

U.S. Government Accountability Office

**SERVING THE
CONGRESS AND THE
NATION**

**Strategic Plan
2018–2023**

Accessible Version

GAO-18-1SP

GAO'S STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Mission

GAO exists to support the Congress in meeting its constitutional responsibilities and to help improve the performance and ensure the accountability of the federal government for the benefit of the American people

GAO CORE VALUES

MISSION VALUES

- Accountability .
- Integrity
- Reliability

PEOPLE VALUES

- Valued
- Respected
- Treated Fairly

TRENDS SHAPING THE UNITED STATES AND ITS PLACE IN THE WORLD

- GLOBALSECURITY
- DEBT AND FISCAL OUTLOOK
- ECONOMICS,TRADE, ANDCONNECTEDNESS
- EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT
- CHANGESIN PEOPLE AND SOCIETY
- SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
- GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNANCE
- ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

WELL-BEING AND FINANCIAL SECURITY

Goal: Provide timely, quality service to the Congress and the federal government to address current and emerging challenges to the well-being and financial security of the American people related to...

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Health care needs
- Lifelong learning
- Challenges facing an aging population
- Effective system of justice
- Housing finance and viable communities
- Stable financial system and consumer protection
- Natural resources and the environment
- National infrastructure
- Benefits and protections for workers, families, and children

NATIONAL SECURITY AND GLOBAL INTERDEPENDENCE

Goal: Provide timely, quality service to the Congress and the federal government to respond to changing security threats and challenges of national security and global interdependence involving...

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Homeland security
- Military capabilities and readiness
- Foreign policy and international economic interests
- Intelligence Community's management and integration

NATIONAL CHALLENGES

Goal: Help transform the federal government to address national challenges by assessing...

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Government's fiscal position and approaches to address current and projected fiscal gaps
- Major management challenges and program risks
- Fraud, waste, and abuse and needed improvements in internal controls

MAXIMIZE GAO VALUE

Goal: Maximize the value of GAO by enabling quality, timely service to the Congress and by being a leading practices federal agency by focusing on...

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Empowering GAO's workforce to excel
- Delivery of quality results and products
- Promotion of knowledge sharing, government standards and strategic solutions
- Providing modern integrated tools and systems

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ABBREVIATIONS

BOP	Federal Bureau of Prisons
CMS	Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
DATAAct	Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014
DOD	Department of Defense
DOE	Department of Energy
DOJ	Department of Justice
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
GDP	gross domestic product
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act of 1993
HHS	Department of Health and Human Services
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development
IC	Intelligence Community
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NNSA	National Nuclear Security Administration
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
Treasury	Department of the Treasury
USPS	U.S. Postal Service
VA	Department of Veterans Affairs

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LETTER FROM THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL

February 2018

I am pleased to present GAO's Strategic Plan for Serving the Congress and the Nation for fiscal years 2018 to 2023. As the nation confronts a series of both new and long-standing challenges, this plan describes our goals and strategies to support the Congress to identify cost savings and other financial opportunities; to make government more accountable, efficient and effective; and ultimately to improve the safety, security, and well-being of the American people.

GAO's efforts during this planning period will include work that

- identifies cost-savings, revenue enhancements, and other opportunities through improved government operations and legislative action;

- draws much-needed attention to long-term fiscal exposures and large and growing areas of federal spending, such as health care and interest costs;

- ◆ monitors and evaluates efforts to protect the government and the nation's critical infrastructure from cyberattacks and other global threats;

- helps the Congress anticipate and respond to rapid developments in science and technology that will transform a range of activities across government and society; and identifies ways to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of government programs and policies.

The federal government remains on an unsustainable long-term fiscal path—it is spending more money than it is collecting. GAO's work will place emphasis on strategies to save the government money through improved operations and by highlighting the large-scale fiscal exposures and financial liabilities that can threaten the health of the government's finances over time.

GAO's High-Risk List provides a road map for priority actions needed in agencies and program areas that we deem high risk due to their vulnerabilities to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement, or are most in need of transformation. Areas on the High-Risk List cover some of the largest agencies and programs, including Department of Defense financial management and business operations, Medicare, Medicaid, Department of Veterans Affairs health care, the U.S. Postal Service, Internal Revenue Service enforcement of tax laws, and the Department of Homeland Security.

The list also highlights areas where the government faces large and potentially unknown future financial liabilities, such as hundreds of billions of dollars in flood insurance claims, pension system guarantees, and disability and health claims. Moreover, the High-Risk List includes a number of areas focused on the health, safety, and well-being of Americans, including the control of toxic substances, food safety, oversight of medical products, and protecting the nation's cyber critical infrastructure.

In 2021, the U.S. Government Accountability Office will mark 100 years of supporting the Congress by helping to improve the performance and ensure the accountability of the federal government for the benefit of the American people. Since our founding, we have evolved into an agency of dedicated and multidisciplinary staff, made up of experts in conducting financial and performance audits, program evaluations, policy analysis, and technology assessments covering virtually every federal program, activity, and function.

GAO also performs foresight work to explore the implications of emerging issues that pose both risks and opportunities for the federal government. In addition, GAO continually explores and identifies new ways to communicate the results of our work to Congress and the American people in an accessible manner.

Above all else, we will safeguard the high quality of our work by working effectively and efficiently while at the same time maintaining our strong commitment to a skilled and diverse workforce and an inclusive workplace.

In the Strategic Context that follows, we outline a number of drivers and trends that will shape GAO's work as we support the Congress in the coming years. Some of these are long-standing issues, while others have emerged more recently with the potential to rapidly affect government and society.

LETTER FROM THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL

To ensure this plan accurately reflects the needs of the Congress and the nation as a whole, we invited comments on a draft of this plan from Members of Congress and their staff; our Comptroller General's Advisory Board; GAO advisory entities, which include representatives from the federal inspector general, state and local government

audit communities, and academia; and GAO's sister agencies, the Congressional Budget Office and the Congressional Research Service. We have reviewed and incorporated these comments into the final version of the plan, as appropriate.

If you have any questions, please contact me at

(202) 512-5500 or dodarog@gao.gov or Managing Director for Strategic Planning and External Liaison James-Christian Blockwood at (202) 512-2639 or blockwoodjc@gao.gov.

Sincerely,

Gene L. Dodaro

Comptroller General of the United States

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Evolving threats to global and national security, rapid science and technology innovation, and shifting demographic trends point to a period of transformation that will affect society, the economy, and government for many years to come. GAO has in place tools and systems to identify trends and respond to them as they evolve to remain responsive to congressional priorities and to be positioned to adopt new audit and evaluation techniques as necessary.

The United States likely will continue deploying significant resources of the federal government to counter terrorism and other global threats. Ongoing military and diplomatic operations overseas, including Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan, will involve combating insurgents, supporting peacekeeping, building capacity, reconstructing infrastructure, and training other nations' forces. Moreover, North Korea's nuclear activities, territorial disputes in the South China Sea, and cyber-attacks by state and non-state actors all pose serious challenges to global security.

Around the globe, fragile economic conditions, growing numbers of people displaced by conflict, natural and manmade disasters, and a re-evaluation of commitments to global trade are all contributing to future uncertainty. Such challenges will require careful consideration and coordination with other levels of government to develop effective near-term responses and long-term solutions.

One of the leading drivers of the nation's debt is the federal government's existing commitments to an aging population. The number of baby boomers turning 65 will continue to rise and further drive spending for major health and retirement programs, which will have significant fiscal impacts on both the federal budget and the economy. At the same time, since the 2007–2009 financial crisis, we have seen a decrease in the labor force participation rate and birth rate, which could leave fewer workers to finance the federal health and retirement programs that serve older Americans.

Other demographic and societal trends, such as growing income inequality in the United States in recent decades, disparities in life expectancy, and uncertainty about future population growth due to changing immigration policy and patterns, have the potential to affect a variety of federal programs and public policies in areas such as health care, education, and income support.

Cybersecurity threats pose considerable and growing challenges for government and society. More connected devices and greater reliance on Internet-connected systems in homes, businesses, and government provides substantial efficiency and convenience. This same connectedness also poses risks for the nation's critical infrastructure, intellectual property, and sensitive data. Data protection, privacy, and national security are intricately tied together and will require sustained attention from government and nongovernmental entities alike.

Federal coordination with state and local governments will be essential as the nation works to meet its future challenges. In fiscal year 2016, the federal government provided state and local governments nearly \$661 billion in federal grants, funding programs in health care, transportation, income security, education, job training, social services, community development, environmental protection, and other areas. Effective collaborations, networks, and partnerships across sectoral boundaries will be vital to achieving national policy objectives.

Balancing multiple competing demands on the nation's land, water, and air resources will be critical in the coming years. Other areas requiring attention will be meeting challenges associated with the country's long-term energy and food needs, as well as managing the federal government's fiscal exposures from climate-related risks. The costs of recovering from the 2017 hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, as well as serious wildfires and other disasters, underscore the need for planning and disaster resilience. The federal government also faces long-term financial liabilities for environmental cleanup, which in fiscal year 2016 were estimated to cost \$447 billion.

New and emerging issues in science and technology, such as artificial intelligence and genome editing, will fundamentally alter lives across the nation and the world. Technological developments in these areas are proceeding at a rapid pace. They present great opportunities to improve quality of life and the performance of the economy and the government. At the same time, the speed and scope of these technological developments likely will challenge the federal government's and the Congress' ability to assess program and policy implications in areas such as ethics, security, safety, privacy, and equity.

These transformative technologies also call attention to the need to prepare students and workers for the jobs of the future. Automation has the potential to create many new jobs and enhance U.S. competitiveness, but it may also disrupt employment in various sectors of the economy, including the service industry, manufacturing, and transportation. The accelerated pace of technological advances suggests the need for closer alignment between

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

education and workforce systems to help prepare workers for shifts in employment and the nature of work that may lie ahead.

Against the backdrop of these trends, a plan is needed to put the nation on a sustainable long-term fiscal path. In the near term, the Congress and executive branch agencies have opportunities to improve the government's fiscal condition. GAO's High Risk program and our work on duplicative, overlapping, and fragmented federal programs can help the government save billions of dollars. GAO's work also identifies a number of strategies and specific actions agencies can take to reduce improper payments, which could yield significant additional savings.

GAO remains ready to assist in these efforts in an era of dynamic change and transformation in the years ahead.

For additional information about the forces and drivers forming the strategic context of the plan, see Trends Affecting Government and Society ([GAO-18-396SP](#)).

GAO At a Glance

ABOUT GAO

GAO is an independent, nonpartisan professional services agency in the legislative branch of the federal government. Commonly known as the audit and investigative arm of the Congress or the “congressional watchdog,” we examine how taxpayer dollars are spent and advise lawmakers and agency heads on ways to make government work better.

GAO was established under the Budget and Accounting Act of 1921 to investigate how federal dollars were spent. Over time, our mission evolved from voucher auditing to include the more comprehensive program and performance evaluations we are known for today.

The Comptroller General of the United States is the head of GAO. Gene L. Dodaro is the current Comptroller General.

CORE VALUES

Our mission values of accountability, integrity, and reliability are reflected in all of the work we do. Additionally, our people values of valuing, respecting, and treating staff fairly are equally essential to successfully achieving our mission and making GAO a great place to work.

MISSION VALUES:

Accountability

Enhance the economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and credibility of the federal government

Integrity

Conduct professional, objective, fact-based, non-partisan, non-ideological, fair, and balanced work

Reliability

Produce timely, accurate, useful, clear, and candid products

People Values

Valued

Seek out and appreciate each person’s perspectives

Respected

Treat everyone with dignity

Treated Fairly

Foster a work environment that provides opportunities for all

ABOUT THIS PLAN

GAO FACTS AND FIGURES

As a legislative branch agency, we are exempt from many laws that apply to the executive branch agencies. However, we generally hold ourselves to the spirit of many of these laws, including the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) and the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010.

This strategic plan provides what we consider to be information equivalent to what is supplied by the executive branch agencies in their GPRA-required strategic plan. Additionally, we have separated the plan into three documents:

1. Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives,
2. Key Efforts, and
3. Trends Affecting Government and Society.

This approach will provide us the opportunity to update our key efforts and trends as appropriate in response to any changes in our internal and external operating environment.

Our Employees

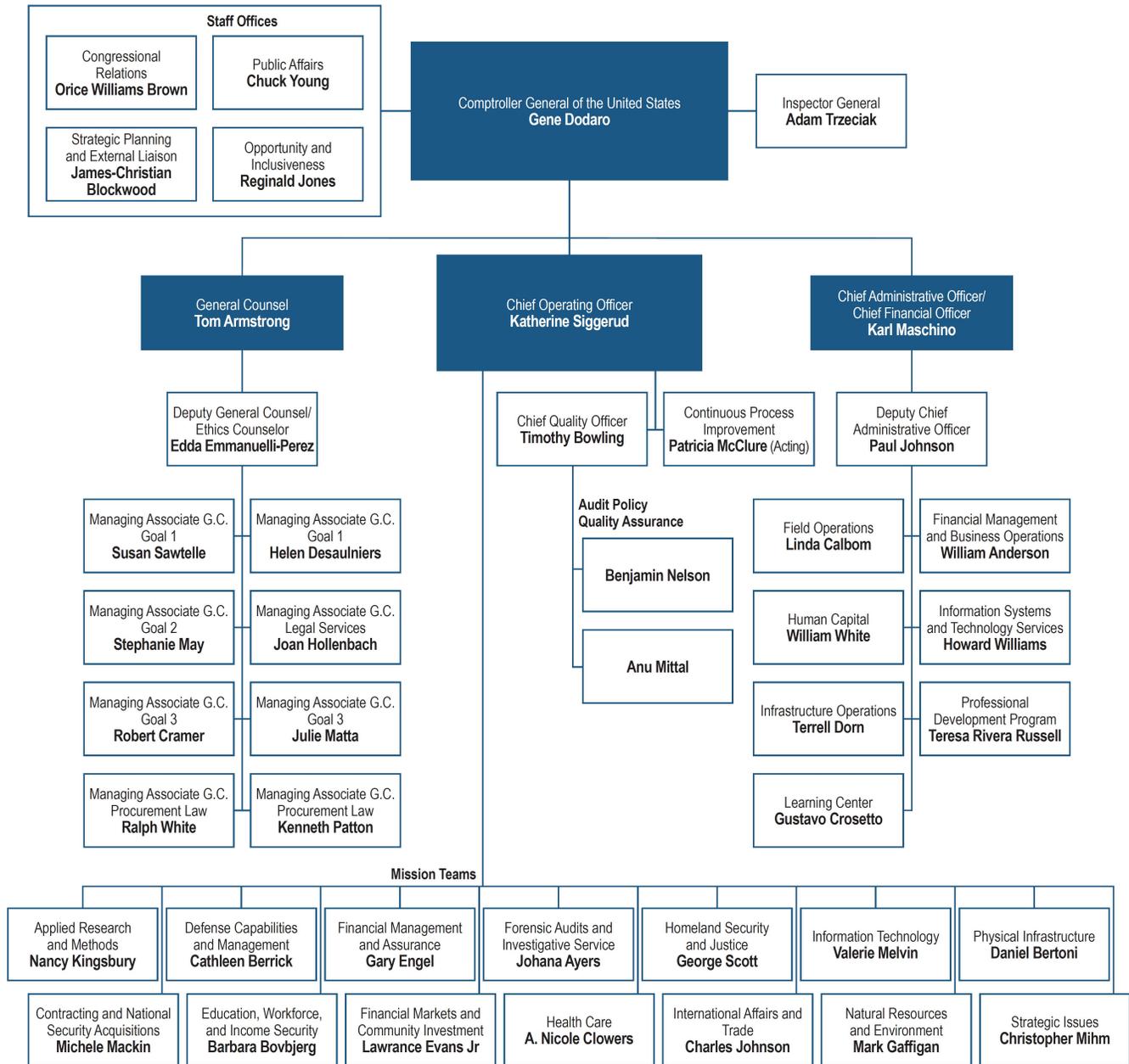
GAO is composed of roughly 3,000 employees possessing academic degrees in various fields, including

- Accounting Law
- Engineering Information Technology
- Economics
- Social Science
- Physical Science
- Subject-Area Specialists

Washington D.C. Headquarters and 11 Field Offices

- Atlanta
- Boston
- Chicago
- Dallas
- Dayton
- Denver
- Huntsville
- Los Angeles
- Norfolk
- Oakland
- Seattle

GAO Organization Chart



Legend:

 The Executive Committee



Note: Everyone listed on this table, other than the Comptroller General, is a Senior Executive Service (SES) level manager. Also, with the exception of the Comptroller General of the United States, the Chief Operating Officer, the Chief Administrative Officer, the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, the Inspector General, the General Counsel, the Deputy General Counsel, the Chief Quality Officer, the Chief Information Officer, and the Chief Human Capital Officer, the SES managers are titled "Managing Director."

Source: GAO. | GAO-18-1SP

January 2018

GOAL 1

Address Current and Emerging Challenges to the Well-Being and Financial Security of the American People

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 Financing and Programs to Serve the Health Needs of an Aging and Diverse Population
- 1.2 Lifelong Learning to Enhance U.S. Competitiveness
- 1.3 Benefits and Protections for Workers, Families, and Children
- 1.4 Financial Security and Well-Being of an Aging Population
- 1.5 A Responsive, Fair, and Effective System of Justice
- 1.6 Housing Finance and Viable Communities
- 1.7 A Stable Financial System and Sufficient Consumer Protection
- 1.8 Responsible Stewardship of Natural Resources and the Environment
- 1.9 A Viable, Safe, Secure, and Accessible National Physical Infrastructure

GAO's first strategic goal focuses on efforts to promote U.S. citizens' general well-being and financial security. These efforts depend, in part, on how well the federal government addresses current and emerging challenges associated with health, education, demographic shifts, financial systems, crime, natural resources, and physical infrastructure. In light of these circumstances and the evolving needs of those whose well-being and financial security are most at risk, it is essential that GAO help the Congress and the federal government to

- ◆ identify, prioritize, and target public investment to the most pressing challenges affecting citizens' general well-being;
- ◆ manage and oversee federal efforts to improve citizens' general well-being;
- ◆ explore and assess alternative approaches for providing benefits and protections; and
- ◆ balance the demands of competing objectives to ensure decisions made today do not compromise future needs.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.1

Financing and Programs to Serve the Health Needs of an Aging and Diverse Population

Although the growth in health care costs has moderated recently, by 2025 total health care spending in the United States is projected to reach more than \$5 trillion, or about \$16,000 per capita.¹ Growth in federal spending for health care programs—more than a quarter of total private and public health care spending—has exceeded the rate of economic growth in the past and is projected to continue this trend (see fig. 1).

Growth in federal spending on health care will be driven both by increasing enrollment, in part stemming from the aging of the population, and increasing health care spending per person. The federal government faces challenges to effectively and efficiently managing health care programs, including Medicare, Medicaid, and programs that serve American Indians, veterans, and military service members and that offer subsidized private insurance to lower-income Americans. Specifically, the demands to meet Americans’ health needs are growing in volume and complexity while oversight is becoming more challenging.

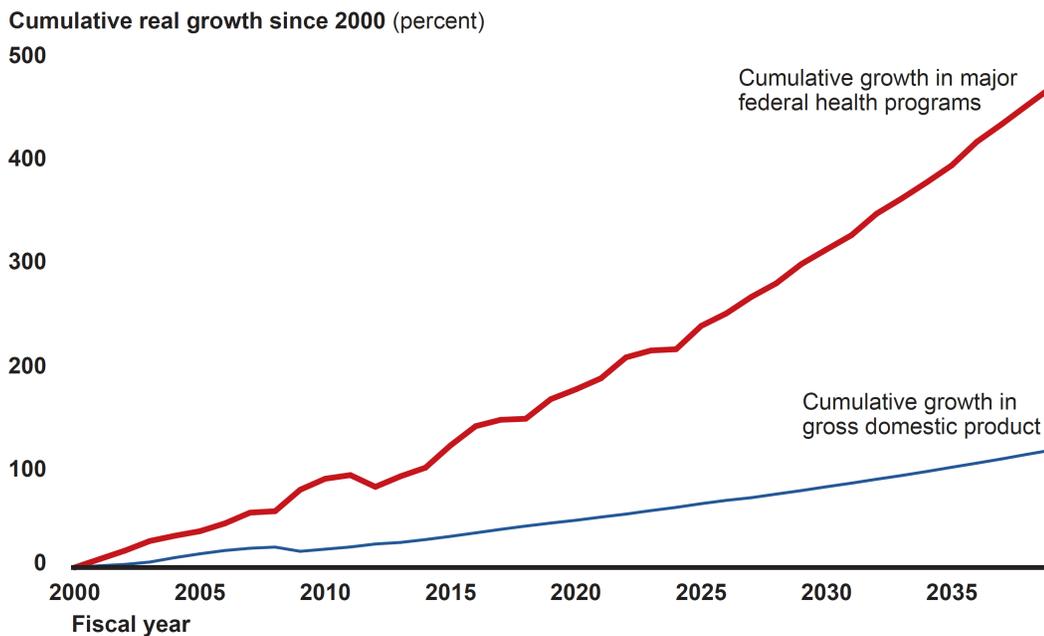
GAO’s work on health coverage, program expenditures, financing and management, access to and quality of care, protection of public health, and program integrity can help federal leaders make strategic decisions that will allow the federal government both to provide health care and manage its effectiveness and efficiency.

GAO’s Health Care Team

Issue Areas: Federal health care policies and programs, which make up about a quarter of federal spending and have tangible effects on people’s lives.

Expertise: Helping ensure that programs provide access to quality care, protect the public, and remain fiscally sustainable.

FIGURE 1: ACTUAL AND PROJECTED FEDERAL SPENDING ON MAJOR HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS GROWS FASTER THAN GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT



Source: GAO analysis of Congressional Budget Office data. | GAO-18-1SP

Note: Data after fiscal year 2015 are projected.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.1 PERFORMANCE GOALS

Financing and Programs to Serve the Health Needs of an Aging and Diverse Population

- **Performance Goal 1.1.1:** Assess trends and issues affecting the health care system.
- **Performance Goal 1.1.2:** Assess trends, costs, and issues in public and private health insurance coverage and reforms.
- **Performance Goal 1.1.3:** Assess efforts to reduce improper payments and fraud, waste, and abuse in federal health care programs.
- **Performance Goal 1.1.4:** Evaluate Medicare reform, financing, expenditures, operations, and program integrity.
- **Performance Goal 1.1.5:** Evaluate Medicaid financing, expenditures, and oversight.
- **Performance Goal 1.1.6:** Assess state and federal efforts to provide health care for potentially vulnerable populations.
- **Performance Goal 1.1.7:** Assess actions and options for improving VA's and DOD's health care services.
- **Performance Goal 1.1.8:** Evaluate the effectiveness of federal programs to promote and ensure public health, including the safety and efficacy of drugs and medical devices and prevent and respond to public health emergencies.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.2

Lifelong Learning to Enhance U.S. Competitiveness

Ensuring access to quality lifelong learning opportunities is central to enhancing

U.S. competitiveness in the global economy, but several challenges impede access, including educational inequities in primary and secondary education and rising college tuition.

- Many students, particularly those attending schools serving high concentrations of low-income and minority students, lack opportunities for quality early learning or primary education (K-12) and frequently graduate unprepared for college or the workplace.
- As technology transforms the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in the economy, most American jobs in the future will require at least some college (see fig. 2). At the same time, rising costs of college tuition have propelled federal student loan debt past \$1.3 trillion and remain a barrier to college for many.
- While recent legislation requires closer collaboration between federal education and workforce training programs that better connect workers with in-demand jobs, these programs must continue adjusting to socioeconomic challenges in light of evolving federal, state, and local partnerships.

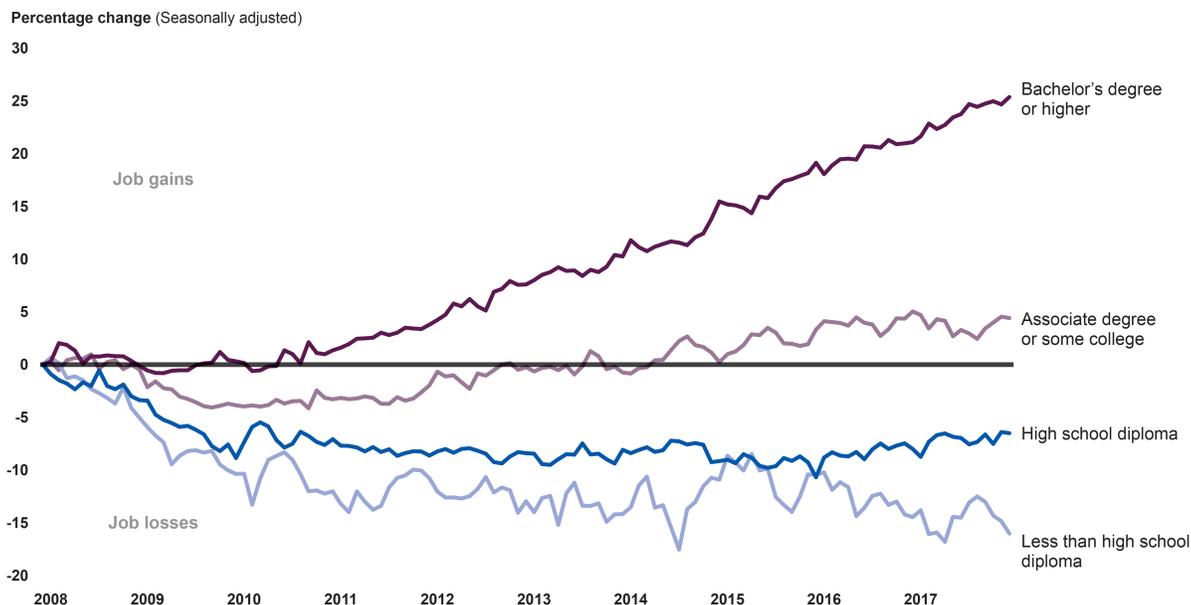
GAO’s work will help the Congress assess these trends and challenges to ensure U.S. competitiveness.

GAO’s Education, Workforce, and Income Security Team

Issue Areas: Federal programs and legislation that affect the quality of life for everyone, from infancy through old age.

Expertise: Helping ensure the well-being of children and students; fostering and protecting the workforce; and ensuring adequate care and support for the disadvantaged, veterans, people with disabilities, and older Americans.

FIGURE 2: CHANGES IN EMPLOYMENT BY EDUCATION LEVEL, 2008–2017



Source: GAO analysis of data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. | GAO-18-1SP

²See GAO, *K-12 Education: Better Use of Information Could Help Agencies Identify Disparities and Address Racial Discrimination*, GAO-16-345 (Washington, D.C.: April 21, 2016) and OECD, *Equity and Quality in Education: Supporting Disadvantaged Students and Schools*, OECD Publishing (2012).

Source: GAO analysis of data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. | GAO-18-1SP

²See GAO, *K-12 Education: Better Use of Information Could Help Agencies Identify Disparities and Address Racial Discrimination*, GAO-16-345 (Washington, D.C.: April 21, 2016) and OECD, *Equity and Quality in Education: Supporting Disadvantaged Students and Schools*, OECD Publishing (2012).

GOAL 1

Address Current and Emerging Challenges to the Well-Being and Financial Security of the American People

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.2 PERFORMANCE GOALS

Lifelong Learning to Enhance U.S. Competitiveness

- **Performance Goal 1.2.1:** Assess policy and administrative challenges to improving school readiness and K-12 education to better prepare youths for college and the workforce.
- **Performance Goal 1.2.2:** Identify opportunities to improve programs that provide postsecondary federal student aid.
- **Performance Goal 1.2.3:** Identify ways to improve programs that facilitate job opportunities for workers, including veterans, and enhance their skills for occupations in demand in an evolving economy.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.3

Benefits and Protections for Workers, Families, and Children

Shifts in the U.S. economy over the past decade have changed the nature of work and imposed new conditions affecting wage and benefit arrangements and occupational health and safety. These economic shifts caused an increasing number of households to seek assistance from the social safety net and challenged federally supported programs to provide efficient service while ensuring program integrity (see fig. 3). For example, outlays for disability benefits increased from

\$165 billion in fiscal year 2007 to \$286 billion in fiscal year 2016 and an estimated \$281 billion in fiscal year 2017.

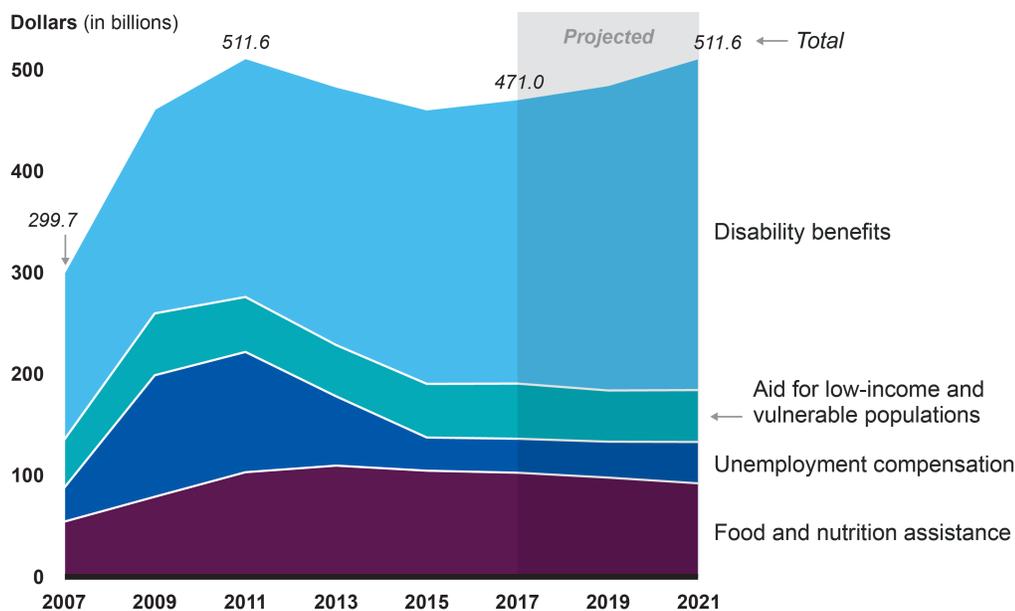
The federal government and states jointly ensure the viability and integrity of our nation’s social safety net, which includes programs that promote and support employment opportunities and safe workplaces; help those who cannot work to provide for themselves; and protect vulnerable populations, including at-risk children and youth. In 2017, the estimated federal investment in programs that provide assistance to these groups in key areas—such as unemployment payments, food assistance, and disability benefits—was \$471 billion. Federal agencies and states will need to continue working together to ensure the welfare and success of the nation’s population from childhood through retirement.

GAO’s work will help assure those with need can access efficient and effective programs while ensuring program integrity across the constellation of federal programs.

Did you Know

Many benefits resulting from GAO’s work cannot be measured in dollars but still lead to program and operational improvements. In fiscal year 2017, we recorded 1,280 of these other benefits.

FIGURE 3: ACTUAL AND ESTIMATED OUTLAYS FOR SELECTED ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, FISCAL YEARS 2007–2021



Source: GAO analysis of Office of Management and Budget data. | GAO-18-1SP
 Note: Outlays are estimated beginning in fiscal year 2017.

Source: GAO analysis of Office of Management and Budget data. | GAO-18-1SP

Note: Outlays are estimated beginning in fiscal year 2017.

GOAL 1

Address Current and Emerging Challenges to the Well-Being and Financial Security of the American People

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.3 PERFORMANCE GOALS

Benefits and Protections for Workers, Families, and Children

- **Performance Goal 1.3.1:** Identify opportunities to improve programs that provide social services and economic and nutrition assistance to individuals, families, and children.
- **Performance Goal 1.3.2:** Assess the effectiveness of strategies and safeguards to protect workers.
- **Performance Goal 1.3.3:** Identify ways to improve federal policies and support for people with disabilities.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.4

Financial Security and Well-Being of an Aging Population

Ensuring that older adults have a secure retirement is a shared goal of government, employers, and individuals. However, various trends make achieving this goal increasingly difficult. For one, Social Security continues to face serious long-term financial challenges—with its Old Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund expected to be depleted by 2035—largely because people are living longer and large numbers of baby boomers are retiring.

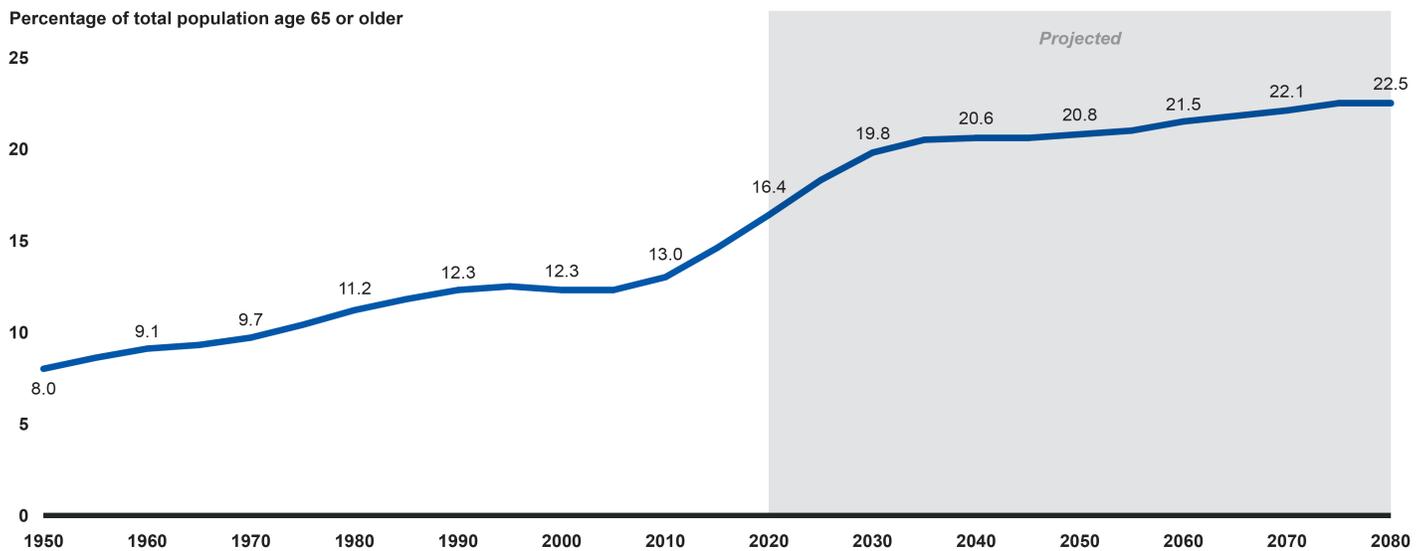
By 2040, 20.6 percent of Americans will be at least 65 years old, compared with 12.3 percent in 2000 (see fig. 4). In addition, employers have shifted more responsibility and risk to individuals for ensuring their own retirement security. As a result, many individuals will have to work longer, save more, and better manage those savings. Meanwhile, despite the growing need for community-based services to help seniors remain independent, fiscal pressures at all levels of government may limit funding for such services.

In light of these challenges, GAO’s work will analyze the necessary policies and programs to assist policymakers in helping millions of Americans attain a secure retirement.

Did You Know?

GAO has found that many individuals face challenges in their efforts to provide for a financially secure retirement, particularly at a time when increases in longevity further raise the risk of outliving their savings

FIGURE 4: OLDER AMERICANS COMPRISE AN INCREASING SHARE OF TOTAL POPULATION



Source: GAO analysis of data from the Office of the Chief Actuary, Social Security Administration (intermediate assumptions). | GAO-18-1SP

Source: GAO analysis of data from the Office of the Chief Actuary, Social Security Administration (intermediate assumptions). | GAO-18-1SP

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.4 PERFORMANCE GOALS

Financial Security and Well-Being of an Aging Population

- **Performance Goal 1.4.1:** Assess the policy and administrative challenges to financing government benefits for older adults.
- **Performance Goal 1.4.2:** Assess the policies and administration of programs that could enable older adults to maintain their independence and ties to the community.
- **Performance Goal 1.4.3:** Assess the adequacy and effectiveness of private and public employer-sponsored retirement plans in providing security to older adults.
- **Performance Goal 1.4.4:** Assess strategies and opportunities that help individuals improve their employment options, security, and preparedness for retirement.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.5

A Responsive, Fair, and Effective System of Justice

The increase in drug overdose deaths, the evolving nature of domestic terrorism, and ongoing concerns about human trafficking demonstrate that the American people face evolving criminal threats that require a robust, fair, and effective system of justice. Although violent crime rates nationally remain significantly lower than in previous decades, some communities have seen increased levels of violent crime in recent years. In addition, illicit drug use poses significant and growing law enforcement and public health challenges.

Furthermore, federal agencies need to effectively manage the federal offender population, including ensuring better outcomes for those re-entering society. The Department of Justice’s (DOJ) grant resources that fund and sustain programs to fight crime must also be monitored to avoid duplication and unnecessary overlap.

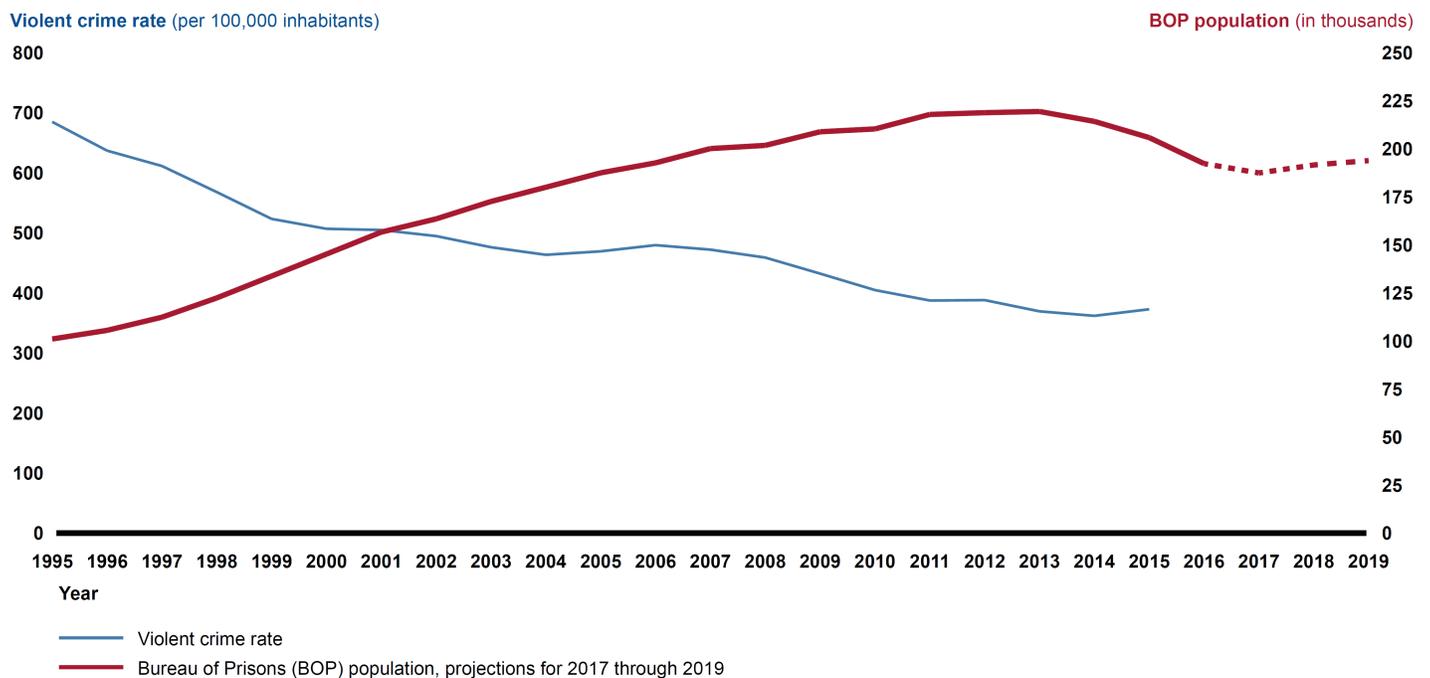
GAO’s work will continue to help the Congress assess efforts to protect against and respond to violent crimes, drug trafficking, and domestic terrorism, as well as manage the federal offender population. GAO’s work will also assess federal efforts to protect vulnerable populations and help local communities ensure an effective criminal justice system through federal grant programs.

GAO’s Homeland Security and Justice Team

Issue Areas: National security, law enforcement, and emergency preparedness efforts.

Expertise: Helping strengthen border security and critical infrastructure protection, facilitating coordination to improve security, improving emergency and disaster preparedness and response, and strengthening the justice system.

FIGURE 5: U.S. FEDERAL PRISON POPULATION, 1995–2016; PRISON POPULATION PROJECTIONS, 2017–2019; AND VIOLENT CRIME RATES, 1995–2015



Source: GAO analysis of U.S. Department of Justice data and projections; Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reporting Program. | GAO-18-1SP

GOAL 1

Address Current and Emerging Challenges to the Well-Being and Financial Security of the American People

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.5 PERFORMANCE GOALS

A Responsive, Fair, and Effective System of Justice

- **Performance Goal 1.5.1:** Assess federal efforts to prevent, deter, investigate, and prosecute terrorism, violent crime, and cybercrime.
- **Performance Goal 1.5.2:** Assess federal efforts to protect vulnerable populations and ensure the rights of U.S. citizens.
- **Performance Goal 1.5.3:** Review the federal government's efforts to confine, rehabilitate, and monitor the release of convicted federal offenders.
- **Performance Goal 1.5.4:** Evaluate federal efforts to assist states and localities with ensuring a fair and effective criminal justice system through federal grants.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.6

Housing Finance and Viable Communities

The economic and social well-being of communities is vital to the nation’s growth and prosperity. The federal government directly or indirectly supports more than two-thirds of the value (\$628 billion out of \$840 billion for the first two quarters of 2017) of new mortgage originations in the single-family housing market. The Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Agriculture, and the Treasury spend tens of billions of dollars annually on rental housing programs to help the most vulnerable populations find and maintain affordable housing.

GAO’s work will help the Congress define the federal role in the housing finance system; monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of federal housing programs; and evaluate how HUD, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) serve homeless individuals and families.

In addition to housing, small businesses are vital to ensuring viable communities because they employ more than half the nation’s workforce (see fig. 6). The federal government administers multiple economic development programs—including programs that provide assistance to entrepreneurs that may help businesses grow and succeed—and often relies on state and local governments and nonprofit agencies to implement them.

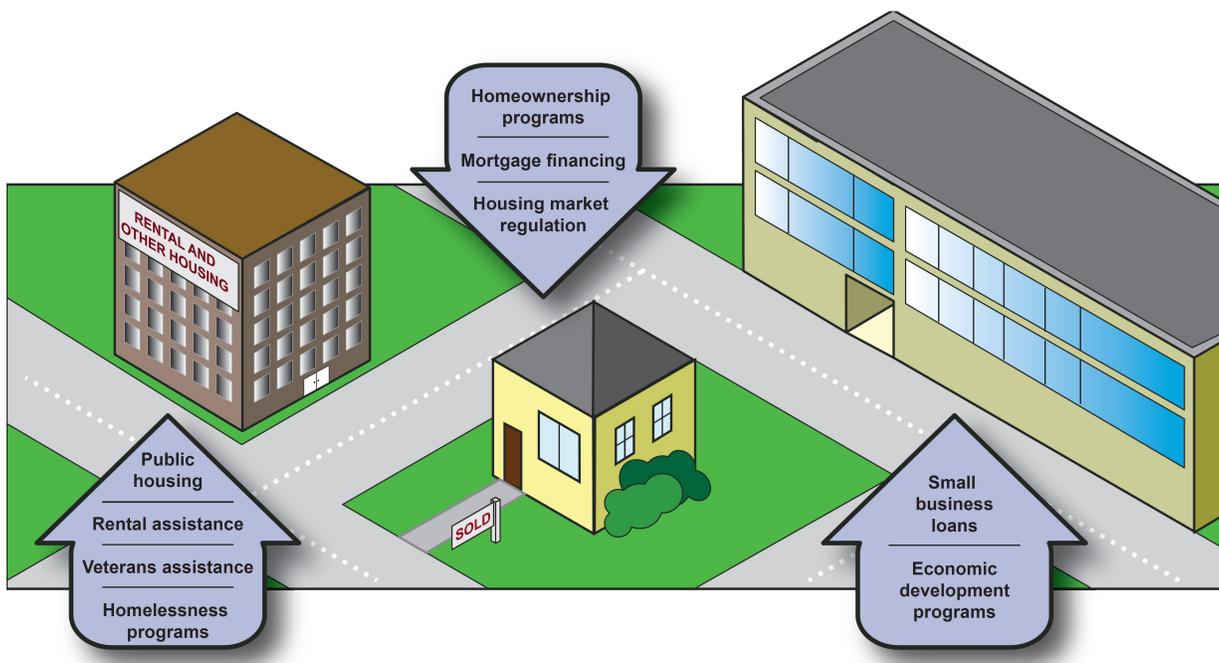
GAO’s work will continue to help the Congress by assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of federal initiatives to help small businesses.

GAO’s Financial Markets and Community Investment Team

Issue Areas: Areas that are critical to the nation’s economic and social well-being.

Expertise: Helping ensure U.S. financial markets function smoothly and effectively; identifying ways to stem fraud and abuse; and assessing the effectiveness of federal initiatives aimed at housing, small businesses, state and local governments, and communities.

FIGURE 6: COMPONENTS OF VIABLE COMMUNITIES



GOAL 1

Address Current and Emerging Challenges to the Well-Being and Financial Security of the American People

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.6 PERFORMANCE GOALS

Housing Finance and Viable Communities

- **Performance Goal 1.6.1:** Assess how the federal government can balance supporting homeownership and managing financial risk while reforming the federal role in housing finance.
- **Performance Goal 1.6.2:** Examine how federal programs that support affordable rental housing meet their objectives, including managing the condition of assisted properties and improving the well-being of special populations.
- **Performance Goal 1.6.3:** Assess federal homeless assistance efforts and their effects on both homeless individuals and families.
- **Performance Goal 1.6.4:** Monitor federal community and economic development assistance and its effect on communities.
- **Performance Goal 1.6.5:** Assess the effectiveness of federal initiatives to assist small businesses.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.7

A Stable Financial System and Sufficient Consumer Protection

Fragmentation and overlap in the U.S. regulatory structure could hamper the federal government’s ability to address systemic risk developments in the U.S. financial system, including those that contributed to the 2007–2009 financial crisis. In response to that crisis, financial regulators issued wide-ranging regulations to address perceived weaknesses and risks in the financial system, many of which were called for by the Dodd-Frank Act. However, financial regulators face the challenge of achieving statutory objectives and the benefits of regulations while also minimizing unnecessary regulatory burden. In addition, new financial technologies have benefited consumers but also increased risks of cybercrime and identity theft (see fig. 7).

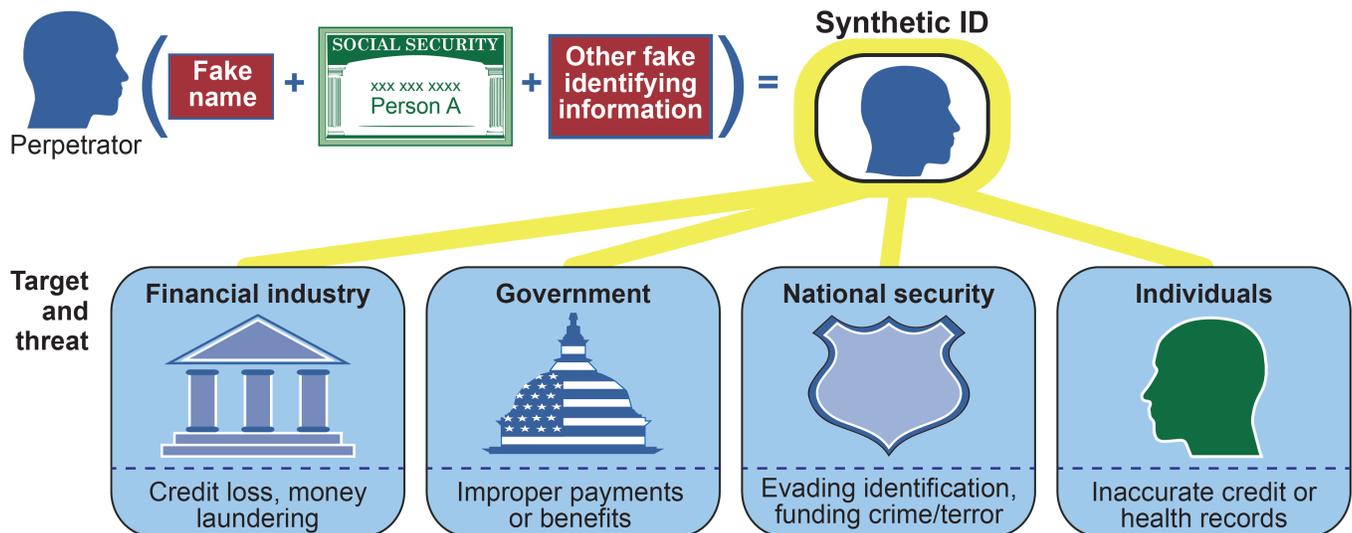
Financial fraud and exploitation affect 1 in 10 Americans every year, and such fraud is estimated to cost \$45-50 billion annually in direct measurable costs. At the same time, consumers face challenges assessing the benefits and risks of increasingly complex financial products and services. In addition, America’s continued reliance on imported goods underscores the need to ensure product safety of manufactured items. According to the latest available data, imports of consumer products grew 80 percent from 2002 to 2015, from \$419 billion to \$754 billion, respectively.

GAO’s work will help the Congress monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of postcrisis reforms, while also helping ensure the safety, soundness, and stability of the U.S. financial system. In addition, GAO will continue to assess the efforts of federal agencies to ensure consumer financial protection and consumer product safety.

Did You Know?

While some types of identity fraud involve stealing a real person’s identity, synthetic identity fraud is about creating a new identity that can be used for criminal activity—often by using Social Security numbers that belong to people not actively using credit.

Figure 7: Threats posed by Synthetic Identify Fraud



GOAL 1

Address Current and Emerging Challenges to the Well-Being and Financial Security of the American People

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.7 PERFORMANCE GOALS

A Stable Financial System and Sufficient Consumer Protection

- **Performance Goal 1.7.1:** Assess the ability of regulators to oversee the financial services industry and maintain a stable, competitive, and efficient financial system amid significant market, technological, and regulatory changes.
- **Performance Goal 1.7.2:** Assess federal oversight of consumer protection laws and regulations for financial services and products and for manufactured items.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.8

Responsible Stewardship of Natural Resources and the Environment

Responsible stewardship of natural resources and the environment encompasses some of the nation’s most challenging issues and requires balancing often- competing objectives, such as economic growth for today versus protection of the nation’s air, water, and lands for the future. Moreover, many of these challenges are interdependent.

For example, federal agencies face challenges managing water and energy, which are linked, as water is needed for energy development and generation, and energy is required to supply, use, and treat drinking water and wastewater. Federal agencies also face challenges—compounded by the potential for water shortages—managing the nation’s water resources for multiple competing uses, such as safe drinking water, wildlife habitat, agriculture, and commercial activities (see fig. 8). In related areas of food and agriculture, federal oversight of food safety is a challenge because responsibilities are fragmented across 16 federal agencies and the proportion of imported food in the nation’s food supply is increasing. The federal government also faces significant fiscal challenges associated with mitigating the financial risks presented by a changing climate and environmental cleanup related to nuclear waste at federal sites. These issues all intersect with a complex array of stakeholders at multiple levels of government and in the private sector.

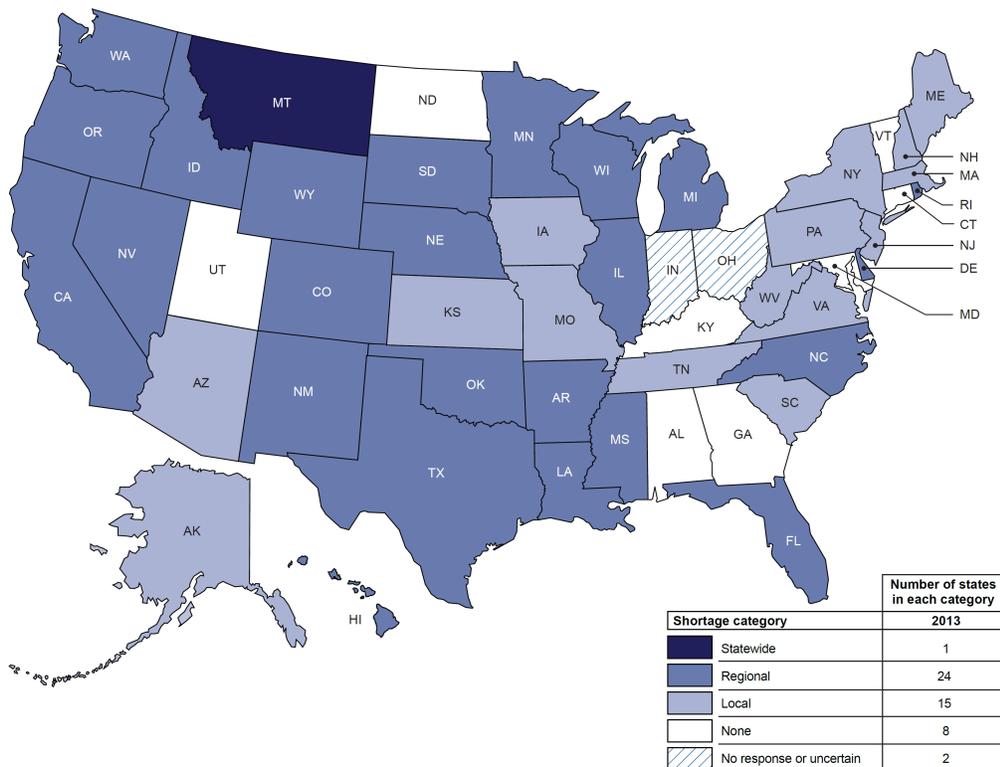
GAO’s work will seek to guide the Congress and federal agencies as they engage all stakeholders in addressing these and other issues.

GAO’s Natural Resources and Environment Team

Issue Areas: Federal efforts to manage the nation’s air, water, land, food, and energy resources.

Expertise: Helping ensure that programs and policies protect the environment, ensure food safety, address agriculture issues, ensure reliable and environmentally sound energy, meet the nation’s science challenges, and address U.S. and international nuclear security and cleanup.

FIGURE 8: EXTENT OF STATE WATER SHORTAGES LIKELY OVER THE NEXT DECADE UNDER AVERAGE WATER CONDITIONS, 2013



Sources: GAO analysis of state water managers’ responses to GAO survey; Map Resources (map). | GAO-18-1SP

GOAL 1

Address Current and Emerging Challenges to the Well-Being and Financial Security of the American People

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.8 PERFORMANCE GOALS

Responsible Stewardship of Natural Resources and the Environment

- **Performance Goal 1.8.1:** Assess federal efforts to ensure affordable, reliable, and environmentally sound energy for current and future generations.
- **Performance Goal 1.8.2:** Assess federal strategies for sustainably managing our nation's land and water resources, including programs for Native communities.
- **Performance Goal 1.8.3:** Assess environmental protection strategies and programs.
- **Performance Goal 1.8.4:** Assess efforts to manage the federal government's environmental liabilities.
- **Performance Goal 1.8.5:** Assess federal programs' ability to ensure a safe food supply and address agricultural risks and environmental impacts.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.9

A Viable, Safe, Secure, and Accessible National Physical Infrastructure

The physical infrastructure of the United States—including transportation, telecommunications, the postal system, and federal facilities—is the backbone of the economy and affects every American’s daily life. A number of challenges, including capacity constraints, deterioration, and technological obsolescence have hindered efforts to ensure that this infrastructure is viable, efficient, safe, and accessible. For example, the nation’s surface transportation system—including highways, transit, maritime ports, and rail systems that move both people and freight—is critical to the economy. However, the system is under growing strain, and the cost to repair and upgrade the system to meet current and future demands is estimated in the hundreds of billions of dollars.

To address these and other challenges, policymakers will not only need to identify a long-term sustainable means to fund infrastructure investments and encourage more efficient use of existing infrastructure but also will need to consider how emerging technologies, such as infrastructure communications with automated vehicle technologies, may be used to ensure that the nation’s infrastructure can meet current and future demands.

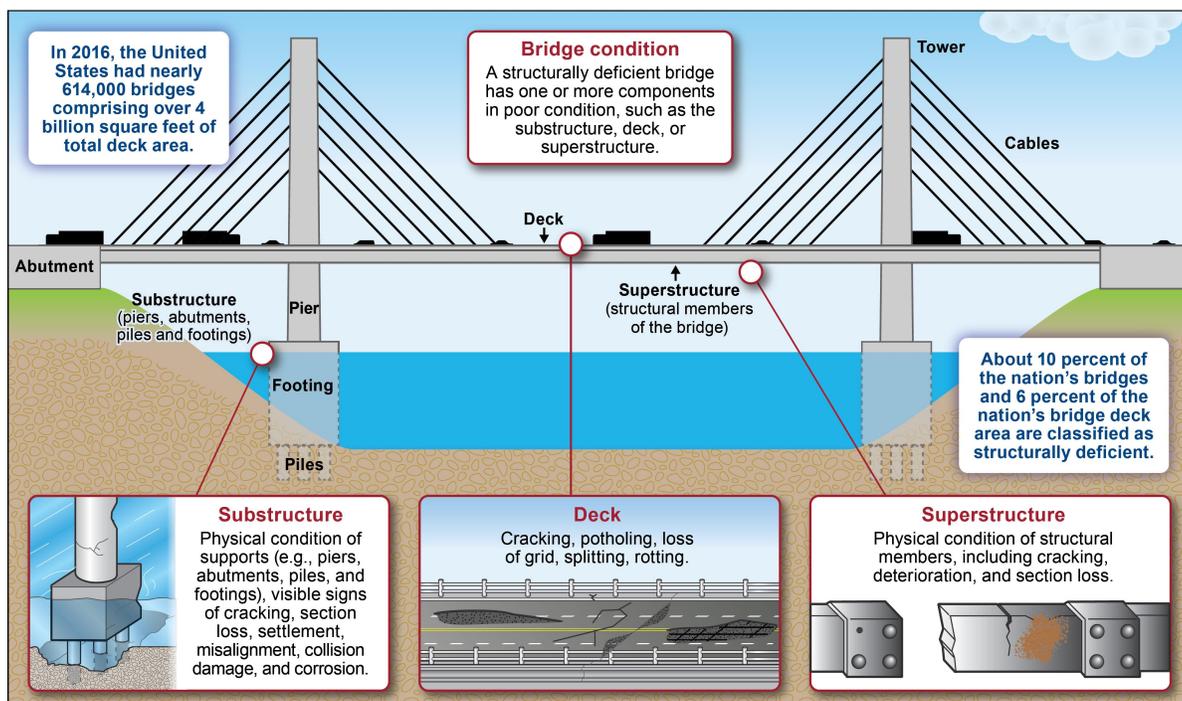
GAO’s work will continue to address infrastructure issues by assessing options; developing well-reasoned strategies; and, in some cases, calling for legislative changes.

GAO’s Physical Infrastructure Team

Issue Areas: Federal programs and policies addressing infrastructure challenges in the United States.

Expertise: Helping ensure the funding, operation, and maintenance of transportation systems, telecommunications networks, the postal service, oil and gas pipelines, and federal facilities.

FIGURE 9: KEY COMPONENTS THAT MAY CONTRIBUTE TO A BRIDGE’S CLASSIFICATION AS STRUCTURALLY DEFICIENT



Source: GAO. | GAO-18-1SP

Source: GAO. | GAO -18-1SP

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.9

A Viable, Safe, Secure, and Accessible National Physical Infrastructure

FIGURE 10: SELECTED EMERGING ISSUES IN PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Aviation	New entrants such as “drones” and commercial space vehicles are putting increasing demands on the existing aviation system and airspace with more frequent use of the system. As a result, efficient and cost-effective use of the airspace system and its infrastructure through investment in and use of technologies and improved operations is an important challenge.
Surface transportation	Railroads are mandated to implement safety technologies, such as Positive Train Control and electronically controlled pneumatic braking on certain trains over the next few years. In addition, vehicle manufacturers are developing automated vehicle technologies that have the potential to decrease highway fatalities by reducing human errors. Consequently, ensuring effective oversight of the railroads and vehicle manufacturers’ efforts to implement and manage these technologies will be critical.
Telecommunications	FirstNet has been given \$7 billion and highly valued spectrum to establish a nationwide broadband network for public safety officials, such as police officers, firefighters, and emergency medical-services personnel. However, FirstNet is faced with a complex and challenging mission, and continued oversight of FirstNet’s efforts will be important to ensure the network’s reliability and security.
Federal facilities	Natural disasters, such as hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes, can destroy federal buildings and cripple the government’s ability to deliver needed services. The federal government needs to continue its focus on emergency preparedness and resiliency to help prevent catastrophic damage to its buildings and to speed recovery.
Postal Service	Technology and the Internet have changed how businesses and consumers use the mail. USPS is at risk of a sudden and even more accelerated decline in its business brought about by new technological advances or new private sector businesses. This decline will have implications for USPS, current and retired postal employees, and ratepayers.

Source: GAO. | GAO-18-1SP

GOAL 1

Address Current and Emerging Challenges to the Well-Being and Financial Security of the American People

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.9 PERFORMANCE GOALS

A Viable, Safe, Secure, and Accessible National Physical Infrastructure

- **Performance Goal 1.9.1:** Assess federal investments, policies, and programs that support transportation infrastructure.
- **Performance Goal 1.9.2:** Assess federal regulation of transportation safety and efforts to fund improvements in safety.
- **Performance Goal 1.9.3:** Evaluate federal policies to improve the mobility of people and goods and increase access to transportation systems.
- **Performance Goal 1.9.4:** Assess federal efforts to support and oversee telecommunications in the public interest.
- **Performance Goal 1.9.5:** Assess the U.S. Postal Service's efforts to ensure its viability and accomplish its mission.
- **Performance Goal 1.9.6:** Assess federal efforts to manage and secure the government's real property portfolio.

GOAL 2

Help the Congress Respond to Changing Security Threats and the Challenges of Global Interdependence

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Protect and Secure the Homeland from Threats and Disasters
- Effectively and Efficiently Utilize Resources for Military Capabilities and Readiness
- Advance and Protect
- U.S. Foreign Policy and International Economic Interests
- Improve the Intelligence Community's Management and Integration to Enhance Intelligence Activities

GAO's second strategic goal focuses on helping the Congress and executive branch agencies plan for and respond to security threats and challenges related to global interdependence. Over the next 5 years, security threats and challenges to national and homeland security are expected to remain complex and dynamic. Certain nation-states seek to broaden their influence through confrontational means, while non-state actors will likely continue sowing significant instability through acts of terrorism, cyberwarfare, and other means. In addition, the nation and its infrastructure face threats posed by natural disasters and the associated costs of preparing for and recovering from such disasters.

The nation's security priorities will be influenced, in part, by continued fiscal imbalances, including trade deficits, dependence on foreign capital to finance

U.S. spending, and the disparity between government revenues and spending. Difficult decisions will need to be made, and the nation's security agencies—most prominently, the Departments of Defense (DOD), Homeland Security (DHS), and State—will need to strike an appropriate balance between spending on current missions and investing in new capabilities. Because many of the threats facing the nation go beyond the authority and scope of any one agency, it is essential that GAO's work enable federal entities to enhance their basic management capabilities, including their ability to collaborate, not only with each other but also with foreign, state, and local governments and nongovernmental partners.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.1

Protect and Secure the Homeland from Threats and Disasters

The United States faces increasingly complex threats and challenges to securing the homeland. Flows of both legitimate and illicit travel and trade to the country will continue to challenge efforts to effectively secure U.S. borders. Ongoing threats to transportation security underscore the need for an effective, risk-based aviation security program. Disasters continue to affect the United States, including 15 disasters costing more than a billion dollars each in 2016 and 15 disasters exceeding \$1 billion each in 2017, with damage from Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria still being assessed. An increase in severe natural disasters, alongside the threat of potential terrorist attacks, will pose serious challenges to federal agencies that must respond to and help recover from such events. In addition, cyberattacks are on the rise, targeting both government and private sector systems alike. These attacks are growing more sophisticated as physical infrastructure is increasingly connected to online information systems. This trend greatly increases the potential damage that cyber threats can cause (see fig. 11).

GAO’s work will help the Congress assess efforts to protect against and respond to threats and other disasters and to prioritize and allocate resources for homeland security.

Did You Know?

“Limiting the Federal Government’s Fiscal Exposure by Better Managing Climate Change Risks” is on GAO’s High-Risk List in part

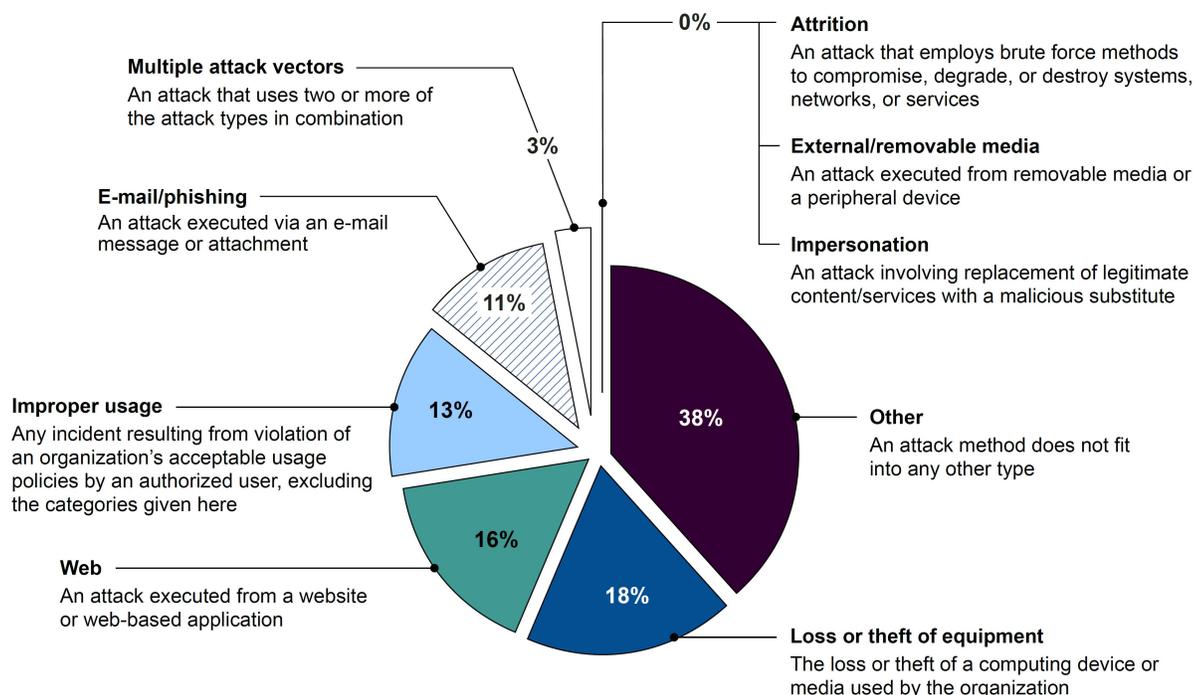
because of concerns about the increasing costs of disaster response and recovery efforts. Building disaster resilience by taking actions to mitigate vulnerabilities and adapt to the effects of climate change is

one strategy to help to limit the

nation’s fiscal exposure.

FIGURE 11: FEDERAL INFORMATION SECURITY INCIDENTS BY THREAT VECTOR CATEGORY, FISCAL YEAR 2016

FIGURE 11: FEDERAL INFORMATION SECURITY INCIDENTS BY THREAT VECTOR CATEGORY, FISCAL YEAR 2016



Source: GAO analysis of United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team and Office of Management and Budget data. | GAO-18-1SP

Source: GAO analysis of United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team and Office of Management and Budget data. | GAO-18-1SP

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.1 PERFORMANCE GOALS

Protect and Secure the Homeland from Threats and Disasters

- **Performance Goal 2.1.1:** Assess federal homeland security management, resources, acquisitions, and stakeholder coordination.
- **Performance Goal 2.1.2:** Assess efforts to strengthen border security and address immigration enforcement and services issues.
- **Performance Goal 2.1.3:** Assess efforts to strengthen the sharing of terrorism-related information.
- **Performance Goal 2.1.4:** Assess efforts to strengthen security in all transportation modes.
- **Performance Goal 2.1.5:** Assess U.S. national emergency preparedness and response capabilities and efforts to strengthen the nation's resilience against future disasters.
- **Performance Goal 2.1.6:** Assess the cost, availability, and management of catastrophic insurance and disaster loan programs.
- **Performance Goal 2.1.7:** Assess efforts to strengthen the physical protection and cybersecurity of federal government assets and the nation's critical infrastructure.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.2

Effectively and Efficiently Utilize Resources for Military Capabilities and Readiness

The Department of Defense (DOD) continues to face a complex and evolving national security and fiscal environment. Ongoing counterinsurgency operations, the need to prepare for more conventional conflicts, the challenge of new and emerging cyber threats, and increasing personnel costs and fiscal pressures combine to complicate DOD’s planning for the future (see table 1). DOD faces difficult decisions related to how to plan for and support military forces and prioritize its programs and efforts to address current, emerging, and potential threats and challenges.

GAO’s work will assist DOD and relevant divisions of the Department of Energy (DOE) in planning to meet these threats and challenges more effectively and efficiently in areas such as military operations and support, force structure and readiness, weapons acquisition, human capital management, training, logistics, contracting, and recapitalization (see fig. 12).

TABLE 1: FIVE KEY CHALLENGES THAT SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECT DOD’S ABILITY TO ACCOMPLISH ITS MISSION

1. Rebalancing forces and rebuilding readiness
2. Mitigating threats to cyberspace and expanding cyber capabilities
3. Controlling the escalating costs of programs (e.g., weapon systems and military health care), and better managing finances
4. Strategically managing human capital
5. Achieving greater efficiencies in defense business operations

Source: GAO. | GAO-18-1SP

GAO’s Defense Capabilities and Management Team

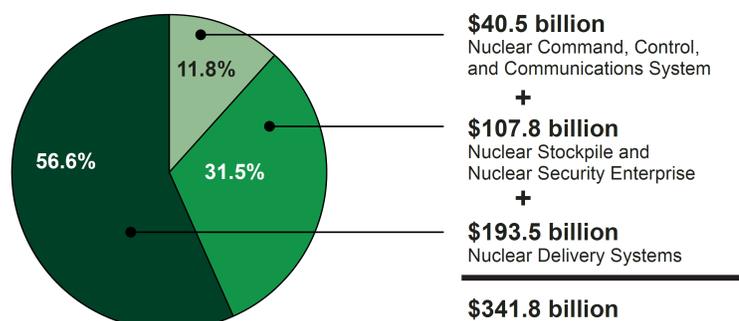
Issue Areas: DOD, which costs taxpayers nearly \$600 billion a year.

Expertise: Supporting congressional oversight of DOD as it modernizes and transforms itself to meet 21st century challenges. GAO’s Contracting and National Security Acquisitions Team

Issue Areas: U.S. government spending for goods and services—nearly half a trillion dollars annually.

Expertise: Helping ensure that big-ticket item acquisitions are managed appropriately and determining whether the government is making sound business decisions and appropriately overseeing contractors.

FIGURE 12: DOD AND DOE 10-YEAR ESTIMATES FOR SUSTAINING AND MODERNIZING THE U.S. NUCLEAR DETERRENT (FISCAL YEAR 2017)



Source: GAO analysis of DOD and DOE data. | GAO-18-1SP

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.2 PERFORMANCE GOALS

Effectively and Efficiently Utilize Resources for Military Capabilities and Readiness

- **Performance Goal 2.2.1:** Assess DOD's ability to meet operational demands while rebuilding readiness and preparing for future missions.
- **Performance Goal 2.2.2:** Assess DOD's efforts to defend the homeland and respond to cyber and other unconventional threats.
- **Performance Goal 2.2.3:** Assess DOD's human capital management to ensure a high-quality total workforce of military personnel, federal civilians, and contractors.
- **Performance Goal 2.2.4:** Assess the ability of weapon system acquisition programs and science and technology development processes to achieve intended outcomes.
- **Performance Goal 2.2.5:** Assess DOD's progress in improving contract [management](#).
- **Performance Goal 2.2.6:** Assess DOD's progress in improving the maintenance and sustainment of weapons systems throughout their life cycle and other logistics functions and activities.
- **Performance Goal 2.2.7:** Assess DOD's management of the defense support infrastructure.
- **Performance Goal 2.2.8:** Assess efforts of DOE's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and DOD to maintain and modernize the nuclear security enterprise, nuclear force structure, and associated weapon systems.
- **Performance Goal 2.2.9:** Assess DOD's business operations efforts to adapt and leverage organizational structures and management processes to maximize efficiencies and performance.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.3

Advance and Protect U.S. Foreign Policy and International Economic Interests

To advance national interests and values abroad through global engagement,

U.S. foreign policy in recent years has focused on promoting human rights and democracy; countering a diverse, complex, and uncertain array of multidimensional security threats; addressing various humanitarian crises; and navigating changes in global trade.

GAO's work will continue to monitor and report on U.S. agencies' efforts to

- execute security assistance and stability programs to counter the growing threat of nonstate terrorist actors to the nation, its allies, and other foreign partners while maintaining sanctions on, or mitigating potential conflicts with, nations of concern (e.g., Russia, Iran, and North Korea);
- use bilateral and multilateral resources to promote democracy and human rights while meeting development priorities and emergency needs;
- manage and safeguard the United States' overseas diplomatic presence at more than 270 posts worldwide, particularly in high-threat areas where transnational terrorist and violent extremist organizations—such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), al Qaeda, their African and Asian affiliates, and other emergent groups—remain the most potent terrorist threats to global security (see fig. 13);
- execute programs to advance U.S. trade interests, the total value of which exceeded \$3.9 trillion in 2014; enforce trade rules; review and revise, where appropriate, key international trade mechanisms, such as the World Trade Organization or the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which is in the process of being updated for the first time in 25 years; maintain U.S. export gains; and increase foreign investment (see fig. 14);
- manage foreign affairs functions, including Department of State's efforts to reorganize, realign, and rethink its business operations; ensure the effectiveness of consular operations (such as visa processing and passport security); and examine refugee screening; and
- protect national security supply chains—for example, the sufficiency of efforts by the interagency Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States to assess and mitigate national security risks associated with foreign acquisitions of U.S. businesses.

GAO's International Affairs and Trade Team

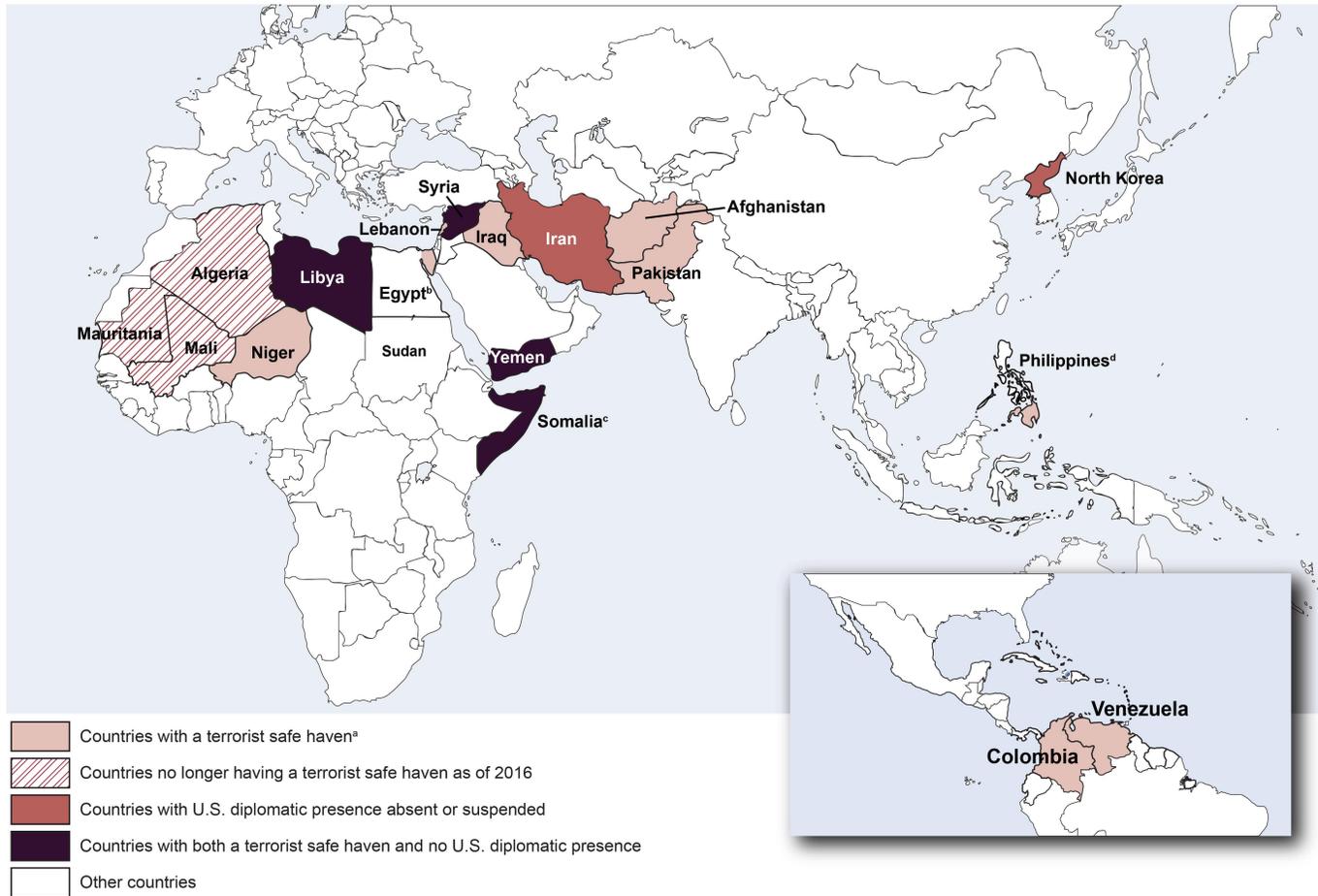
Issue Areas: Federal policies and programs that address global economic, security, and humanitarian problems.

Expertise: Helping assess performance and accountability of U.S. foreign aid programs, foreign affairs functions and activities, agencies' efforts to combat international terrorism and other transnational threats (including weapons of mass destruction), trade, and U.S. assistance to multilateral and nongovernmental organizations.

GOAL 2

Help the Congress Respond to Changing Security Threats and the Challenges of Global Interdependence

FIGURE 13: TRANSNATIONAL TERRORISM SAFE HavENS AND U.S. DIPLOMATIC PRESENCE AS OF 2016



Sources: GAO analysis of Department of State data; Map Resources (map). | GAO-18-1SP

^aIn addition, Iran, Sudan, and Syria are designated state sponsors of terrorism.

^bEgypt: Safe Haven designation limited to the Sinai Peninsula.

^cSomalia: The Secretary of State announced in May 2015 that the United States would reopen a diplomatic facility in Mogadishu at an unspecified date.

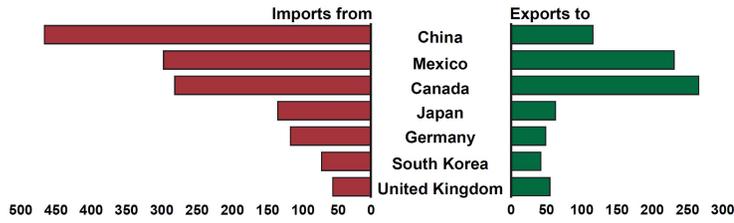
^dPhilippines: Southern islands and the littoral regions of the Sulu and Sulawesi Seas shared with Indonesia and Malaysia.

GOAL 2

Help the Congress Respond to Changing Security Threats and the Challenges of Global Interdependence

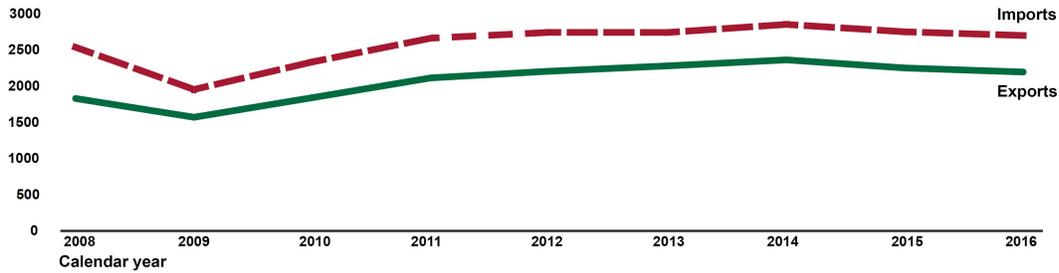
FIGURE 14: OVERVIEW OF U.S. INTERNATIONAL TRADE

U.S. merchandise trade with top 7 partners in 2016 (dollars in billions)



Trends for U.S. trade with all countries

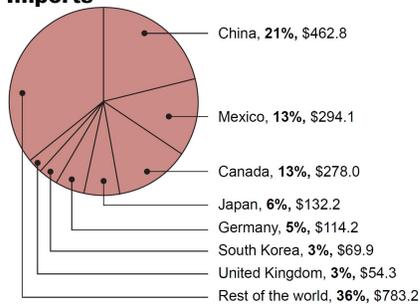
Merchandise trade (dollars in billions)



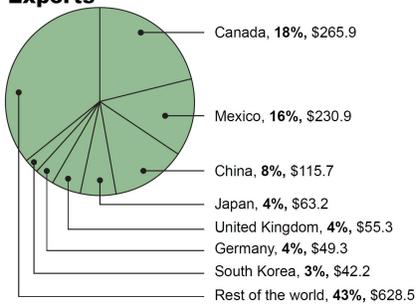
Top seven U.S. markets in 2016

Merchandise trade (dollars in billions)

Imports



Exports



Source: GAO analysis of U.S. Department of Commerce data. | GAO-18-1SP

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.3 PERFORMANCE GOALS

Advance and Protect U.S. Foreign Policy and International Economic Interests

- **Performance Goal 2.3.1:** Analyze the implementation and results of U.S. and international efforts to counter threats to the United States and its foreign partners' national security.
- **Performance Goal 2.3.2:** Analyze the implementation and management U.S. bilateral and multilateral foreign assistance including development, humanitarian, and economic assistance, and efforts to promote democracy and human rights.
- **Performance Goal 2.3.3:** Analyze how international trade programs serve U.S. interests and how the United States can influence the world economy.
- **Performance Goal 2.3.4:** Assess the management and effectiveness of U.S. diplomatic efforts and membership in multilateral organizations.
- **Performance Goal 2.3.5:** Assess efforts to manage the effects of foreign investment and a global supplier base on U.S. national security interests.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.4

Improve the Intelligence Community's Management and Integration to Enhance Intelligence Activities

The U.S. Intelligence Community (IC)—a coalition of 17 elements that independently and collaboratively gather and analyze the intelligence necessary to conduct foreign relations and national security activities—is facing an increasing number of challenges from the evolving global environment with traditional and nontraditional adversaries.

To address these challenges, the IC continues to strive toward greater integration and efficiencies across the community and implementation of IC enterprise standards, processes, tools, and services that leverage both government's and industry's leading practices.

GAO's work will examine ways to improve management and integration in the IC and focus on the IC's business operations and fiscal management, acquisition and contract management, as well as intelligence efforts in support of military and other government activities.

FIGURE 15: OVERVIEW OF U.S. INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY



Source: GAO analysis of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence information. | GAO-18-1SP

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.4 PERFORMANCE GOALS

Improve the Intelligence Community's Management and Integration to Enhance Intelligence Activities

- **Performance Goal 2.4.1:** Analyze the IC's business operations and efforts to integrate and leverage organizational structures and management processes to maximize efficiencies and performance.
- **Performance Goal 2.4.2:** Assess the IC's acquisition and contract management programs and processes.
- **Performance Goal 2.4.3:** Evaluate the IC's planning and efforts that support military operations, diplomatic activities, and other government activities.

GOAL 3

Help Transform the Federal Government to Address National Challenges

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Analyze the Government's Fiscal Condition and Opportunities to Strengthen Approaches to Address the Current and Projected Fiscal Gaps
- Support Government Accountability by Identifying Fraud, Waste, and Abuse and Needed Improvements in Internal Controls
- Support Congressional Oversight of Crosscutting Issues, Major Management Challenges, and Program Risks

GAO's third strategic goal focuses on helping the federal government transform itself to address national challenges that cut across geographic boundaries, programs, and levels of government. Successfully addressing such challenges will depend on the government's ability to

- identify innovative strategies for allocating limited resources and better navigating rapid change and uncertainty;
- incorporate internal control measures to help curb fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement and to provide the public with the demonstrable results it reasonably expects; and
- collaborate more effectively both domestically and internationally across state and local governments, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector.

This transformation will need to take place amidst a landscape of fiscal uncertainty that will also need to be addressed. Our simulations show that, absent policy changes, the federal government faces unsustainable growth in debt and a growing imbalance between revenue and spending. The federal government must, in turn, examine all aspects of fiscal policy, existing programs, and tax administration for opportunities to reduce fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement. It is essential that GAO provide government managers and policymakers with clear, timely, realistic assessments of the government's performance management, financial condition, and cost of operations.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.1

Analyze the Government's Fiscal Condition and Opportunities to Strengthen Approaches to Address the Current and Projected Fiscal Gaps

Absent policy changes, the federal government faces an unsustainable long-term fiscal path. Within 14 to 22 years, federal debt held by the public is projected to surpass the historical high of 106 percent of gross domestic product (see fig. 16). The gap between revenue and spending drives growth in deficits and debt. On the spending side, key drivers are health care and interest on the debt. To change course, policymakers should consider changes to the entire range of federal activities, including spending and revenue. The longer action is delayed, the more drastic the changes will have to be.

GAO's work will help address fiscal challenges by identifying

- improvements in tax administration, including opportunities to reduce the tax gap;
- efficiencies in managing the federal debt held by the public, which totaled over \$14 trillion at the end of fiscal year 2017;
- state and local governments' fiscal challenges and the implications for federal programs; and
- accurate and timely information about (1) government spending to help policymakers manage the country's fiscal condition and (2) ways tax policy is likely to affect federal revenues, the economy, and individuals' and businesses' financial decisions.

GAO's Strategic Issues Team

Issue Areas: The federal government's role in achieving national goals and its ability to deliver meaningful results.

Expertise: Helping address national challenges, such as long-term fiscal imbalances, and improve agencies' strategic planning, workforce agility, performance, and management.

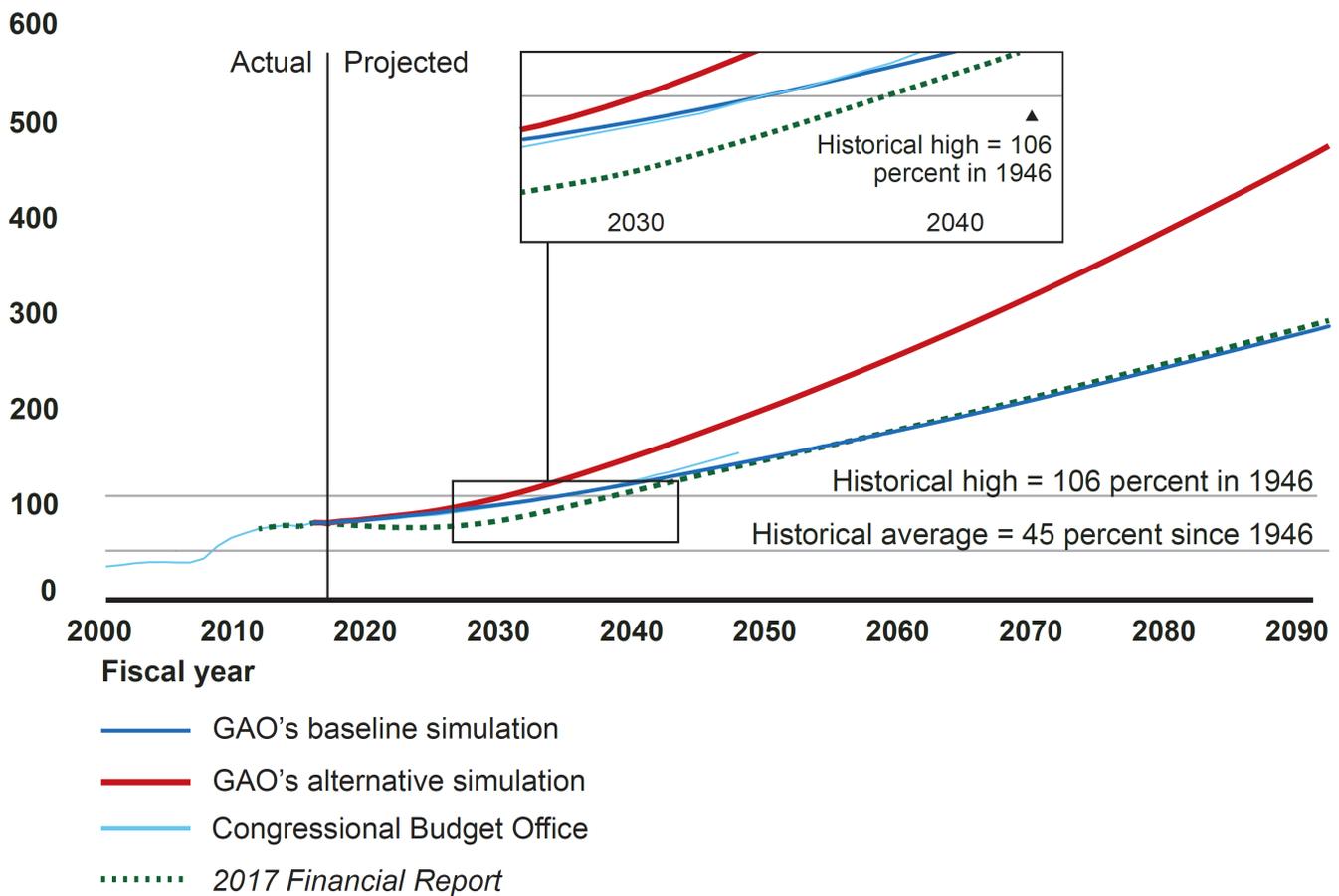
GAO's Financial Management and Assurance Team

Issue Areas: Federal financial management and operations; stewardship of financial resources.

Expertise: Helping improve and transform federal financial management and operations to meet existing and emerging critical accountability challenges and ensure that reliable, useful, and timely financial information is available for making decisions, managing costs, and monitoring performance day to day

FIGURE 16: FEDERAL DEBT HELD BY THE PUBLIC IS PROJECTED TO GROW TO UNSUSTAINABLE LEVELS

Percentage of gross domestic product



Sources: GAO, Congressional Budget Office, and 2017 Financial Report. | GAO-18-1SP

Sources: GAO, Congressional Budget Office, and 2017 Financial Report. | GAO-18-1SP

Note: Debt held by the public is the value of all Treasury securities sold to the public, including international investors, domestic private investors, the Federal Reserve, and state and local governments.

These simulations and projections do not reflect the effects of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, Pub. L. No. 115-97, 131 Stat. 2054, enacted on December 22, 2017, or other legislation enacted after September 30, 2017, that changes policy in effect as of the end of the fiscal year.

GAO's baseline extended simulation and the Congressional Budget Office's (CBO) long-term projection begin with a baseline using CBO estimates and generally assume current law, such as the scheduled expiration of tax provisions, continues into the future. One key difference between the results of the 2017 Financial Report projections and GAO's baseline extended simulation is that the 2017 Financial Report projections assume that individual income taxes increase gradually as real taxable incomes rise over time and an increasing share of total income is taxed at higher tax brackets, while GAO's baseline extended simulation assumes that revenue remains a constant share of gross domestic product. GAO's alternative simulation generally reflects historical trends, such as the extension of tax expenditures scheduled to expire, and incorporates the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) Office of the Actuary's 2017 illustrative alternative assumptions for health care cost growth, which assume cost controls under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 are not maintained over the long term. As noted above, using the alternative assumptions, which are not included in the 2017 Financial Report projections and GAO's baseline extended simulation, substantially increases projected health care costs.

GOAL 3

Help Transform the Federal Government to Address National Challenges

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.1 PERFORMANCE GOALS

Analyze the Government's Fiscal Condition and Opportunities to Strengthen Approaches to Address the Current and Projected Fiscal Gaps

- **Performance Goal 3.1.1:** Analyze factors affecting the federal short- and long-term budget outlook, debt management, and agencies' budget decisions and operations.
- **Performance Goal 3.1.2:** Monitor and examine the federal government's response to state and local governments' short- and long-term fiscal condition.
- **Performance Goal 3.1.3:** Assess the reliability of financial information, effectiveness of internal controls over financial reporting, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations related to the government's fiscal position and financing sources.
- **Performance Goal 3.1.4:** Help inform congressional deliberations on tax policy.
- **Performance Goal 3.1.5:** Identify opportunities to reduce the tax gap and further protect revenue.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.2

Support Government Accountability by Identifying Fraud, Waste, and Abuse and Needed Improvements in Internal Controls

Not only do fraud, waste, and abuse cost taxpayers billions of dollars annually, they also undermine confidence in government, prevent federal programs from fulfilling their intended purposes, and create potential national security risks. To minimize fraud, waste, and abuse, as well as improve accountability across the government, federal agencies must improve their internal controls.

GAO's work will include forensic audits, internal control reviews, and special investigations of highly vulnerable federal programs and funding to help detect and prevent fraud, waste, and abuse. GAO's work will assess agencies' implementation of the Fraud Reduction and Data Analytics Act of 2015 and continue to use the Fraud Risk Management Framework to help agencies combat fraud and preserve integrity in government programs (see figs. 17 and 18).³ GAO will also continue to use tips received through FraudNet, an operation that provides a secure means for individuals to confidentially communicate their concerns about possible fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement, and criminal activities in federal programs.

GAO's Forensic Audits and Investigative Service Team

Issue Areas: Forensic audits and investigations of highly vulnerable federal programs and funding to help detect and prevent fraud, waste, and abuse.

Expertise: Helping combat fraud and preserve integrity in government programs using data analytics, investigative techniques, and GAO's Fraud

Risk Management Framework to assess agencies' efforts, and managing FraudNet so the public can report allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement to GAO.

FIGURE 17: FRAUD REDUCTION AND DATA ANALYTICS ACT OF 2015 REQUIREMENTS

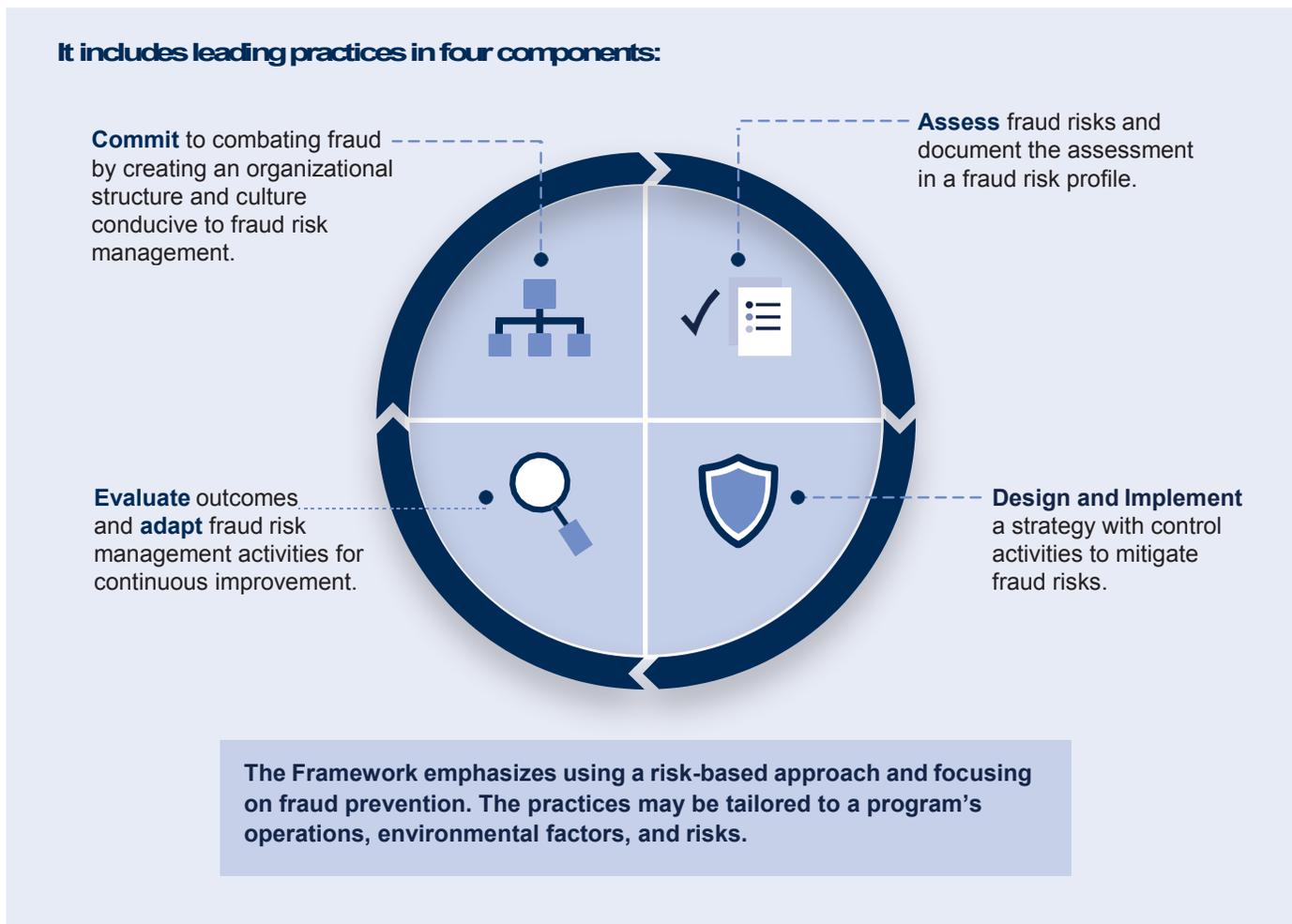
- The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) must establish guidelines that incorporate leading practices from GAO's Fraud Risk Management Framework.
- Agencies are required to establish financial and administrative controls, to include, among other things, evaluating fraud risks, designing and implementing related antifraud controls, and using data to monitor fraud trends.
- OMB must establish a working group to improve the sharing of controls and other best practices for addressing fraud and development of data-analytics techniques.
- The working group must submit a plan to the Congress for establishing a federal interagency library of data analytics and data sets that can be used to address fraud.
- Federal agencies must report to the Congress for 3 years, as part of their annual financial reporting, on their progress in implementing OMB's guidelines and other antifraud guidance, identifying fraud risks, and establishing steps to reduce fraud.

Source: GAO analysis of legislation. | GAO-18-1SP

³GAO identified leading practices for managing fraud risks and organized them into the Fraud Risk Framework Management. GAO, *A Framework for Managing Fraud Risks in Federal Programs*, GAO-15-593SP (Washington, D.C.: July 2015). Pub. L. No. 114-186, § 3, 130 Stat. 546, 546 (2016).

FIGURE 18: GAO'S FRAUD RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

What does GAO's Fraud Risk Management Framework include?



Source: GAO. | GAO -18-1SP

GOAL 3

Help Transform the Federal Government to Address National Challenges

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.2 PERFORMANCE GOALS

Support Government Accountability by Identifying Fraud, Waste, and Abuse and Needed Improvements in Internal Controls

- **Performance Goal 3.2.1:** Perform forensic audits to identify and address vulnerabilities to fraud, waste, and abuse.
- **Performance Goal 3.2.2:** Conduct investigations, controls testing, and security vulnerability assessments.
- **Performance Goal 3.2.3:** Identify ways to strengthen accountability and internal controls for federal programs, assets, and operations.
- **Performance Goal 3.2.4:** Process and investigate allegations received through FraudNet.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.3

Support Congressional Oversight of Crosscutting Issues, Major Management Challenges, and Program Risks

The federal government is central to effectively addressing major issues, including the strength of the national economy, public safety and security, disaster response, and oversight of financial markets. The public expects the government to be more transparent and accountable, requiring federal agencies to improve performance and focus on effective, efficient, and results-oriented management.

GAO's work will continue to monitor and report on high-risk program areas, which are vulnerable to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement or are most in need of broad reform (see table 2 and fig. 19). These issues include VA health care; strategic human capital management, including mission-critical skills gaps in agencies across the federal government; and the security of federal information systems.

Furthermore, GAO's work will identify opportunities to reduce duplication, overlap, and fragmentation in government programs; achieve financial benefits; and enhance collaboration. GAO's work will also examine federal policies, data, business processes, and workforce management across the government as well as in key areas, such as federal contracting, grants management, science and technology issues, information technology systems, and information management.

GAO's Information Technology Team

Issue Areas: Federal information technology investments, security, and management.

Expertise: Helping federal agencies build the capacity to manage IT and information to improve performance and reduce costs and helping to strengthen information security and protect computer and telecommunication systems that support the nation's vital infrastructures.

GAO's Applied Research and Methods Team

Issue Areas: Practical application of statistics, social and physical sciences, engineering, and economics.

Expertise: Providing technical expertise to GAO mission and support teams, assuring analytical rigor and overall quality of GAO information, and assessing technology and other specialized areas.

TABLE 2: GAO'S HIGH-RISK LIST AS OF JANUARY 2018***Strengthening the Foundation for Efficiency and Effectiveness***

- Strategic Human Capital Management^a
- Managing Federal Real Property
- Funding the Nation's Surface Transportation System^a
- Modernizing the U.S. Financial Regulatory System and the Federal Role in Housing Finance^a
- Restructuring the U.S. Postal Service to Achieve Sustainable Financial Viability^a
- Management of Federal Oil and Gas Resources
- Limiting the Federal Government's Fiscal Exposure by Better Managing Climate Change Risks
- Improving the Management of IT Acquisitions and Operations
- Improving Federal Programs that Serve Tribes and their Members^a
- 2020 Decennial Census
- U.S. Government Environmental Liabilities^a

Transforming DOD Program Management

- DOD Supply Chain Management
- DOD Weapon Systems Acquisition
- DOD Financial Management
- DOD Business Systems Modernization
- DOD Support Infrastructure Management^a
- DOD Approach to Business Transformation

Ensuring Public Safety and Security

- Ensuring the Security of Federal Information Systems and Cyber Critical Infrastructure and Protecting the Privacy of Personally Identifiable Information
- Strengthening Department of Homeland Security Management Functions
- Ensuring the Effective Protection of Technologies Critical to U.S. National Security Interests^a
- Improving Federal Oversight of Food Safety^a
- Protecting Public Health through Enhanced Oversight of Medical Products
- Transforming EPA's Processes for Assessing and Controlling Toxic Chemicals
- Mitigating Gaps in Weather Satellite Data
- Government-wide Personnel Security Clearance Process

Managing Federal Contracting More Effectively

- DOE's Contract Management for the National Nuclear Security Administration and Office of Environmental Management
- NASA Acquisition Management
- DOD Contract Management^a

Assessing the Efficiency and Effectiveness of Tax Law Administration

- Enforcement of Tax Laws^a

Modernizing and Safeguarding Insurance and Benefit Programs

- Medicare Program^a
- Medicaid Program^a

GOAL 3

Help Transform the Federal Government to Address National Challenges

- Improving and Modernizing Federal Disability Programs
- Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation Insurance Programs
- National Flood Insurance Programs
- Managing Risks and Improving VA Health Care

Source: GAO.

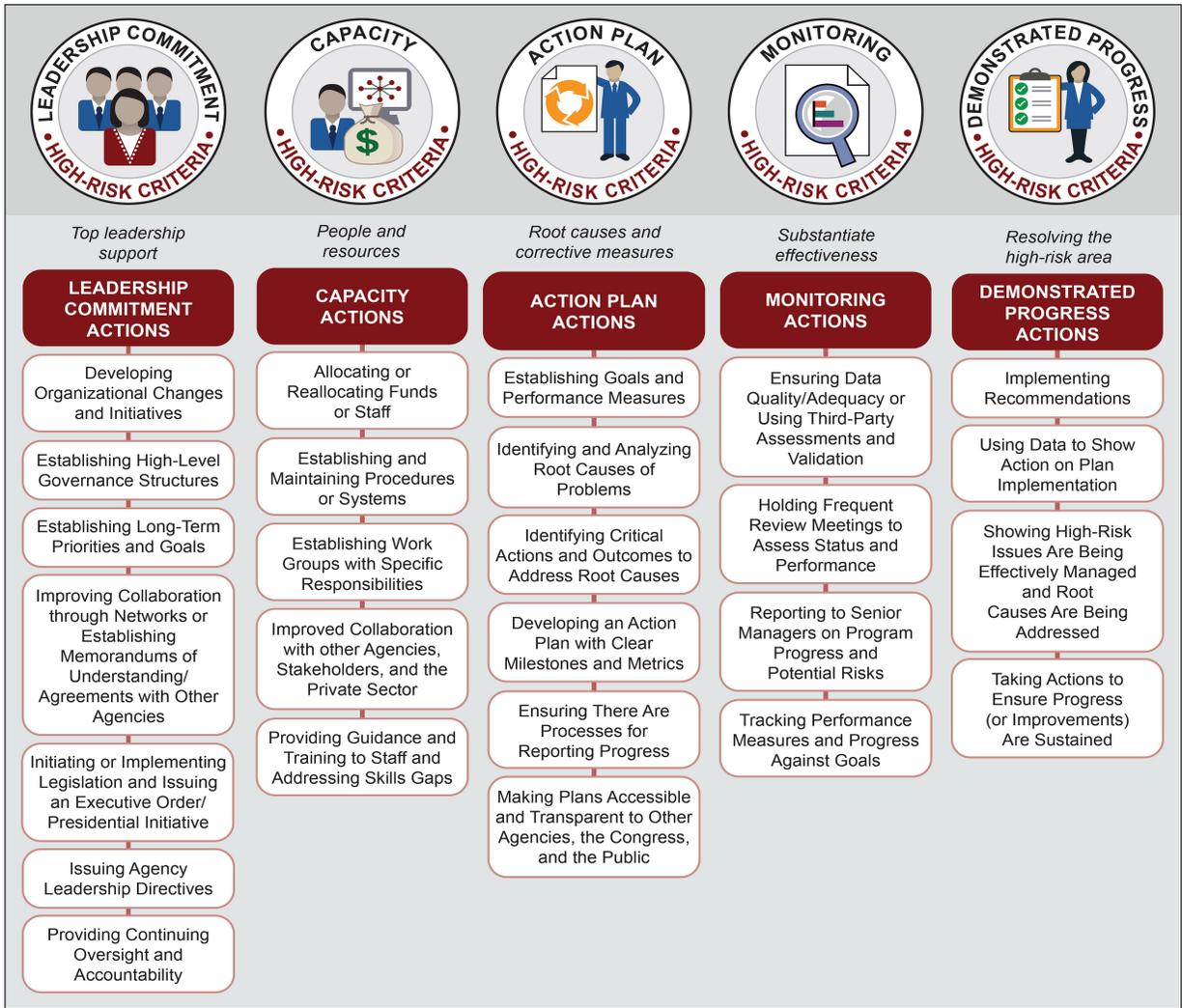
^aLegislation is likely to be necessary in order to effectively address this area.

Note: GAO updates the High-Risk List every two years at the start of a new Congress. The next update will be issued in early 2019.

GOAL 3

Help Transform the Federal Government to Address National Challenges

FIGURE 19: CRITERIA FOR REMOVAL FROM GAO'S HIGH-RISK LIST AND EXAMPLES OF AGENCY ACTIONS LEADING TO PROGRESS



Source: GAO. | GAO-18-1SP

Source: GAO. | GAO-18-1SP

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.3 PERFORMANCE GOALS

Support Congressional Oversight of Crosscutting Issues, Major Management Challenges, and Program Risks

- **Performance Goal 3.3.1:** Highlight high-risk federal programs and operations and assess government-wide management reforms.
- **Performance Goal 3.3.2:** Assess efforts to improve results-oriented management across the government.
- **Performance Goal 3.3.3:** Analyze and assess efforts to develop an agile, skilled workforce essential to achieving the missions of a high-performing and collaborative federal government.
- **Performance Goal 3.3.4:** Identify ways to improve federal agencies' acquisition of goods and services.
- **Performance Goal 3.3.5:** Assess the management and results of the federal investment in science and technology, the effectiveness of efforts to protect intellectual property and encourage innovation, and the progress and implications of technological innovations.
- **Performance Goal 3.3.6:** Assess the government's planning, implementation, and use of IT to improve performance and modernize federal programs and operations.
- **Performance Goal 3.3.7:** Identify ways to improve the collection, dissemination, and quality of federal information.
- **Performance Goal 3.3.8:** Identify ways to improve the administration and management of grants and other federal assistance across all levels of government.
- **Performance Goal 3.3.9:** Identify and assess efforts to reduce fragmentation, overlap, and duplication and to enhance collaboration.
- **Performance Goal 3.3.10:** Identify ways to promote innovation, transparency, and open government and evaluate implementation of the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014 (DATA Act).

GOAL 4

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Empower GAO's Workforce to Excel through Strategic Talent Management
- Streamline GAO's Processes to Deliver Quality Results and Products and Promote Knowledge Sharing, Government Standards, and Strategic Solutions
- Provide Modern Integrated Tools and Systems in a Secure, Collaborative, and Mobile Environment

Maximize the Value of GAO by Enabling Quality, Timely Service to the Congress and by Being a Leading Practices Federal Agency

GAO's fourth strategic goal focuses on empowering GAO's multidisciplinary workforce through continuous improvement and innovation to maximize value, achieve operational excellence, support the Congress' highest legislative and oversight priorities, and deliver quality results. Further, as a leading-practices agency, GAO develops strategies to ensure effective and efficient use of resources. To achieve this goal, GAO will

- promote employee engagement, diversity, and inclusiveness;
- maintain and enhance its relationships with congressional clients and federal agencies;
- identify and address internal management challenges and enterprise risks;
- collaborate and coordinate with the audit and accountability communities, as well as other agencies in the legislative branch;
- leverage data, technology, and process optimization to improve business practices;
- provide modern, integrated tools and systems to ensure efficiency and effectiveness and enhance staff's ability to work collaboratively in a mobile environment;
- streamline its physical and technological infrastructure;
- expand the use of business intelligence tools to facilitate agile, accurate, cost-effective, and data-driven decision making;
- continue to enhance contract administration processes to ensure timely delivery of services at a fair and reasonable cost; and
- implement security practices that enhance preparedness and resilience.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.1

Empower GAO's Workforce to Excel through Strategic Talent Management

GAO will attract, develop, and retain a diverse, inclusive, and highly productive workforce using a strategic talent management approach and through our commitment to a workplace where people are valued, respected, and treated fairly (see fig. 20). This approach will help us achieve operational excellence and provide the greatest return on investment to the Congress and the American people. As a knowledge-based organization, GAO recognizes that our greatest strength lies with our people.

GAO will undertake a number of efforts that leverage our agency's expertise and networks to achieve our goals. We will address the need to build capacity and transfer knowledge through succession planning, while providing learning and developmental opportunities to meet future challenges. We will also leverage data to strengthen learning, knowledge sharing, and growth opportunities that increase the skills and competencies of our workforce to address the increasingly complex, interdisciplinary, and global issues facing the federal government.

GAO's Chief Administrative Office and the Office of Opportunity and Inclusiveness

Issue Areas: Improving GAO operations to maximize value, achieve operational excellence, and deliver quality results to the Congress.

We support agency operations in the management of talent, learning, finance, acquisition, information technology, records, facilities, security, labor relations, and in promoting and maintaining a work environment that is fair, unbiased, and inclusive.

People Values

Valued

Seek out and appreciate each person's perspectives

Respected

Treat everyone with dignity

Treated Fairly

Foster a work environment that provides opportunities for all

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.1 PERFORMANCE GOALS

Empower GAO's Workforce to Excel through Strategic Talent Management

- **Performance Goal 4.1.1:** Identify, attract, and retain a workforce with the skills necessary to achieve operational excellence.
- **Performance Goal 4.1.2:** Develop the workforce using learning organization principles that instill multidisciplinary thinking, collaboration, and responsiveness.
- **Performance Goal 4.1.3:** Enhance and sustain a culture that is fair, diverse, and inclusive and provides opportunities for all employees to excel.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.2

Streamline GAO's Processes to Deliver Quality Results and Products and Promote Knowledge Sharing, Government Standards, and Strategic Solutions

GAO will continue efforts to strengthen relations with the Congress and improve the effectiveness and quality of our services. We will explore ways to present our work to ensure it is widely accessible to the Congress, the public sector, the press, and the American people through various formats and platforms, including video, podcasts, and data visualization (see fig. 21). We plan to streamline and standardize work processes to ensure consistent, measurable outcomes and improve workflow, internal controls, and management oversight.

In light of the increasingly complex, interdisciplinary, and global issues facing the federal government, GAO will expand its partnerships with other organizations to promote professional auditing standards and audit capacity and help enhance their knowledge, agility, and responsiveness.

GAO will also enhance its foresight and strategic planning capabilities by identifying and responding to evolving trends and emerging issues of national importance.

GAO Staff Offices: Office of Congressional Relations, Office of Public Affairs, Office of Strategic Planning & External Liaison, Audit Policy & Quality Assurance, and Continuous Process Improvement Office

Issue Areas: Strengthening relations with the Congress; improving the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of GAO's work; and improving how GAO and other audit organizations respond to evolving trends and emerging issues.

Expertise: We support agency operations in several areas— congressional relations, continuous process improvement, opportunity and inclusiveness, public affairs, strategic planning, and external outreach.

Figure 21: Examples of GAO's Multimedia formats

- Videos
- Interactives
- Infographics
- Podcasts

Source: GAO. | GAO-18-1SP

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.2 PERFORMANCE GOALS

Streamline GAO's Processes to Deliver Quality Results and Products and Promote Knowledge Sharing, Government Standards, and Strategic Solutions

- **Performance Goal 4.2.1:** Enhance outreach to broaden and preserve relationships with the Congress and audited entities.
- **Performance Goal 4.2.2:** Enhance GAO's foresight and strategic planning capacity.
- **Performance Goal 4.2.3:** Develop and continually improve government internal control, evaluation, and auditing standards.
- **Performance Goal 4.2.4:** Enhance information sharing, training, and capacity building for the domestic and international accountability community.
- **Performance Goal 4.2.5:** Leverage data, technology, and process improvement to continually enhance

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.3

Provide Modern Integrated Tools and Systems in a Secure, Collaborative, and Mobile Environment

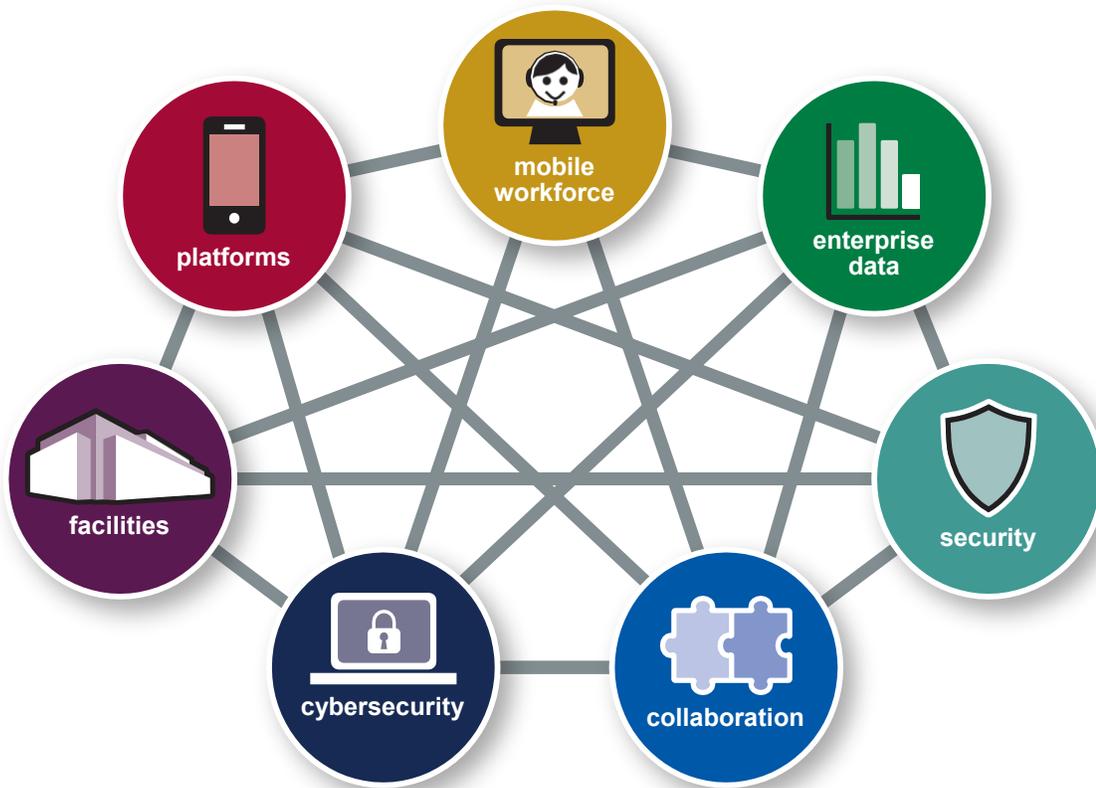
To ensure GAO continues to be a responsible steward and leading practices agency, it is critical that we provide staff with modern and secure integrated tools and systems necessary for working in a collaborative and mobile environment (see fig. 22). We must diligently manage costs while also making the infrastructure investments required to sustain operational excellence and address evolving needs. It is essential that our business operations be efficient and effective and that agency systems support more powerful analytic platforms to inform timely decision making. We will reduce the cost of operations by streamlining space utilization and leveraging cloud-based technologies.

Did You Know?

GAO completed the multiyear deployment of a new Engagement Management System in fiscal year 2017.

This system provides analysts with access to real-time data on their engagements, offers managers better tools for monitoring engagement progress and costs, and maintains a strong foundation of internal controls.

FIGURE 22: MODERN INTEGRATED TOOLS AND SYSTEMS ADVANCE GAO'S EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS IN AN INCREASINGLY MOBILE ENVIRONMENT



Source: GAO. | GAO-18-1SP

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.3 PERFORMANCE GOALS

Provide Modern Integrated Tools and Systems in a Secure, Collaborative, and Mobile Environment

- **Performance Goal 4.3.1:** Empower staff with collaborative, integrated tools to enhance business processes and increase efficiency.
- **Performance Goal 4.3.2:** Enhance tools that integrate crosscutting enterprise data to facilitate more agile, accurate, cost-effective, and data- driven decision making.
- **Performance Goal 4.3.3:** Enable a mobile, collaborative environment.
- **Performance Goal 4.3.4:** Ensure a secure, robust, cost-effective physical and technological infrastructure.

GUIDE TO GAO TEAM ABBREVIATIONS

ARM	Applied Research and Methods
CNSA	Contracting and National Security Acquisitions
DCM	Defense Capabilities and Management
EWIS	Education, Workforce, and Income Security
FAIS	Forensic Audits and Investigative Service
FMA	Financial Management and Assurance
FMCI	Financial Markets and Community Investment
HC	Health Care
HSJ	Homeland Security and Justice
IAT	International Affairs and Trade
IT	Information Technology
NRE	Natural Resources and Environment
PI	Physical Infrastructure
SI	Strategic Issues

Figure 23: Strategic Objectives and GAO Teams

Strategic Goal	Strategic Objective	ARM	CNSA	DCM	EWIS	FAIS	FMA	FMCI	HC	HSJ	IAT	IT	NRE	PI	SI
Goal 1: Address Current and Emerging Challenges to the Well-Being and Financial Security of the American People	1.1 Financing and Programs to Serve the Health Needs of an Aging and Diverse Population								X						X
	1.2 Lifelong Learning to Enhance U.S. Competitiveness				X										
	1.3 Benefits and Protections for Workers, Families, and Children				X						X				
	1.4 Financial Security and Well-Being of an Aging Population				X										
	1.5 A Responsive, Fair, and Effective System of Justice									X					
	1.6 Housing Finance and Viable Communities							X							
	1.7 A Stable Financial System and Sufficient Consumer Protection							X							
	1.8 Responsible Stewardship of Natural Resources and the Environment	X												X	
	1.9 A Viable, Safe, Secure, and Accessible National Physical Infrastructure														X
Goal 2: Help the Congress Respond to Changing Security Threats and the Challenges of Global Interdependence	2.1 Protect and Secure the Homeland from Threats and Disasters	X	X					X		X	X	X	X		
	2.2 Effectively and Efficiently Utilize Resources for Military Capabilities and Readiness		X	X										X	
	2.3 Advance and Protect U.S. Foreign Policy and International Economic Interests		X	X							X			X	
	2.4 Improve Intelligence Community Management and Integration to Enhance Intelligence Activities		X	X							X				
Goal 3: Help Transform the Federal Government to Address National Challenges	3.1 Analyze the Government's Fiscal Condition and Opportunities to Strengthen Approaches to Address the Current and Projected Fiscal Gaps						X								X
	3.2 Support Government Accountability by Identifying Fraud, Waste, and Abuse and Needed Improvements in Internal Controls					X	X								
	3.3 Support Congressional Oversight of Crosscutting Issues, Major Management Challenges, and Program Risks	X	X				X					X	X		X
Goal 4: Maximize the Value of GAO by Enabling Quality, Timely Service to the Congress and by Being a Leading Practices Federal Agency	4.1 Empower GAO's Workforce to Excel through Strategic Talent Management	All of GAO's Mission Teams, Chief Administrative Offices, and Staff Offices contribute to the overall achievement of these Strategic Goals and Objectives.													
	4.2 Streamline GAO's Processes to Deliver Quality Results and Products, and Promote Knowledge Sharing, Government Standards, and Strategic Solutions														
	4.3 Provide Modern Integrated Tools and Systems in a Secure, Collaborative, and Mobile Environment														

Source: GAO. | GAO-18-1SP

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

IMAGE SOURCES

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Front cover: GAO (United States Capitol) Page 7: GAO (United States Capitol)

Page 11: GAO (GAO Headquarters building)

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE DOCUMENTS

GAO's 2018-2023 Strategic Plan ([GAO-18-1SP](#)), Key Efforts ([GAO-18-395SP](#)), and Trends Affecting Government and Society ([GAO-18-396SP](#)) are available on GAO's [Strategic Planning website](#).

Documents related to GAO's [performance planning](#) and GAO's annual [performance reporting](#) are also available online.

PROVIDING COMMENTS ON THIS REPORT

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