs FY 1992-1995? 4) What are the funding requests for these programs for FY 1996?



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

TITLE: REVIEW OF THE REORGANIZATION OF THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET (OMB 2000) (246077)

BACKGROUND : OMB 2000 is a major reorganization of OMB, intended to better integrate management and budget functions. The requestors have asked GAO to (1) describe what changes OMB 2000 has brought about, including effects on statutory offices and responsibilities, and (2) determine what OMB views as the effort's objectives and measurable results.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What are the goals of OMB 2000? (2) How will OMB measure the results? (3) To what extent have OMB mgmt. & budget functions been integrated? (4) How has the reorganization affected OMB's statutory offices (OFFM, OFPP, OIRA) & responsibilities? (5) Has OMB 2000 affected the implementation of govt.-wide initiatives, i.e., Govt. Perf. & Results Act?

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

TITLE: REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE OF CONTRACTED AND IN-HOUSE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SERVICES IN GSA (246078)

BACKGROUND : We previously reported on the extent to which property management services have been contracted or retained in-house by GSA (GAO/GGD-94-126BR).

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What has been the performance of contracted & in-house activities in the Public Buildings Service (PBS)? (2) What are the perceptions of GSA & tenant agency officials on the effectiveness of GSA's use of in-house & contracted services? (3) Could GSA improve mgmt. & oversight information on the effectiveness of its property mgmt. services?

TITLE: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: STATE AND LOCAL PRIVATIZATION INITIATIVES (246087)

BACKGROUND : As part of upcoming hearings on the privatization and reinvention efforts of the District of Columbia, Congress asked GAO to testify on the privatization initiatives of state and city governments.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What are the privatization trends and initiatives being adopted by city and state governments to improve service delivery? (2) Are there lessons learned or impediments to the District having a successful privatization program?

FEDERAL STATISTICS

TITLE: THE FEDERAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM'S FUNCTIONAL DIFFERENCES (243038)

BACKGROUND : Because of the statistical system's current decentralized structure, the collection and dissemination of statistical information depends on the effective performance of many separate statistical agencies and programs. There has been no systematic investigation by GAO of what constitutes an effective statistical agency.

KEY QUESTIONS : 1. Do the guidelines established by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) for an effective statistical agency represent a valid evaluation criteria? 2. To what extent do the Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and National Center for Health Statistics meet a selected number of criteria established by the NAS?

TITLE: ASSESSMENT OF STATISTICAL AGENCIES' PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE ECONOMIC STATISTICS INITIATIVES (243048)

BACKGROUND : GAO was asked to assess statistical agencies' progress in implementing the Economic Statistics Initiatives for high priority improvements in statistics. Originally termed the Boskin Initiatives, these recommendations received partial funding and continue to receive support by the Clinton Administration.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Describe the impetus for Economic Statistics Initiatives (ESI); (2) Describe specific agency plans, funds requested, and funds received FY 90-94; (3) Describe agencies' progress in implementing ESI; (4) Describe other improvements outside ESI from FY 90-94; and (5) Summarize FY 95 Presidential budget for economic statistical programs and obtain agencies' views.

TITLE: REENGINEERING THE CENSUS UNDER BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS (243060)

BACKGROUND : Without any changes to the way the Census Bureau conducted the 1990 Decennial Census, the Bureau estimates that the next census could cost as much as \$4.8 billion. The Appropriations Committee is concerned about the increasing cost and has encouraged the Bureau to reengineer its census-taking methodology.

KEY QUESTIONS : 1) Do the 1995 Test Census results demonstrate that alternative census-taking methods can reduce costs and not impair data quality? 2) Will the Bureau's plan for reengineering the census result in cost savings?
