



Highlights of [GAO-12-96](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

Since September 11, 2001, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) mission and workforce have expanded, and the FBI has outgrown its aging headquarters, the J. Edgar Hoover Building (Hoover Building). As a result, the FBI also operates in over 40 annexes, the majority located in the National Capital Region. In the explanatory statement accompanying the 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act, GAO was directed to examine the FBI's headquarters facilities. In response, GAO examined the extent to which (1) these facilities support the FBI's security, space, and building condition requirements and (2) the FBI and the General Services Administration (GSA)—the real property steward for the Hoover Building—have followed leading capital decision-making practices in identifying alternatives for meeting the FBI's facility needs. GAO reviewed security, space, and condition assessments and planning studies; visited FBI facilities; and interviewed FBI and GSA officials.

What GAO Recommends

The FBI should document decisions about, and track its implementation of, all security recommendations for the Hoover Building and the FBI's headquarters annexes. GSA should reassess its decision to limit recapitalization investments in the Hoover Building, since the FBI is likely to stay in it for several more years while its long-term facility needs are being planned. The FBI agreed with these recommendations. GSA indicated it is working to implement GAO's recommendation.

View [GAO-12-96](#). For more information, contact David C. Maurer at (202) 512-9627 or maurerd@gao.gov or David J. Wise at (202) 512-2834 or wised@gao.gov.

November 2011

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Actions Needed to Document Security Decisions and Address Issues with Condition of Headquarters Buildings

What GAO Found

According to FBI and GSA assessments, the FBI's headquarters facilities—the Hoover Building and the headquarters annexes—do not fully support the FBI's long-term security, space, and building condition requirements. The FBI has addressed many **security** concerns at the Hoover Building by implementing protective measures. Furthermore, in response to a recommendation GAO made in a law enforcement sensitive version of this report issued in July 2011, the FBI has updated its security assessment of the Hoover Building in accordance with security standards issued in 2010. The assessment includes recommendations but does not indicate whether recommended actions will be implemented. While this is reasonable given the short period of time since GAO's July 2011 report, documentation of decisions on the recommendations and tracking implementation is important because of facility planning and budget implications—for both the Hoover Building and a new headquarters—and time needed to coordinate with GSA. FBI officials told GAO that the annexes will be assessed against the 2010 security standards. The officials noted, though, that the dispersion of staff in annexes creates security challenges. The Hoover Building's original design is inefficient, according to GSA assessments, making it difficult to reconfigure **space** to promote staff collaboration. Staff dispersion across annexes likewise hampers collaboration and the performance of some classified work. Furthermore, the **condition** of the Hoover Building is deteriorating, and GSA assessments have identified significant recapitalization needs. However, GSA has decided to limit investments in the Hoover Building to those necessary to protect health and safety and keep building systems functioning while GSA assesses the FBI's facility needs. This decision increases the potential for building system failures and disruption to the FBI's operations.

Through studies conducted over the past decade, the FBI and GSA have considered three broad alternatives, each with variations, to try to meet the FBI's facility needs—(1) modernize the Hoover Building, (2) demolish the Hoover Building and construct a new headquarters on the existing site, and (3) acquire a new headquarters on a new site. In doing so, the FBI and GSA thus far have generally followed leading practices for capital decision making. To varying degrees, these alternatives would improve security, space, and building conditions, but each would take several years to implement. Estimates of the alternatives' costs, developed in the studies, are not comparable because they were prepared at different times and for different purposes. The FBI and GSA plan to discuss the FBI's facility needs with the Office of Management and Budget, and GSA and the FBI will need to present a business case, including current, comparable cost estimates, to support the choice of a preferred alternative and financing strategy. The FBI's 2011 security assessment of the Hoover Building, as well as information on any security improvements that may be needed at the annexes, could inform the agencies' decisions and help ensure that limited budgetary resources are allocated effectively.

This is a public version of a law enforcement sensitive report that GAO issued in July 2011, which has been updated, including a modification to a recommendation, to reflect recent FBI actions. Information that the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security deemed sensitive has been omitted.