

September 2003

# HOMELAND SECURITY

## Risks Facing Key Border and Transportation Security Program Need to Be Addressed



G A O

Accountability \* Integrity \* Reliability



Highlights of [GAO-03-1083](#), a report to Subcommittees on Homeland Security, Senate and House Committees on Appropriations

# HOMELAND SECURITY

## Risks Facing Key Border and Transportation Security Program Need to Be Addressed

### Why GAO Did This Study

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) plans to establish a program to strengthen management of the pre-entry, entry, status, and exit of foreign nationals who travel to the United States. The goals of the program, known as the United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology (US-VISIT), are to facilitate legitimate trade and travel, enhance national security, and adhere to U.S. privacy laws and policies. By congressional mandate, DHS is to develop and submit for approval an expenditure plan for US-VISIT that satisfies certain conditions, including being reviewed by GAO. GAO was asked to determine, among other things, whether the plan satisfies these conditions and to provide observations about the plan and DHS's management of the program.

### What GAO Recommends

GAO is making a number of recommendations to the Secretary of DHS aimed at minimizing the risks facing US-VISIT, including (1) establishing an executive body, composed of appropriate stakeholder representatives, to guide and direct the program, be held accountable for the program's progress and outcomes, and address key program issues and make associated decisions and (2) taking steps to establish an effective program management capability. DHS concurred with our recommendations and stated that it has made progress toward addressing them.

[www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-03-1083](http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-03-1083)

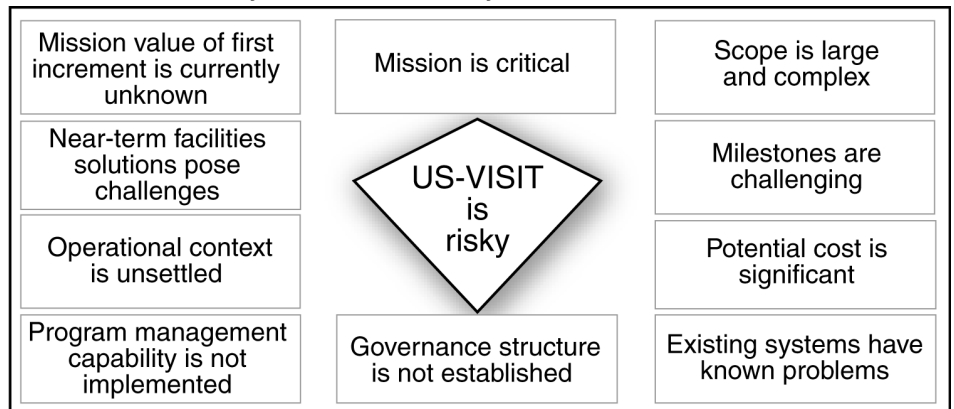
To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Randolph C. Hite at (202) 512-3439 or [hiter@gao.gov](mailto:hiter@gao.gov).

### What GAO Found

DHS's fiscal year 2003 US-VISIT expenditure plan and related documentation partially satisfied the conditions imposed by the Congress, which include meeting the capital planning and investment control review requirements of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). For example, DHS fulfilled the OMB requirement that agencies state whether projects are approved by investment review boards and reviewed by Chief Financial and Procurement Officers; the plan was conditionally approved by DHS's review board, which includes DHS's Chief Financial and Procurement Officers. On the other hand, OMB guidance requires that agency plans summarize life cycle costs and include a cost/benefit analysis that covers return on investment. DHS has not yet established a date and plan for developing these for US-VISIT, although program officials stated that they intend to do so.

GAO also identified 10 factors (see figure) affecting US-VISIT and concluded that the program is a very risky endeavor. Some risk factors are inherent to the program, such as its mission criticality, its size and complexity, and its enormous potential costs. Others, however, arise from the program's relatively immature state of governance and management. For example, although the program has governmentwide scope, an accountable governance structure to direct and oversee the program that reflects this scope is not yet established. In addition, a US-VISIT program management capability has yet to be established, important aspects defining the program's operating environment are not decided, facility needs are unclear and challenging, and the mission value to be derived from the program's initial operating capability is unknown. Because of the risk factors, GAO concluded that it is uncertain that US-VISIT will be able to measurably and appreciably achieve DHS's stated goals for the program. Further, DHS's near-term investment in the program is at risk of not delivering promised capabilities on time and within budget and not producing mission value commensurate with investment costs.

Factors That Collectively Make US-VISIT a Risky Endeavor



Source: GAO.

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### Abbreviations

ADIS	Arrival Departure Information System
APIS	Advance Passenger Information System
CCD	Consular Consolidated Database
CLAIMS 3	Computer Linked Application Information Management System 3
CLASS	Consular Lookout and Support System
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
EA	enterprise architecture
IBIS	Interagency Border Inspection System
IDENT	Automated Biometric Identification System
INS	Immigration and Naturalization Service
IRB	Investment Review Board
IT	information technology
NIIS	Non-Immigrant Information System
NSEERS	National Security Entry-Exit Registration System
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
POE	port of entry
SA-CMM <sup>®</sup>	Software Acquisition Capability Maturity Model <sup>®</sup>
SEI	Software Engineering Institute
SEVIS	Student Exchange Visitor Information System
US-VISIT	U.S. Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology

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**Contents**

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United States General Accounting Office  
Washington, D.C. 20548

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September 19, 2003

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Chairman  
The Honorable Robert C. Byrd  
Ranking Minority Member  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate

The Honorable Harold Rogers  
Chairman  
The Honorable Martin Olav Sabo  
Ranking Minority Member  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
Committee on Appropriations  
House of Representatives

Pursuant to the Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, 2003,<sup>1</sup> the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) submitted to Congress in June 2003 its fiscal year 2003 expenditure plan for the United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology (US-VISIT) program. US-VISIT is a governmentwide program intended to improve the nation's capacity for collecting information on foreign nationals who travel to the United States, as well as control the pre-entry, entry, status, and exit of these travelers. The goals for US-VISIT are to facilitate legitimate travel and trade, enhance national security, and adhere to U.S. privacy laws and policies. As also required by the Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, 2003, we reviewed the expenditure plan. Our objectives were to (1) determine whether the US-VISIT fiscal year 2003 expenditure plan satisfies certain legislative conditions specified in the Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, 2003; (2) determine the status of our US-VISIT open recommendations; and (3) provide any other observations about the expenditure plan and DHS's management of US-VISIT. The specified legislative conditions are that the plan meet the capital planning and investment control review requirements established by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), including OMB Circular A-11, part 3; that it comply with the acquisition rules, requirements, guidelines, and systems

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<sup>1</sup>P.L. 108-7 (Feb. 20, 2003).

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acquisition management practices of the federal government; and that it be reviewed by GAO.

On July 18, 2003, we provided your offices a written briefing detailing the results of our review. This report summarizes and transmits this briefing. The full briefing, including our scope and methodology, is reprinted as appendix I.

Concerning our first objective, DHS partially satisfied those legislative conditions specified in the Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, 2003, that are applicable to it. That is, the plan, including related program documentation and program officials' statements, satisfied or provided for satisfying many, but not all of the key aspects of (1) OMB's capital planning and investment control review requirements; and (2) federal acquisition rules, requirements, guidelines, and systems acquisition management practices. For example, DHS fulfilled the OMB requirement that agencies state whether projects are approved by investment review boards and reviewed by Chief Financial and Procurement Officers; the plan was conditionally approved by DHS's review board, which includes DHS's Chief Financial and Procurement Officers. On the other hand, OMB guidance requires that agency plans summarize life cycle costs and include a cost/benefit analysis that covers return on investment. DHS has not yet established a date and plan for developing a current life cycle cost and a cost/benefit analysis for US-VISIT, although program officials stated that they intend to do so.

Concerning our second objective, DHS has initiated action to implement or has partially implemented most, but not all of the recommendations contained in our report on the fiscal year 2002 expenditure plan.<sup>2</sup> Each recommendation, along with the status of each, is summarized below.

- We recommended that DHS develop a system security plan and privacy impact assessment. The department has action under way to address this recommendation. Specifically, DHS reported that it has defined security and privacy requirements and has drafted a security plan and a privacy impact assessment.

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<sup>2</sup>U.S. General Accounting Office, *Information Technology: Homeland Security Needs to Improve Entry Exit System Expenditure Planning*, GAO-03-563 (Washington, D.C.: June 9, 2003).

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- We recommended that DHS ensure that controls in the area of acquisition planning, solicitation, requirements management, program management, contract tracking and oversight, and evaluation are implemented in accordance with the Software Engineering Institute's (SEI) guidance.<sup>3</sup> The department plans to implement this recommendation. Specifically, DHS has recently approved a program management structure that includes functions consistent with these controls; however, it has not yet developed explicit plans or time frames for defining and implementing them.
  - We recommended that DHS ensure that future expenditure plans are provided to the department's House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees in advance of US-VISIT funds being obligated. With respect to the fiscal year 2003 expenditure plan, DHS partially satisfied this recommendation. Specifically, it provided this plan to the Senate and House Appropriations Subcommittees on Homeland Security in June 2003. However, following DHS's request for use of \$5 to \$7 million in March 2003, the April 2003 House Conference Report<sup>4</sup> recommended that DHS use \$5 million for US-VISIT. DHS subsequently allocated the \$5 million to the US-VISIT program.
  - We recommended that DHS ensure that future expenditure plans fully disclose US-VISIT system capabilities, schedule, cost, and benefits. With respect to the fiscal year 2003 expenditure plan, DHS has partially satisfied this recommendation. Specifically, this plan describes high-level capabilities by increment, high-level schedule estimates, and categories of expenditures. However, the plan does not associate these categories of expenditure to incremental capabilities, time frames, and benefits. Moreover, the plan does not identify expected benefits in tangible, measurable, and meaningful terms, nor does it associate benefits with increments.

Finally, we identified 10 factors that make US-VISIT a risky endeavor. Some of these risk factors are inherent to the program, and others are a product of the program's relatively immature state of governance and management. The specific risk factors that we identified are as follows:

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<sup>3</sup>Carnegie Mellon Software Engineering Institute, *Software Acquisition Capability Maturity Model*<sup>®</sup>, Version 1.03 (March 2002) defines acquisition process management controls for planning, managing, and controlling software-intensive system acquisitions.

<sup>4</sup>H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 108-76, at 80 (2003).

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- US-VISIT is critical to the department's mission in preventing the entry of persons who pose a threat to our nation into the United States. The missed entry of just one of these persons could have severe consequences.
  - US-VISIT is large in scope and complex. For example, the program is to (1) support a large governmentwide process involving multiple departments and agencies, (2) modify and expand facilities at over 150 land ports of entry, and (3) interconnect about 20 existing systems.
  - To meet US-VISIT's daunting milestones,<sup>5</sup> DHS has chosen to implement temporary solutions, largely because over the last 7 years, limited progress has been made in addressing key legislative requirements. For example, to meet deadlines at land ports of entry, DHS plans to develop and implement interim, or temporary, system and facility solutions.
  - The program will be a costly undertaking. In February 2003, DHS estimated that the program would cost about \$7.2 billion through fiscal year 2014. However, this estimate is outdated and does not include, for example, the State Department's cost to implement visas with biometrics, which we previously estimated could add as much as \$15 billion to the program's cost through 2014.<sup>6</sup>
  - The performance of initial increments of the US-VISIT system depends on the performance of existing systems that are to be interfaced. Some of these systems, such as the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System<sup>7</sup> and the Computer Linked Application Information Management System 3,<sup>8</sup> have known system availability problems that could limit US-VISIT system performance.

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<sup>5</sup>For example, the Immigration and Naturalization Service Data Management Improvement Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-215, June 15, 2000) requires that US-VISIT be implemented at all air and sea ports of entry by December 31, 2003; at the 50 highest volume land ports of entry by December 31, 2004; and at all remaining ports of entry by December 31, 2005.

<sup>6</sup>U.S. General Accounting Office, *Technology Assessment: Using Biometrics for Border Security*, GAO-03-174 (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 15, 2002).

<sup>7</sup>The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System contains information on foreign students.

<sup>8</sup>The Computer Linked Application Information Management System 3 contains information on foreign nationals who request benefits, such as change of status or extension of stay.



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- US-VISIT is not currently directed and overseen by an accountable governance structure that reflects the program's governmentwide scope and that includes the appropriate leaders from each stakeholder organization, that is, those who can make and enforce decisions and commit resources.
  - The US-VISIT program office does not have the capabilities (people, processes, and tools) to effectively manage the program. For example, this office has not yet been adequately staffed, specific roles and responsibilities have not been defined, and acquisition management process controls have not been developed and implemented. Moreover, DHS has not defined specific plans and time frames for doing so.
  - Key information about the operational context surrounding US-VISIT that is necessary to effectively define, establish, and implement the program is not yet available. As a result, DHS is making certain assumptions and decisions in order to meet near-term deadlines, such as the use of a two-fingerprint biometric; these assumptions and decisions would require system rework if they prove inconsistent with subsequent operational context policy or standards decisions.
  - Construction of US-VISIT facility solutions, both interim and permanent, pose serious challenges for a number of reasons. For example, existing facilities do not support existing entry and exit processes at a number of land ports of entry, border crossing wait times are very sensitive to very small increases in processing times at certain high-volume land ports of entry, and interim facility solutions must satisfy yet-to-be defined program requirements.
  - The mission value to be gained from the initial US-VISIT operational capability planned for December 31, 2003, is not currently known. In particular, DHS has not defined specific, measurable benefits expected from this initial operating capability, in large part because it has yet to define the processes that will govern how entry and exit activities will be performed. This uncertainty is compounded by the fact that this initial operating capability is to be constrained by existing facilities and personnel and it is not to result in increases in border crossing wait times.

In conclusion, US-VISIT is a risky undertaking because it is to support a critical mission, its scope is large and complex, it must meet a demanding implementation schedule, and its potential cost is enormous. Generally,

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these risk factors are inherent to the program and cannot be easily changed. However, compounding these inherent risk factors are a number of others that are attributable to the program's current state of governance and management and its acquisition approach, as described above. Further, DHS did not fully satisfy the legislative conditions imposed by the Congress and has yet to fully implement our previous recommendations, both of which were aimed at reducing risk. Because of all these risk factors, it is uncertain that US-VISIT will be able to measurably and appreciably achieve DHS's stated goals of facilitating legitimate travel and trade, enhancing national security, and adhering to U.S. privacy laws and policies. Moreover, DHS's near-term investment in the program is at risk of not delivering promised capabilities on time and within budget, and not producing mission value commensurate with investment costs. Thus, it is imperative that the factors that contribute to this level of risk be addressed thoroughly and expeditiously.

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## Recommendations for Executive Action

To address US-VISIT as a governmentwide program and to minimize the risks facing the program, we recommend that the Secretary of Homeland Security, in collaboration with cabinet officials from US-VISIT stakeholder departments and agencies,

- establish and charter an executive body, chaired by the Secretary's designee, potentially co-chaired by the leadership from key stakeholder departments and agencies, and composed of appropriate senior-level representatives from DHS and each stakeholder organization, to guide and direct the US-VISIT program; and
- direct this executive body to immediately take steps to (1) ensure that the human capital and financial resources are expeditiously provided to establish a fully functional and effective US-VISIT program office and associated management capability, (2) clarify the operational context within which US-VISIT must operate, and (3) decide whether proposed US-VISIT increments will produce mission value commensurate with costs and risks and disclose to the Congress planned actions based on this body's decisions.

Further, we recommend that the Secretary, through the Under Secretary for Border and Transportation Security, direct the US-VISIT Program Director to expeditiously establish an effective program management capability, including immediately

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- defining program office positional roles, responsibilities, and relationships;
  - developing and implementing a human capital strategy that provides for staffing these positions with individuals who have the requisite core competencies (knowledge, skills, and abilities);
  - developing and implementing a plan for satisfying key SEI acquisition management controls, to include acquisition planning, solicitation, requirements development and management, project management, contractor tracking and oversight, evaluation, and transition to support;
  - developing and implementing a risk management plan and ensuring that all high risks and their status are reported regularly to the executive body;
  - defining performance standards for each US-VISIT system increment that are measurable and reflect the limitations imposed by relying on existing systems for these system increments; and
  - developing an analysis of incremental program costs, benefits, and risks, and providing this analysis to the executive body, to assist it in the body's deliberations and decision making.

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## Agency Comments

In written comments on a draft of this report signed by the Director, US-VISIT, DHS concurred with our recommendations and stated that it has recently made progress toward addressing them. In particular, DHS stated that it has approved the proposed US-VISIT organizational structure and identified necessary staff positions, and that it is working with the Office of Personnel Management to draft position descriptions and prepare for recruitment. Also, it stated that the US-VISIT program office is staffed with 51 detailees from various DHS components and agencies. Last, it stated that it has in place an Investment Review Board that has twice reviewed US-VISIT, has established a DHS framework for addressing policy questions, and has plans to establish a US-VISIT Advisory Council. DHS's comments are reprinted in appendix II.

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We are sending copies of this report to the Chairmen and Ranking Minority Members of other Senate and House committees and subcommittees that

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have authorization and oversight responsibilities for homeland security. We are also sending copies to the Secretary of State and the Director of OMB. We also will make copies available to others upon request. In addition, the report will be available at no charge on the GAO Web site at <http://www.gao.gov>.

Should you or your staff have any questions on matters discussed in this report, please contact me at (202) 512-3439. I can also be reached by E-mail at [Hiter@gao.gov](mailto:Hiter@gao.gov). Key contributors to this report were Seto Bagdoyan, Barbara Collier, Deborah Davis, Neil Doherty, Rebecca Gambler, Tamra Goldstein, James Houtz, Richard Hung, Tammi Nguyen, and Mark Tremba.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Randolph C. Hite". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and "H".

Randolph C. Hite  
Director, Information Technology Architecture  
and Systems Issues

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# Briefing to the Staffs of the Subcommittees on Homeland Security, Senate and House Committees on Appropriations

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## **Information Technology: Risks Facing Key Homeland Security Program Need to Be Addressed**

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Briefing to the Staffs of the  
Subcommittees on Homeland Security  
Senate and House Committee on Appropriations

July 18, 2003



## Briefing Overview

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- Introduction
- Objectives
- Results in Brief
- Background
- Results
  - Legislative Conditions
  - Status of Recommendations
  - Observations
- Conclusions
- Recommendations
- Agency Comments
- Attachment I. Legislative History
- Attachment II. Scope and Methodology



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Seven years ago, the Congress passed legislation that directed the former Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to develop an entry exit system. Pursuant to this and related legislative direction,<sup>1</sup> INS established the entry exit program about 16 months ago. Subsequently, INS was merged into the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and the entry exit program was renamed the United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology (US-VISIT). US-VISIT is a governmentwide program that is to improve the processes, policies, and systems used to collect information on foreign nationals who travel to the United States, and to track entries, exits, and stays of travelers.

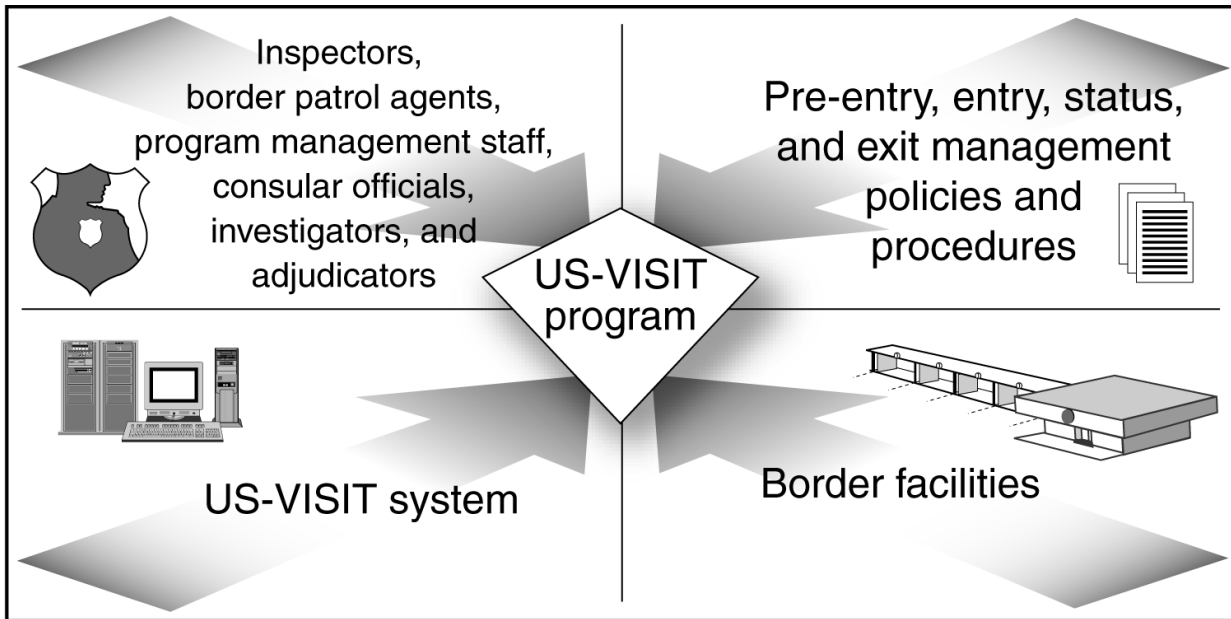
DHS's stated goals for US-VISIT are to

- facilitate legitimate travel and trade,
- enhance national security, and
- adhere to U.S. privacy laws and policies.

<sup>1</sup> See attachment I for a listing of relevant legislation.



The US-VISIT program involves the interdependent application of people, processes, technology, and facilities.



Source: GAO.

Note: GAO analysis based on DHS data.





The Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, 2003,<sup>1</sup> prohibits DHS from obligating any funds appropriated in the act for the entry exit system (now US-VISIT), until it submits a plan for expenditure that satisfies the following legislative conditions.

- It meets the capital planning and investment control review requirements established by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), including OMB Circular A-11, part 3.<sup>2</sup>
- It complies with the acquisition rules, requirements, guidelines, and systems acquisition management practices of the federal government.
- It is reviewed by GAO.

<sup>1</sup> P.L. 108-7 (Feb. 20, 2003).

<sup>2</sup> OMB Circular A-11 establishes policy for planning, budgeting, acquisition, and management of federal capital assets.



## Introduction

In fiscal year 2003, Justice requested \$380 million for the entry exit program (now US-VISIT)—\$362 million in new funding and \$18 million in fiscal year 2003 base resources.

- In conjunction with the Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, 2003, the conference report<sup>1</sup> recommended \$362 million for the entry exit system (now US-VISIT) and related information technology (IT) infrastructure upgrades.
- According to DHS officials, the \$18 million in base resources was to come from a user fee account. However, according to these officials, given the decrease in user fee receipts since September 11, 2001, it is unclear whether the \$18 million will be available for the US VISIT program.

DHS submitted its fiscal year 2003 expenditure plan for \$375 million<sup>2</sup> on June 5, 2003, to its House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Homeland Security.

<sup>1</sup> H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 108-10, at 623 (2003).

<sup>2</sup> In April 2003, H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 108-76 at 80 (2003), recommended that DHS use \$5 million for US-VISIT. The \$5 million was not included in the expenditure plan submitted to the Appropriations Subcommittees in June 2003.



## Objectives

As agreed, our objectives were to

1. determine whether the US-VISIT fiscal year 2003 expenditure plan satisfies the legislative conditions,
2. determine the status of our US-VISIT open recommendations, and
3. provide any other observations about the expenditure plan and DHS's management of US-VISIT.

We conducted our work at DHS headquarters in Washington, D.C., from April through July 2003 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Details of our scope and methodology are given in attachment II.



Results in Brief: Objective 1  
**Legislative Conditions**

DHS's expenditure plan partially satisfies the legislative conditions.

Legislative conditions	Fully satisfies <sup>1</sup>	Partially satisfies <sup>2</sup>	Does not satisfy <sup>3</sup>
1. Meets the capital planning and investment control review requirements established by OMB, including OMB Circular A-11, part 3.		√	
2. Complies with the acquisition rules, requirements, guidelines, and systems acquisition management practices of the federal government.		√	
3. Is reviewed by GAO.	√		

<sup>1</sup> Satisfies or provides for satisfying every aspect of the condition that we reviewed.

<sup>2</sup> Satisfies or provides for satisfying many, but not all, key aspects of the condition that we reviewed.

<sup>3</sup> Satisfies or provides for satisfying few, if any, of the key aspects of the condition that we reviewed.



Results in Brief: Objective 2  
**Open Recommendations**

Status of DHS actions to implement our open recommendations.

GAO open recommendations	Status			
	Complete	Partially complete	In progress	Planned
1. Develop a system security plan and privacy impact assessment.			√	
2. Ensure that controls in the area of acquisition planning, solicitation, requirements management, project management, contract tracking and oversight, and evaluation are implemented in accordance with SEI <sup>1</sup> guidance.				√

*(continued next slide)*

<sup>1</sup> The Software Acquisition Capability Maturity Model<sup>®</sup> developed by Carnegie Mellon University's Software Engineering Institute (SEI) defines acquisition process management controls for planning, managing, and controlling software-intensive system acquisitions.



Results in Brief: Objective 2  
 Open Recommendations

GAO open recommendations	Status			
	Complete	Partially complete	In progress	Planned
3. Ensure that future expenditure plans are provided to DHS's House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees in advance of US-VISIT funds being obligated.		√ <sup>1</sup>		
4. Ensure that future expenditure plans fully disclose what US-VISIT system capabilities and benefits are to be delivered, by when, and at what cost.		√ <sup>1</sup>		

<sup>1</sup> With respect to the fiscal year 2003 expenditure plan.



## Results in Brief: Objective 3 Observations: Risk Factors

US-VISIT is a high risk endeavor. We have identified 10 risk factors affecting US-VISIT:

- **Mission is critical.** The missed entry of one person who poses a threat to the United States could have severe consequences.
- **Scope is large and complex.** Controlling the pre-entry, entry, status, and exit of millions of travelers is a large and complex process.
- **Milestones are challenging.** Progress and current status of the program makes satisfying legislatively mandated milestones difficult.
- **Potential cost is significant.** DHS has estimated that the program will cost \$7.2 billion through fiscal year 2014, and this estimate does not include all costs and may underestimate some others.
- **Existing systems have known problems.** The program is to initially rely on existing systems with known problems that could limit US-VISIT performance.



## Results in Brief: Objective 3 Observations: Risk Factors

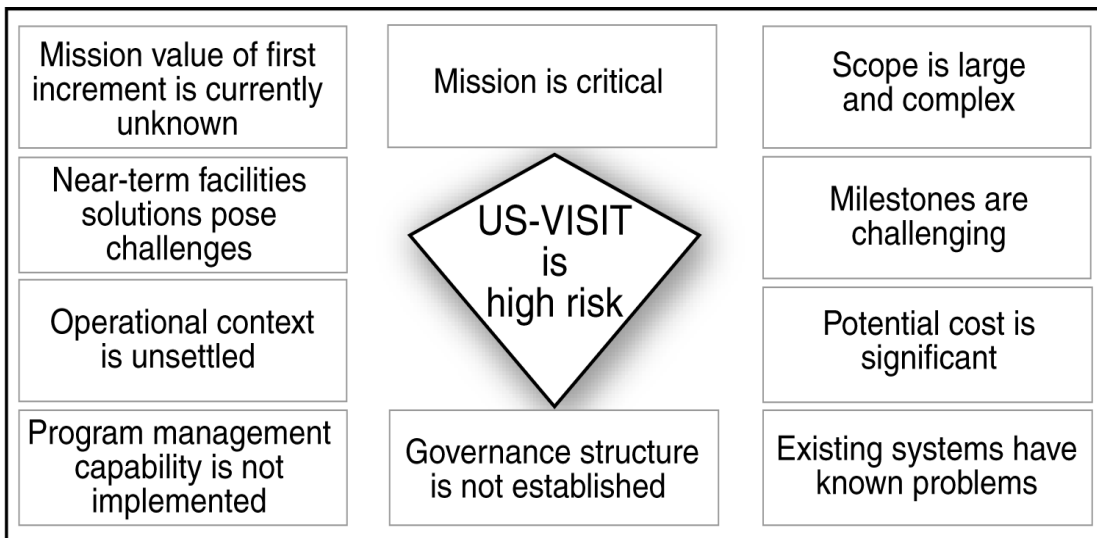
- **Governance structure is not established.** The program is not currently governed by an accountable body that reflects its governmentwide scope and that can make and enforce decisions and commit resources for all program stakeholders.
- **Program management capability is not implemented.** The program office is not yet adequately staffed, roles and responsibilities are not yet clearly defined, and acquisition management processes are not yet established.
- **Operational context is unsettled.** Operational issues have not been decided, such as which rules and standards will govern implementation of biometrics technology.
- **Near-term facilities solutions pose challenges.** Interim facility planning for high-volume land ports of entry (POEs) must satisfy demanding as well as yet-to-be defined requirements.
- **Mission value of first increment is currently unknown.** The benefits versus costs of the first increment are not yet known.





Results in Brief: Objective 3  
**Observation**

**Risk Factors Affecting US-VISIT**



Source: GAO.

Unless these risk factors are effectively addressed, US-VISIT is likely to fall short of envisioned expectations.



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To address these risk factors, we are making recommendations to the Secretary of Homeland Security.

We provided DHS a draft of this briefing. In its oral comments, DHS agreed with our findings, conclusions, and recommendations.



Background  
**Border Inspection by POE**

All persons that legally enter the United States must pass through one of more than 300 land, sea, or air ports of entry (POEs), and must undergo a primary inspection. In fiscal year 2002, about 440 million primary inspections were conducted on foreign nationals and U.S. citizens.

Type of POEs	Number of POEs	Number of inspections	Percentage of inspections
Land	165	358,373,569	81
Air	123	69,679,190	16
Sea	42	12,369,035	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>440,421,794</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: DHS.

Note: GAO analysis based on DHS data.



## Background US-VISIT Overview

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US-VISIT is a governmentwide endeavor intended to facilitate legitimate travel and trade, enhance national security, and adhere to U.S. privacy laws and policies by

- collecting, maintaining, and sharing information on individuals who enter and exit the United States;
- identifying individuals who (1) have overstayed or violated the terms of their visit; (2) can receive, extend, or adjust their immigration status; and (3) should be apprehended or detained by law enforcement officials;
- detecting fraudulent travel documents, verifying traveler identity, and determining traveler admissibility through the use of biometrics; and
- facilitating information sharing and coordination within the border management community.



## Background US-VISIT Organization

Within DHS,<sup>1</sup> organizational responsibility for the US-VISIT program is within the Border and Transportation Security Directorate.

In June 2003, DHS established a US-VISIT program office with responsibility for managing the acquisition, deployment, operation, and sustainment of the US-VISIT system and supporting people (e.g., inspectors), processes (e.g., entry exit policies and procedures), and facilities (e.g., inspection booths) associated with the program.

The following graphic shows the organizational ownership for the US-VISIT program.

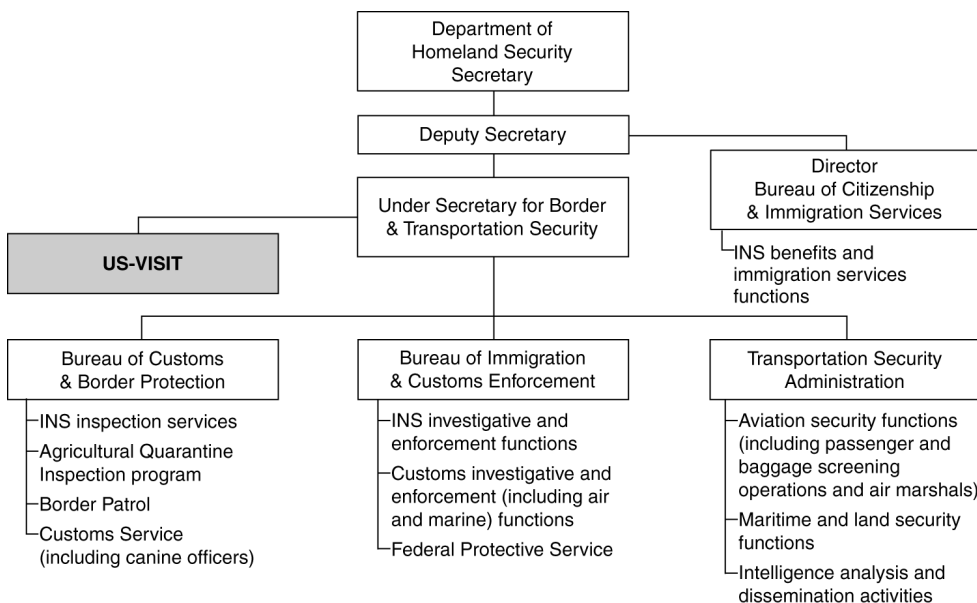
<sup>1</sup> In January 2003, we designated the implementation and transformation of DHS as a high risk program for the following three reasons: (1) the size and complexity of the undertaking, (2) the wide array of existing challenges of the component agencies being merged within DHS, and (3) the potentially serious consequences of DHS's failure to effectively carry out its mission. (U.S. General Accounting Office, *Major Management Challenges and Program Risks: Department of Homeland Security*, GAO-03-102 (Washington, D.C.: January 2003)).

**Appendix I**  
**Briefing to the Staffs of the Subcommittees**  
**on Homeland Security, Senate and House**  
**Committees on Appropriations**



**Background**  
**US-VISIT Organization**

**Organizational Placement of US-VISIT Program (partial DHS organization chart)**



Source: GAO.

Note: GAO analysis based on DHS data. As of May 2003, the US-VISIT program office reports directly to the Under Secretary for Border and Transportation Security.



## Background Acquisition Strategy

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### Acquisition Strategy

DHS plans to deliver US-VISIT capability incrementally. Currently DHS has defined four increments, with Increments 1 through 3 being interim, or temporary, solutions, and increment 4 being the strategic solution and consisting of a series of increments. Increments 1 through 3 include the interfacing and enhancement of existing system capabilities and the deployment of these capabilities at air, sea, and land POEs; the design and construction of interim facilities<sup>1</sup> at land POEs; and the development and implementation of revised border inspection procedures.

<sup>1</sup> DHS is planning to construct interim, or temporary, facilities at land POEs to meet established milestones, while concurrently developing permanent solutions at these POEs.



## Background Acquisition Strategy

According to DHS, Increment 1 is to deliver an initial system operating capability to all air and sea POEs by December 31, 2003, that includes

- recording the arrival and departure of foreign nationals using passenger and crew manifest data,
- identifying travelers who have overstayed their visits or changed their visitor status, and
- interfacing seven existing systems that contain data about foreign nationals.

Increment 1 is to also verify travelers' identities upon entry into the United States through the use of biometrics and checks against watch lists (e.g., the Interagency Border Inspection System—IBIS) at air POEs and 13 of 42 sea POEs, but only for those cruise lines that currently have inspections stations.

Increment 1 is also to include developing policies and procedures and providing the associated training for an interim inspection process.

Increment 1 may include an exit capability beyond the capture of the manifest data.





## Background Acquisition Strategy

Increment 1 is not intended to include the installation or acquisition of additional facilities at air and sea POEs, or employment of additional inspectors.

Increment 2 is to deploy Increment 1 system capability and design and construct interim facilities (e.g., additional inspection booths) at the 50 highest volume land POEs by December 31, 2004. It is also to include

- the use of radio frequency technology<sup>1</sup> for vehicles and pedestrians that are pre-cleared, and
- the use of technology to read travel documents with biometrics.<sup>2</sup>

Increment 3 is to deploy Increment 2 system capability and design and construct interim facilities at all remaining land POEs by December 31, 2005.

Increment 4 is to deliver a new, yet-to-be-defined, integrated system solution to a yet-to-be-defined number of POEs by December 31, 2006.

<sup>1</sup> DHS plans to issue radio frequency-enabled proximity cards. As the person or vehicle passes through the inspection lane, the data on the card are read by an antenna and displayed on the inspector's screen.

<sup>2</sup> By October 26, 2004.



## Background Acquisition Strategy

For the system, DHS plans are to award a single, indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity (IDIQ)<sup>1</sup> type contract to a prime contractor capable of integrating existing and new business processes and technologies. DHS plans to issue a request for proposal for the prime contractor in November 2003. The prime contractor is to be responsible for Increment 4 and is to assist in the deployment of Increments 2 and 3. DHS plans to use existing contractors to interface and enhance the existing systems for Increment 1.

For facilities, the department plans to award contracts for the design and construction of interim facilities at each land POE through the General Services Administration (GSA). DHS is working with GSA to obligate \$17 million for the award of interim facilities design contracts beginning in August 2003. DHS plans to award interim facilities construction contracts for the 50 highest volume land POEs through GSA beginning in February 2004 using anticipated fiscal year 2004 funds.

<sup>1</sup> An IDIQ contract is a flexible contract that provides for an indefinite quantity, within stated limits, of supplies or services during a fixed period of time. The government schedules deliveries or performance by placing orders with the contractor.



## Background Acquisition Strategy

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For human capital, DHS has not yet defined its strategy. However, for Increment 1, it does not plan to acquire any additional inspection staff. According to program officials, the department is developing a training plan for inspectors for Increment 1, and it expects to complete training by the end of December 2003.

DHS is currently developing the policies, procedures, and guidance for implementing Increment 1. It expects to complete development by the end of October 2003.



## Background Component Systems

### Component Systems

US-VISIT (Increments 1 through 4) is to include the interfacing and integration of over 20 existing systems. For example, Increment 1 includes the following existing systems:

- Arrival Departure Information System (ADIS), a database that stores traveler arrival and departure data and can perform query functions;
- Advance Passenger Information System (APIS), a system that captures arrival and departure manifest information;
- Interagency Border Inspection System (IBIS), a system that maintains lookout data and interfaces with other agencies databases, and is currently used by inspectors at POEs to verify traveler information and modify data;
- Automated Biometric Identification System (IDENT), a system that collects and stores biometric data for foreign visitors;



## Background Component Systems

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- Student Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), a system that contains information on foreign students; and
- Computer Linked Application Information Management System (CLAIMS 3), a system that contains information on foreign nationals who request benefits, such as change of status or extension of stay.
- Consular Consolidated Database (CCD), a system that includes information on whether a visa applicant has previously applied for a visa or currently has a valid U.S. visa.



Background  
**Review of Prior Expenditure Plan**

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**GAO's Review of Fiscal Year 2002 Expenditure Plan**

In our report on the fiscal year 2002 expenditure plan,<sup>1</sup> we concluded that

- the plan partially satisfied the legislative conditions;
- INS intended to acquire and deploy a system with functional and performance capabilities consistent with the general scope of capabilities under various laws; and
- the plan did not provide sufficient information to allow Congress to oversee the program.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. General Accounting Office, *Information Technology: Homeland Security Needs to Improve Entry Exit System Expenditure Planning*, GAO-03-563 (Washington, D.C.: June 9, 2003).



## Background Review of Prior Expenditure Plan

Accordingly, we made recommendations, including

- developing a system security plan and privacy impact assessment;
- ensuring that controls in the area of acquisition planning, solicitation, requirements development and management, project management, contract tracking and oversight, and evaluation be implemented in accordance with SEI guidance;
- ensuring that future expenditure plans be provided to the department's House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees in advance of US-VISIT funds being obligated; and
- ensuring that future expenditure plans fully disclose US-VISIT system capabilities, schedule, cost, and benefits to be delivered.



Background  
**Review of Current Expenditure Plan**

**Fiscal Year 2003 Expenditure Plan Summary** (see next slides for descriptions)

<b>Areas of expenditure</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Proof of Concept Demonstrations: NSEERS reimbursement	\$ 10,500,000
NSEERS	9,500,000
Facial Verification Test	1,500,000
System Enhancement & Infrastructure Upgrades	155,000,000
POE IT and Communication Upgrades	85,000,000
Facilities Planning, Analysis, & Design	60,000,000
Training	3,500,000
Program Management Support	30,000,000
Operations & Systems Sustainment	20,000,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 375,000,000<sup>1</sup></b>

Source: DHS.

<sup>1</sup> In April 2003, H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 108-76 at 80 (2003), recommended that DHS use \$5 million for US-VISIT. The \$5 million was not included in the expenditure plan submitted to the Appropriations Subcommittees in June 2003.





## Background Current Expenditure Plan

### Descriptions

**Proof of Concept Demonstrations:** This area includes reimbursement to DHS's Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services for previously conducted registration activities associated with the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS).<sup>1</sup> Costs in this area also include those for software changes made to IDENT to accommodate NSEERS, for the purchase and deployment of additional IDENT/ENFORCE workstations to POEs and district offices, and for training staff on these system changes. In addition, this area includes a pilot with the Australian government to test facial recognition, in which the Australian government will provide a select group of commercial pilots traveling between Australia and the United States with passports that have biometrics encoded on a chip; these passports will allow DHS to test the reading of the biometric information and to conduct facial verification matching tests.

<sup>1</sup> NSEERS consists of (1) a modified version of the Enforcement Case Tracking System (ENFORCE), (2) deployments of the Automated Biometric Identification System (IDENT), and (3) updated policies and procedures covering the registration of certain nonimmigrants. ENFORCE is a case management system that supports the apprehension and booking process for illegal aliens. IDENT is a database of more than 4.5 million foreign visitors' fingerprints (two prints) and photos.



## Background Current Expenditure Plan

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**System Enhancement & Infrastructure Upgrades:** This area includes the enhancement of existing information systems, telecommunications upgrades between the Justice and Customs data centers, an additional server to accommodate increased workload, and wide-area network upgrades to support additional processing and bandwidth requirements relative to the transmission of biometrics data.

**POE IT and Communication Upgrades:** This area includes upgrades to the hardware (e.g., desktop computers, scanners, biometric devices) and communications infrastructure at the POEs.



## Background Current Expenditure Plan

**Facilities Planning, Analysis, & Design:** This area includes modeling air, sea, and the 50 highest volume land POEs for interim facilities and planning for permanent facilities; conducting environmental assessments; acquiring space for US-VISIT enrollment centers at the 50 highest volume land POEs; developing site plans; awarding design contracts for interim facilities at the 50 highest volume land POEs; conducting feasibility studies and developing master plans to begin collecting data and coordinating existing activities and projects for future requirements; and providing facility-related program and project management support.

**Training:** This area includes initial training for personnel to use the US-VISIT system.

**Program Management Support:** This area includes establishing a program management office to manage the US-VISIT program and engaging program management support contractors.

**Operations & Systems Sustainment:** This area includes increased maintenance and technical support to meet the system performance requirements.



**US-VISIT Available Appropriations, DHS Allocations, and Obligations for  
 Fiscal Year 2002 and 2003**

<b>Fiscal year</b>	<b>Available appropriations (millions) <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>DHS allocations (millions)</b>	<b>Obligated (millions)<sup>2</sup></b>
FY 2003	\$ 380.0	\$ 52.5 <sup>3</sup>	\$ 4.2
FY 2002	13.3	— <sup>4</sup>	3.2 <sup>4</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 393.3</b>		<b>\$ 7.4</b>

Source: DHS.

<sup>1</sup> Of the \$449.8 million lump sum appropriated for Enforcement and Border Affairs in the Department of Defense and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Recovery from and Response to Terrorist Attacks on the United States Act, 2002 (P.L. 107-117), the conference report (H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 107-350, at 416 (2001)) recommended that INS use \$13.3 million in appropriations for the entry exit system (now US-VISIT). This amount is available until expended. Of the \$2.8 billion lump sum appropriated for Immigration Enforcement and Border Affairs for fiscal year 2003, the conference report (H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 108-10, at 623 (2003)) recommended that INS use \$362 million for what is now US-VISIT. These funds expire at the end of fiscal year 2003. According to DHS officials, an additional \$18 million in base resources was to be available from a user fee account. Given the decrease in user fee receipts since September 11, 2001, these officials stated that the \$18 million may not be available for the US-VISIT program.



## Background Funding Approvals

<sup>2</sup> As of June 12, 2003.

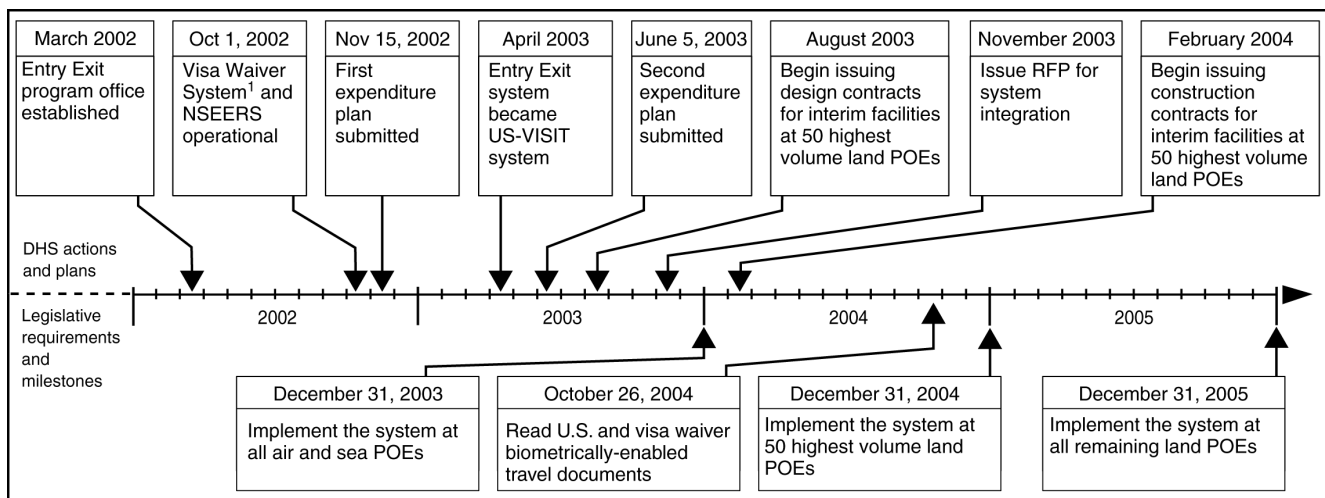
<sup>3</sup> In April 2003, H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 108-76, at 80 (2003), recommended that DHS use \$5 million for US-VISIT. DHS allocated this \$5 million to the US-VISIT program. After submitting the expenditure plan to its appropriations subcommittees in June, DHS allocated \$47.5 million to the US-VISIT program.

<sup>4</sup> On August 2, 2002, the Congress enacted the 2002 Supplemental Appropriations Act for Further Recovery From and Response to Terrorist Attacks on the United States (P.L.107-206, Aug. 2, 2002), which prohibited INS from obligating funds for the entry exit system (from either of the two supplemental appropriations) until the agency submitted an expenditure plan to the appropriations committees that satisfied certain legislative conditions imposed by the act. Before August 2, 2002, the former INS had obligated \$3.2 million.



Background  
**US-VISIT Timeline**

**US-VISIT Timeline**



Source: GAO.

Note: GAO analysis of DHS data.

<sup>1</sup> The Visa Waiver System electronically collects arrival and departure information for all passengers and crew members who are provided a waiver and who arrive and depart U.S. airports and seaports.



## Objective 1 Results Legislative Conditions

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US-VISIT expenditure plan partially satisfies the legislative conditions.

**Condition 1 partially met.** The plan, including related program documentation and program officials' statements, partially meets the capital planning and investment control review requirements established by OMB, including OMB Circular A-11, part 3, which establishes policy for planning, budgeting, acquisition, and management of federal capital assets.

Details of our analysis are shown on the table that follows.



Objective 1 Results  
 Legislative Conditions

**Examples of A-11 conditions**

**Results of our analysis**

Indicate whether the project was approved by Investment Review Board (IRB) and reviewed by Chief Financial and Procurement Officers.

The plan was conditionally approved by DHS's IRB, which is chaired by the Deputy Secretary and composed of department executives, including DHS's Chief Financial and Procurement Officers.

Provide justification and describe acquisition strategy.

The plan provides a high-level justification and description of the acquisition strategy for Increment 1. DHS plans to use existing contracts to interface and enhance existing systems for Increment 1.

Summarize life cycle costs and cost/benefit analysis, including the return on investment.

DHS does not have current life cycle costs nor a current cost/benefit analysis for US-VISIT, but plans to develop these. However, a date and plan for doing so have not been established.<sup>1</sup>

Address enterprise architecture.

The plan states that US-VISIT is identified in DHS's enterprise architecture (EA), but it does not explain how this project conforms to DHS's EA, which is currently under development. Further, DHS officials could not provide evidence of US-VISIT's alignment with DHS's EA activities.<sup>1</sup>

Address security and privacy.

According to program officials, security and privacy requirements have been defined, and a draft security plan and privacy assessment is currently under review.

<sup>1</sup> These areas are more fully discussed in the observation section of the briefing.





## Objective 1 Results Legislative Conditions

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**Condition 2 partially met.** The plan, including related program documentation and program officials' statements, partially complies with the acquisition rules, requirements, guidelines, and systems acquisition management practices of the federal government. These provide a management framework based on the use of rigorous and disciplined processes for planning, managing, and controlling the acquisition of IT resources, including acquisition planning, solicitation, requirements development and management, project management, contract tracking and oversight, and evaluation.

Details of our analysis are shown on the table that follows.



## Objective 1 Results Legislative Conditions

Examples of practices	Results of our analysis
<p><i>Acquisition planning.</i><sup>1</sup>            Ensures that reasonable planning for the acquisition is conducted, including, among other things, developing an acquisition strategy and plan, determining the cost and schedule, identifying risks, and defining requirements.</p>	<p>For various reasons, including the recent transition to DHS, many of the acquisition planning documents that had been prepared for the former entry exit system are outdated. For example, INS had developed an acquisition plan, as required by INS acquisition policies and procedures that outlined its approach and strategy for acquiring the entry exit system. According to DHS officials, the plan is no longer current.</p> <p>DHS officials stated that they have updated some of these acquisition planning documents, submitted them to the IRB on June 30, 2003, and plan to meet with the IRB on July 17, 2003. DHS plans to update additional planning documents by August 7, 2003. For example, DHS plans to update its acquisition plan and develop a life cycle cost estimate and risk management plan for Increment 1.</p>
<p><i>Project management.</i><sup>1</sup>            Provides for the management of activities within the project office and supporting contractors to ensure a timely, efficient, and cost-effective acquisition.</p>	<p>According to US-VISIT program officials, interfacing and enhancing existing systems under Increment 1 are being managed according to the former INS's SDLC.<sup>2</sup> However, they could not provide evidence to support this statement; because of time constraints, we did not verify whether these contractors and associated DHS acquisition entities were following the SDLC.</p> <p>These officials also stated that US-VISIT will transition to DHS's SDLC when it is completed. However, they did not know when the DHS SDLC would be complete, and therefore when US-VISIT will transition.</p>

<sup>1</sup> These practices are addressed in our observations section.

<sup>2</sup> An SDLC (Systems Development Life Cycle) is a management process that specifies, for a series of "cradle to grave" phases, the development activities to be performed, products to be generated, and the decision points to determine whether the project is ready for the next phase.



Objective 1 Results  
**Legislative Conditions**

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**Condition 3 met.** The plan satisfies the requirement that it be reviewed by GAO.  
Our review was completed on July 18, 2003.



## Objective 2 Results Open Recommendations

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**Open Recommendation 1:** Develop a system security plan and privacy impact assessment.

**Status:** In progress

The expenditure plan states that adequate security and privacy related measures are to be built into the US-VISIT system and that these measures will comply with emerging DHS security policies, relevant security-related laws, OMB circulars, and privacy guidelines of the federal Chief Information Officer Council's best practices.

According to program officials, system security and privacy requirements have been defined, and a draft security plan and privacy assessment is currently under review.



## Objective 2 Results Open Recommendations

**Open Recommendation 2:** Ensure that controls in the area of acquisition planning, solicitation, requirements development and management, project management, contract tracking and oversight, and evaluation be implemented in accordance with SEI guidance.

**Status:** Planned

DHS has recently approved a program management structure that includes functions consistent with these acquisition management controls: acquisition planning, solicitation, requirements development and management, project management, contract tracking and oversight, and evaluation. According to the US-VISIT Program Director, these functions will be performed consistent with SEI's guidance. However, the department does not currently have explicit plans and associated time frames for developing and implementing these acquisition management controls.



## Objective 2 Results Open Recommendations

**Open Recommendation 3:** Ensure that future expenditure plans be provided to the Department's House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees in advance of US-VISIT funds being obligated.

**Status:** Partially complete

In fiscal year 2003, Justice requested \$380 million for the entry exit program (now US-VISIT)—\$362 million in new funding and \$18 million in fiscal year 2003 base resources.<sup>1</sup> In conjunction with the Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, 2003, the conference report<sup>2</sup> recommended \$362 million for the entry exit system (now US-VISIT) and related IT infrastructure upgrades.

In June 2003, DHS provided its fiscal year 2003 expenditure plan to the Senate and House Appropriations Subcommittees on Homeland Security. In April 2003, H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 108-76, at 80 (2003), recommended that DHS use \$5 million for US-VISIT. DHS allocated this \$5 million to the US-VISIT program.

<sup>1</sup> According to DHS officials, the \$18 million in base resources was to come from the user fee account. However, according to these officials, given the decrease in user fee receipts since September 11, 2001, it is unclear whether that \$18 million will be available for the US-VISIT program.

<sup>2</sup> H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 108-10, at 623 (2003).



## Objective 2 Results Open Recommendations

**Open Recommendation 4:** Ensure that future expenditure plans fully disclose US-VISIT system capabilities, schedule, cost, and benefits to be delivered.

**Status:** Partially complete

The expenditure plan identifies high-level capabilities by increment, such as

- recording the arrival and departure of foreign nationals using passenger and crew manifest data,
- implementing biometrics, and
- being interoperable with other entities, including law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

The plan also identifies a high-level schedule for implementing the system. For example, Increment 1 is to be implemented by December 31, 2003; Increment 2 by December 31, 2004; and Increment 3 by December 31, 2005.



## Objective 2 Results Open Recommendations

The plan also includes categories of expenditures, such as system enhancements and infrastructure upgrades, facilities planning, analysis and design, and POE IT and communications upgrades. However, the plan does not explicitly associate costs with incremental capabilities, time frames, and benefits. For example, the plan does not state how much of the \$85 million for POE IT and communications upgrades DHS plans to use for Increment 1 or for other increments.

The plan identifies high-level goals for Increment 1 (i.e., positively impact national security and overall efforts in the war against terrorism). However, it does not identify expected benefits in tangible, measurable, and thus meaningful terms, nor does it associate benefits with increments. Therefore, it does not provide the basic data needed to measure return on investment. US-VISIT program officials stated that they intend to estimate program costs and benefits, but they did not have time frames for doing so.





Objective 3 Results  
**Observations**

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**Observation:** US-VISIT is a high risk endeavor.

Ten separate factors collectively expose the US-VISIT program to a high level of risk. Some of these risk factors are inherent to the program, such as those associated with its mission criticality and complexity. Others are a product of the program's relatively immature state of governance and management. Unless these risk factors are effectively addressed, US-VISIT is likely to fall short of envisioned expectations.



## Objective 3 Results Observations: Criticality

### a. Mission is critical.

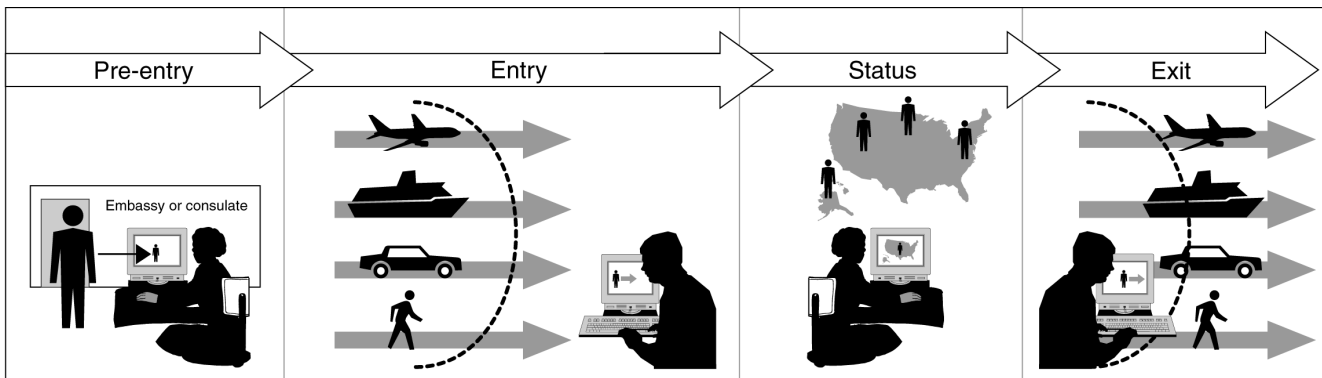
- In fiscal year 2002, there were about 279 million inspections of foreign nationals at U.S. POEs. The missed entry of just one person who poses a threat to the United States can have severe consequences. One of DHS's critical missions is to prevent such an entry, and it intends to rely heavily on US-VISIT to help it do so.
- Additionally, the US-VISIT system is to assist law enforcement in identifying those visitors who overstay or otherwise violate the terms of their visas.
- Further, in announcing the US-VISIT system, the Under Secretary stated that the system would "give America a 21st Century 'smart border'—one that speeds through legitimate trade and travel, but stops terrorists in their tracks."



Objective 3 Results  
**Observations: Complexity**

b. Scope is large and complex.

- US-VISIT is to support and refine a large and complex governmentwide process involving multiple departments and agencies. This process is to control the pre-entry, entry, status, and exit of hundreds of millions of foreign national travelers to and from the United States at over 300 air, sea, and land POEs. It also requires the modification and expansion of facilities at over 150 land POEs. The graphic below depicts the high-level border security processes. The following graphics depict the subprocesses.

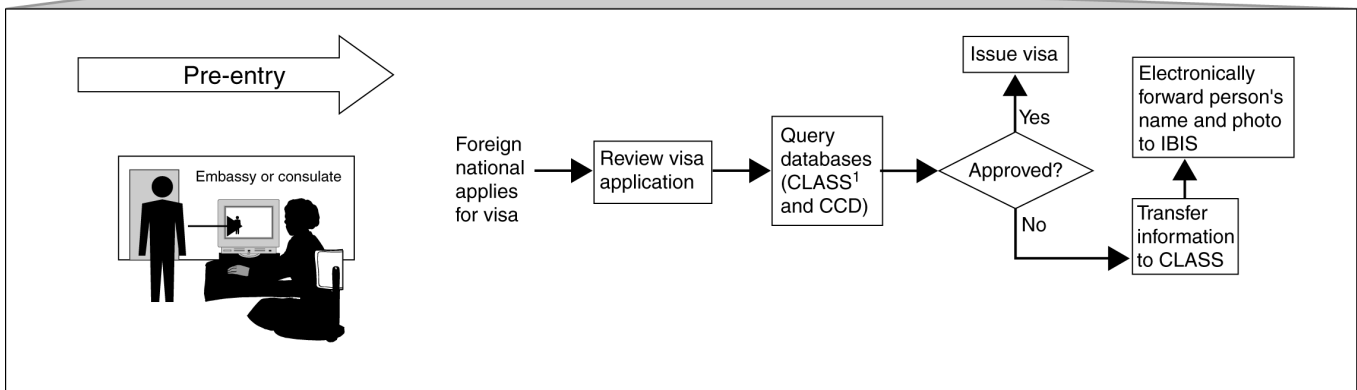
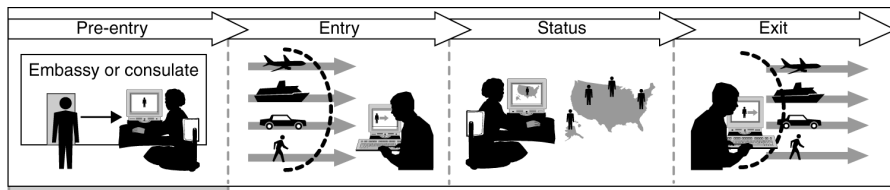


Sources: GAO (data), Nova Development Corp. (images).



Objective 3 Results  
**Observations: Complexity**

**Simplified Diagram of Current Pre-entry Process**



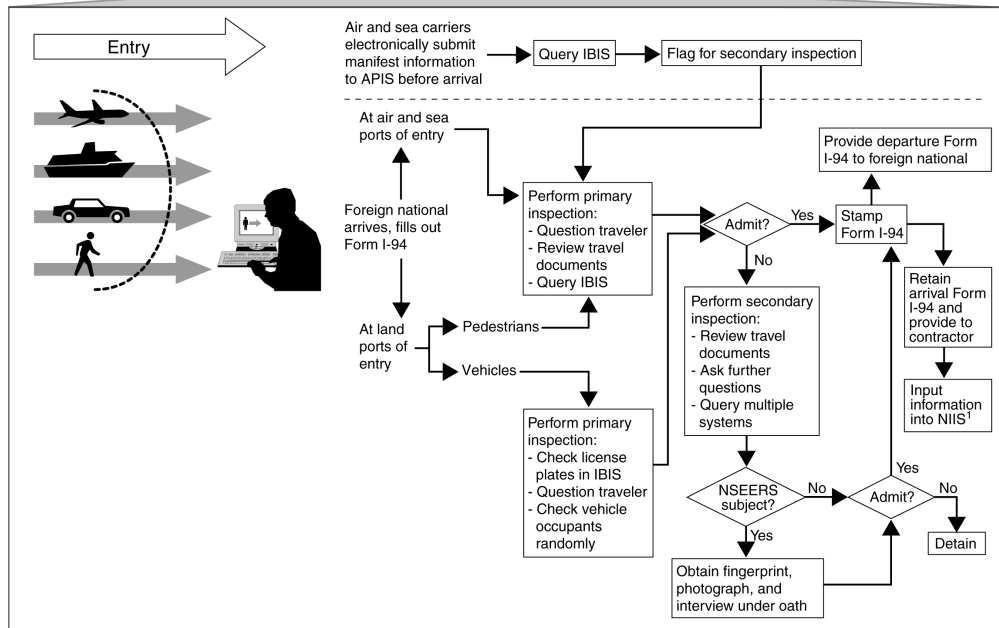
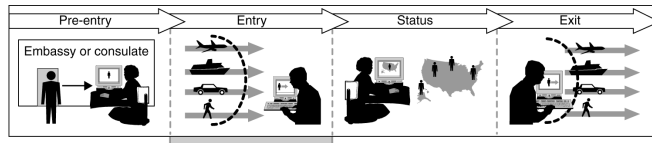
Sources: GAO (data), Nova Development Corp. (images).

<sup>1</sup> The Consular Lookout and Support System (CLASS) is a name check system that contains records of people who may be ineligible to receive a passport or visa.



Objective 3 Results  
 Observations: Complexity

Simplified Diagram of  
 Current Entry Process



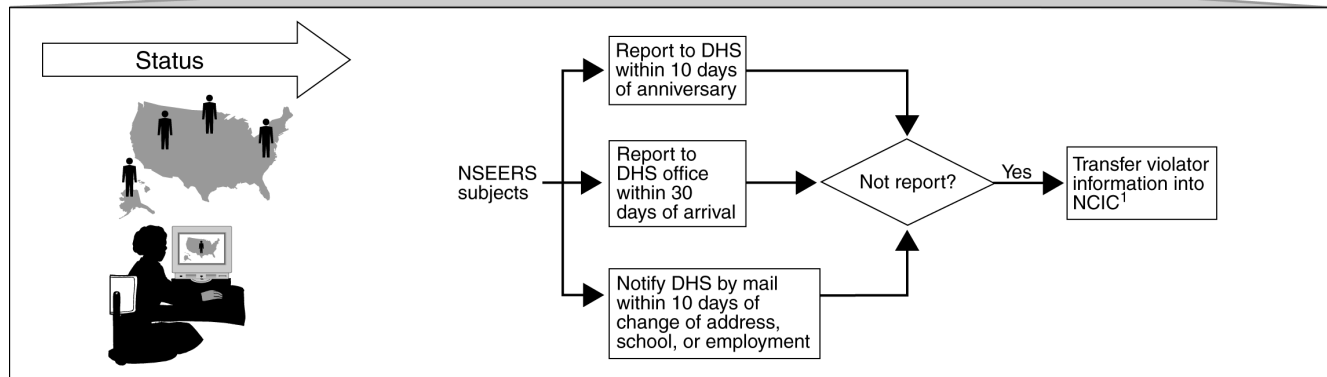
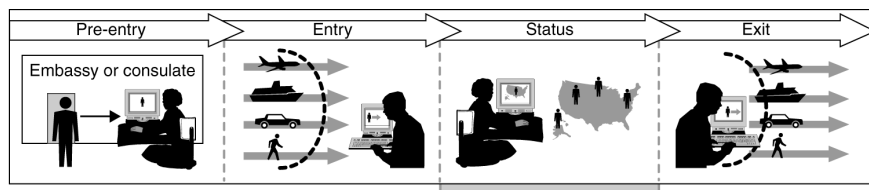
<sup>1</sup> The Non-Immigrant Information System (NIIS) collects arrival and departure Form I-94 data and reports information on overstays.

Sources: GAO (data), Nova Development Corp. (images).



Objective 3 Results  
**Observations: Complexity**

**Simplified Diagram of the Current Status Process**



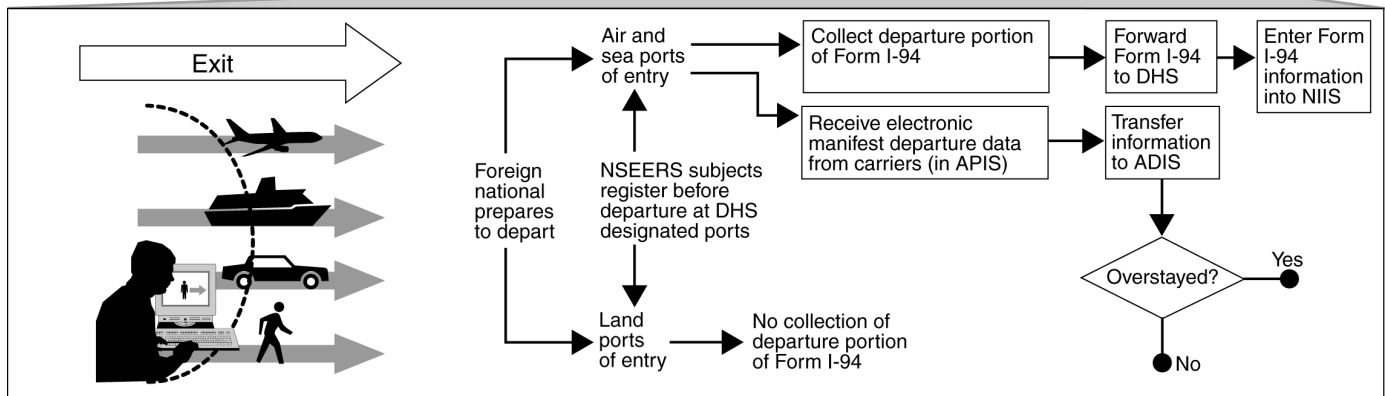
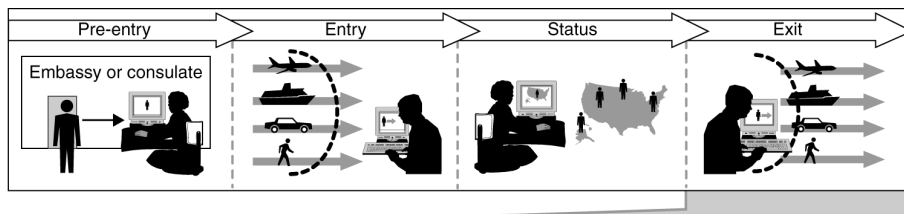
Sources: GAO (data), Nova Development Corp. (images).

<sup>1</sup> The National Crime Information Center (NCIC) provides information on wanted persons and criminal histories.



Objective 3 Results  
 Observations: Complexity

Simplified Diagram of the Current Exit Process



Sources: GAO (data), Nova Development Corp. (images).



## Objective 3 Results Observations: Complexity

As mentioned previously, US-VISIT (Increments 1 through 4) is to include the interfacing and integration of over 20 existing systems. Increment 1 includes the following seven existing systems:

- Arrival Departure Information System,
- Advance Passenger Information System,
- Interagency Border Inspection System,
- Automated Biometric Identification System,
- Student Exchange Visitor Information System,
- Computer Linked Application Information Management System, and
- Consular Consolidated Database.

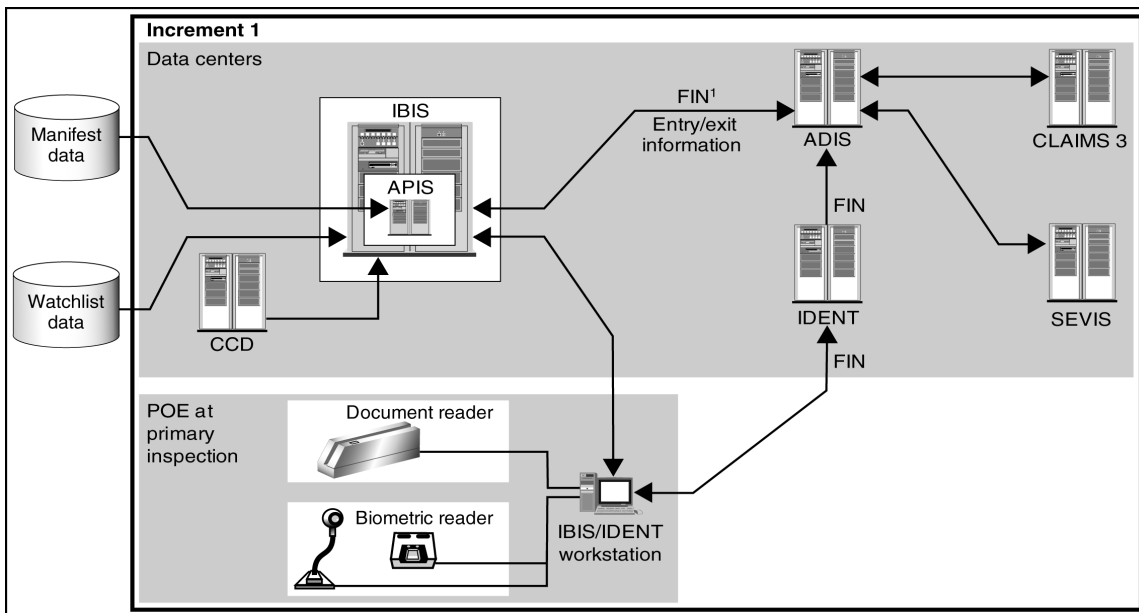
The following graphic shows the systems and their relationships.





Objective 3 Results  
 Observations: Complexity

Simplified Diagram of US-VISIT Increment 1 Component Systems and Relationships



Sources: GAO, Nova Development Corp.

<sup>1</sup> Fingerprint Identification Number.



## Objective 3 Results Observations: Challenging Milestones

### c. Milestones are challenging.

Key US-VISIT milestones are legislatively mandated. For example, the Immigration and Naturalization Service Data Management Improvement Act of 2000<sup>1</sup> requires that US-VISIT be implemented at all air and sea POEs by December 31, 2003; at the 50 highest volume land POEs by December 31, 2004; and at all remaining POEs by December 31, 2005.

Because of limited progress over the last 7 years in addressing entry exit legislative requirements, including the above cited milestones, DHS acknowledges that it cannot complete permanent solutions in these time frames and thus now plans to implement interim, or temporary solutions. For example, as previously described, Increments 1 through 3 include the interfacing of existing systems and the design and construction of interim facilities at land POEs. Further, DHS officials have stated that it will be difficult to develop and implement even the interim solutions at some of the highest volume land POEs (such as San Ysidro, CA; Otay Mesa, CA; and Laredo, TX) by December 31, 2004, because even minor changes in the inspection time can greatly impact the average wait time at these high-volume POEs.

<sup>1</sup> P.L. 106-215 (June 15, 2000).



Objective 3 Results  
**Observations: Cost**

d. Potential cost is significant.

The potential governmentwide cost of US-VISIT over just a 10-year period will likely be in the tens of billions of dollars.

In February 2003, DHS estimated the total overall cost of the US-VISIT program to be about \$7.2 billion through fiscal year 2014. This estimate includes system investment costs, such as IT hardware and communications infrastructure, software enhancements and interfaces, as well as the cost of facilities and additional inspectors. It also includes system and facilities operation and maintenance costs.



## Objective 3 Results Observations: Cost

- The estimate does include the cost of planning, designing, and constructing permanent facilities, which according to DHS is about \$2.9 billion.<sup>1</sup> This estimate is based on the assumptions that (1) no additional traffic lanes will be required to support the entry processes and (2) exit facilities will mirror entry facilities (i.e., that a land POE with 10 entry traffic lanes will require 10 exit traffic lanes). The estimate includes the costs to design and construct building space to house additional computer equipment and inspectors, as well as the costs for highway reconfiguration at land POEs.

The estimate does not include the costs to design and construct interim facilities at land POEs. DHS officials estimate that the cost of constructing the interim facilities at the 50 highest volume POEs is about \$218 million.

<sup>1</sup> The \$2.9 billion is a parametric cost estimate. Parametric cost estimating is a technique used in the planning, budgeting, and conceptual stages of projects. This technique expedites the development of order of magnitude benchmark estimates when discrete estimating techniques are not possible or would require inordinate amounts of time and resources to produce similar results. Estimates such as this can vary  $\pm 30$  to 50 percent.



## Objective 3 Results Observations: Cost

- The estimate does include the cost of implementing biometrics. However, these costs may be understated because it does not include, for example, State Department costs. Specifically, in November 2002,<sup>1</sup> we reported that a rough order of magnitude estimate of the cost to implement visas with biometrics would be between \$1.3 billion and \$2.9 billion initially and between \$0.7 and \$1.5 billion annually thereafter. This estimate is based on certain assumptions, including that all current visa-issuing embassies and consulates will be equipped to collect biometrics from visa applicants. Assuming that biometrics are implemented by December 2004, this means that the recurring cost of having biometric visas through DHS's fiscal year 2014 life cycle period would be between \$7 and \$15 billion; in contrast, DHS has estimated a cost of about \$7.2 billion for the entire program through fiscal year 2014.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. General Accounting Office, *Technology Assessment: Using Biometrics for Border Security*, GAO-03-174 (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 15, 2002).



## Objective 3 Results Observations: Existing Problems

### e. Existing systems have known problems.

The system performance of US-VISIT Increments 1, 2, and 3 is largely dependent on the performance of the existing systems that are to be interfaced to form it. For example, US-VISIT system availability and associated downtime will be constrained by the availability of the interfaced systems. In this regard, some of the existing systems have known problems that could limit US-VISIT performance. For example:

- Recent reports have identified problems with the availability and reliability of SEVIS, which is the Internet-based system designed to manage and monitor foreign students in the United States. For example, in April 2003, the Justice Inspector General reported that many users had difficulty logging on to the system, and that as the volume of users grew, the system became increasingly sluggish.<sup>1</sup> Other reports indicated that university representatives complained that it was taking hours to log on to the system and to enter a single record, or worse, that the system accepted the record and later deleted it.

<sup>1</sup> Statement of Glenn A. Fine, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Justice, "Implementation of the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)" (Apr. 2, 2003).



## Objective 3 Results Observations: Existing Problems

- Similarly, we reported in May 2001<sup>1</sup> that CLAIMS 3 is unreliable; this system contains information on foreign nationals who request benefits and is used to process benefit applications other than naturalization. Specifically, we reported that INS officials stated that CLAIMS 3 was frequently unavailable and did not always update and store important case data when field offices transferred data from the local CLAIMS 3 system to the mainframe computer.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. General Accounting Office, *Immigration Benefits: Several Factors Impede Timeliness of Application Processing*, GAO-01-488 (Washington, D.C.: May 4, 2001).



Objective 3 Results  
**Observations: Governance**

f. Governance structure is not established.

Our experience shows that one key to successfully implementing large and complex modernization programs that involve multiple organizations, such as US-VISIT, is to have an executive body, composed of representatives from each stakeholder organization, to guide and direct the program. Among other things, this body should (1) be formally chartered, (2) include representatives that are empowered to make and enforce decisions and commit resources for their respective organizations, and (3) be responsible and accountable for the program progress and outcomes.

The US-VISIT program is governmentwide in scope, involving multiple departments and agencies. However, it is not currently being guided and directed by a governance structure that reflects this program scope. Instead, the program relies on a combination of

- the DHS Investment Review Board (IRB), which is the department's chartered investment decisionmaking body, made up of senior leadership from the department, and





## Objective 3 Results Observations: Governance

- an integrated project team representing many US-VISIT stakeholder organizations (e.g., Customs and Border Protection, the Transportation Security Administration, and the State Department).

However, the IRB's chartered mission and authority governs only DHS activities, and does not govern non-DHS, stakeholder activities, such as issuing visas and passports, and the integrated project team does not include stakeholder representatives who can personally commit resources and make and enforce decisions for their respective organizations. Moreover, according to the US-VISIT Program Director, who heads the integrated project team, the integrated project team's role is basically to advise the US-VISIT program office.

The Under Secretary for Transportation and Border Security, who is a member of the department's IRB, is assigned responsibility and accountability for program governance. However, the Program Director stated that a governance body with appropriate representation from all relevant program stakeholder organizations would benefit the program. Until such a body is established to address important crosscutting issues, such as operational decisions and resource needs, US-VISIT is at risk of not delivering promised system capabilities and benefits on time and within budget.



## Objective 3 Results Observations: Program Management

### g. Program management capability is not implemented.

Our experience with major modernization programs, like US-VISIT, shows that they should be managed as a formal program, which includes establishing a program office that is (1) adequately staffed (numbers and skill levels), (2) grounded in clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and (3) supported by rigorous and disciplined acquisition management processes.

DHS established a US-VISIT program office in June 2003,<sup>1</sup> and recently determined this office's staffing needs to be 115 government and 117 contractor personnel (in all) to perform key acquisition management functions. The Software Engineering Institute's Software Acquisition Capability Maturity Model (SA-CMM®)<sup>2</sup> has defined a suite of key acquisition process areas that are necessary to manage the system acquisition program in a rigorous and disciplined fashion. These process areas include acquisition planning, requirements development and management, project management, solicitation, contract tracking and oversight, evaluation, and transition to support.

<sup>1</sup> The predecessor program office for the entry exit program was established within the former INS in March 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Carnegie Mellon Software Engineering Institute, *Software Acquisition Capability Maturity Model*, Version 1.03 (March 2002).



## Objective 3 Results Observations: Program Management

As of July 10, 2003, the US-VISIT program's staffing levels were far below DHS's stated needs. Specifically, the US-VISIT program officials stated that the program office has 10 staff within the program office and another 6 staff that are working closely with them. Moreover, specific roles and responsibilities have not been defined beyond general statements. Further, plans and associated time frames for achieving needed staffing levels and defining roles, responsibilities, and relationships have not yet been defined. According to the Program Director, positions are to be filled with detailees from various DHS component organizations. Positions are also to be filled with full-time equivalent slots from other DHS components that are not currently filled.

Additionally, while the approved program office structure (see slide 65) provides for positions to perform the SA-CMM<sup>®</sup> key process areas, including acquisition planning, requirements development and management, project management, and contract tracking and oversight, none of the process areas have been defined and implemented. In the interim, the program office is relying on the knowledge and skills of existing program office staff to execute these important acquisition functions.



Objective 3 Results  
**Observations: Program Management**

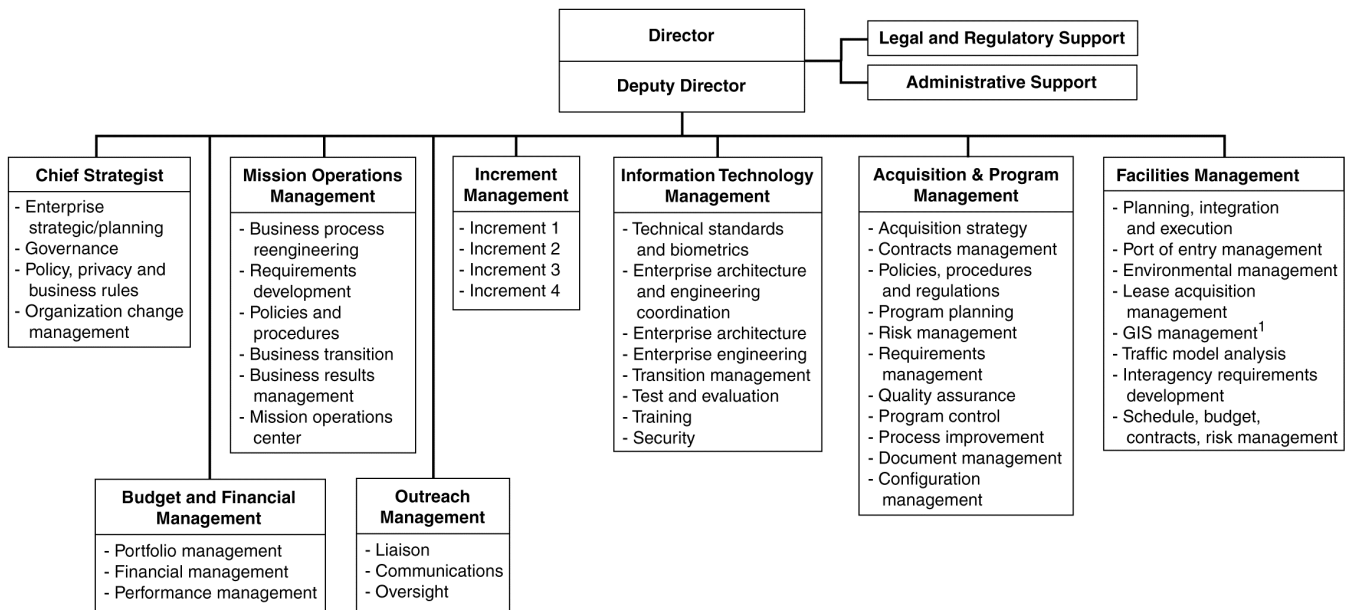
According to the Program Director, needed program staffing and key process areas are not yet in place because the program is only now getting off the ground, and it will take time to establish a fully functioning and capable program management capability. Until the program office is adequately staffed, positional roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood, and rigorous and disciplined acquisition process controls are defined, understood, and followed, DHS's ongoing efforts to acquire, deploy, operate, and maintain system capabilities will be at risk of not producing promised performance levels, functionality, and associated benefits on time and within budget.

The graphic on the next page shows the US VISIT program management structure.



## Objective 3 Results Observations: Program Management

### Approved US-VISIT Program Management Structure



Source: GAO.

<sup>1</sup> A geographic information system (GIS) is a system of computer software, hardware, and data used to manipulate, analyze, and graphically present a potentially wide array of information associated with geographic locations.



## Objective 3 Results Observations: Operational Context

### h. Operational context is unsettled.

To effectively define, establish, and implement a program (particularly one that involves restructuring and reengineering the use of people, processes, technology, and facilities from physically and culturally divergent organizations), it is essential that the program be aligned with a common blueprint, or frame of reference, governing key aspects of program operations—e.g., what functions are to be performed by whom, when and where they are to be performed, what information is to be used to perform them, and what rules and standards will govern the application of technology to support them. Such a frame of reference is referred to as an enterprise architecture (EA). In brief, an EA defines the operations of an enterprise, such as DHS, in both business terms (e.g., policies, processes, information, locations) and technical terms (e.g., hardware and software standards). It also provides these operational definitions for both the “as is” state and the “to be” state, and it includes a transition plan for moving between the two.



## Objective 3 Results Observations: Operational Context

The operational context, or EA, within which US-VISIT is to exist has not been defined. Currently, DHS is developing an EA and reports that it is to be completed by October 2003. If developed effectively, the department's EA should provide the operational context necessary to effectively define, establish, and make operational US VISIT.

In the absence of an EA, certain policy and standards information that is necessary to effectively define, establish, and implement the US-VISIT program is not yet available. In particular, policy decisions have not been made governing (1) whether official travel documents will be required for all persons who enter and exit the country, including U.S. and Canadian citizens, and (2) whether biometrics will be captured and used for all persons entering and exiting the country, including U.S. and Canadian citizens. Some of these policy decisions may necessitate changes to existing laws and regulations.

Similarly, certain technology standards, such as the number of fingerprints to be collected, are only now emerging, with a tentative agreement to use two fingerprints and plans to migrate to eight prints for enrollment. Also, the specific processes have yet to be defined (e.g., entry and exit procedures and border personnel roles and responsibilities relative to implementation of the procedures).



Objective 3 Results  
**Observations: Operational Context**

Because this operational context is unsettled and unclear, the program office is making certain assumptions and decisions necessary to meet near-term deadlines, such as the use of a two-fingerprint biometric, and adoption of border crossing processes that will implement planned system capabilities in whatever way needed to avoid (1) requiring additional facilities and personnel for Increment 1 and (2) increasing wait times for traffic crossings. If these assumptions and decisions are not aligned with DHS's EA, then near-term investments in systems and associated process will need to be reworked or replaced. Moreover, the mission value of the planned system capabilities that are actually implemented (made operational) at the border could be minimal. For example, inspectors may have to limit their use of installed system capabilities (such as those for capturing biometrics) to prevent traffic delays.

Unless DHS can coordinate its plans for developing its EA (and thus providing a clear operational context) with its near-term implementation plans for US VISIT, the department is increasing its near-term risk of defining, establishing, and implementing a program and supporting system that will not cost-effectively meet mission needs.





Objective 3 Results  
**Observations: Near-Term Facilities**

I. Near-term facilities solutions pose challenges.

According to DHS officials, DHS's existing facilities do not adequately support the current entry exit process at land POEs. In particular, more than 100 land POEs have less than 50 percent of the required capacity to support current inspection processes and traffic levels.<sup>1</sup> As a result, as part of US VISIT (increment 2), DHS plans to construct interim facilities at about 40 of the 50 highest volume land POEs by December 31, 2004, and construct interim facilities at the remaining portion of the 50 by February 2005. To accomplish this, DHS plans to begin awarding design contracts in August 2003, and construction contracts in February 2004.

<sup>1</sup> Data Management Improvement Act Task Force, *First Annual Report to Congress* (Washington, D.C.: December 2002).



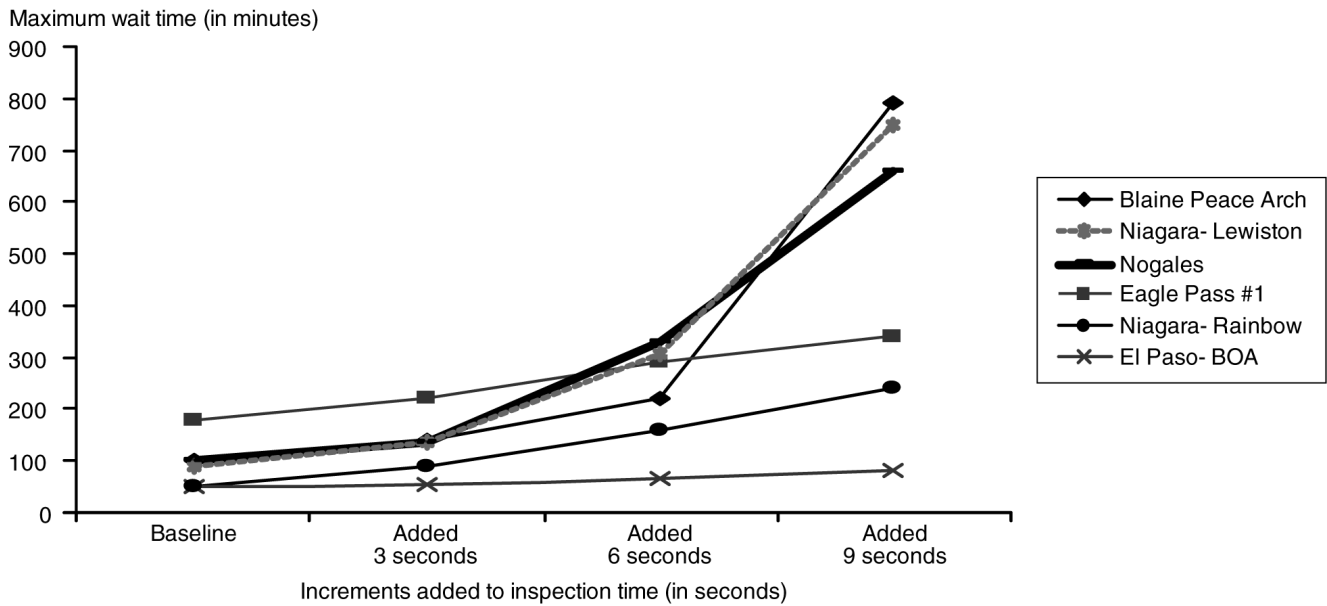
## Objective 3 Results Observations: Near-Term Facilities

According to DHS officials, the department plans to design and construct interim facilities to (1) support the US-VISIT inspection process, technology, and staff requirements; and (2) meet current traffic wait time requirements at each land POE. To plan for the design and construction of interim facilities that meet these requirements, DHS is modeling various inspection process and facilities scenarios to define what inspection process to follow and what interim facilities to construct. DHS officials told us that preliminary modeling exercises show that 3-, 6-, and 9-second incremental increases in average inspection times at some high volume land POEs can significantly increase average wait times at these POEs. For example, peak wait time at the Blaine Peace Arch POE in Washington could increase by more than *11 hours* if the average inspection increased by *9 seconds*. The modeling exercise was based on two key assumptions: (1) the current staffing level and (2) the current number of inspection booths staffed for each POE. (see figure on next slide for modeling results at six POEs).



Objective 3 Results  
 Observations: Near-Term Facilities

High-Volume Ports Maximum Vehicle Wait Time as a Function of Added Inspection Time



Source: DHS.



## Objective 3 Results Observations: Near-Term Facilities

At this point, DHS officials told us that they are planning to satisfy interim facilities constraints and requirements by installing temporary booths on existing traffic lanes and employing additional inspectors at some of the highest volume land POEs.<sup>1</sup> However, they also stated that the high traffic volumes and urban locations of some land POEs will make meeting US-VISIT constraints and requirements challenging, even on an interim basis. Moreover, given existing facilities constraints, developing interim facilities plans without defined inspection process, staff, and technology requirements introduces considerable uncertainty and risk that resources invested in interim facilities may not fully satisfy constraints and requirements and may not be useful in the design and construction of permanent facilities.

<sup>1</sup>At this point, DHS is not planning to acquire additional land for interim facilities at land ports of entry.



Objective 3 Results  
**Observations: Value of First Increment**

j. Mission value of first increment is currently unknown.

OMB Circular Number A-11, part 3, requires that investments in major systems be implemented incrementally, with each increment delivering tangible and measurable benefits. Incremental investment involves justifying investment in each increment on the basis of benefits, costs, and risks.

DHS is pursuing US-VISIT incrementally, but it has not defined the specific benefits to be provided by Increment 1.

- The expenditure plan states that Increment 1 will provide “immediate benefits,” but it does not describe them. Instead, it describes capabilities to be provided, such as the ability to determine whether a foreign national should be admitted and perform checks against watch lists. It does not describe in meaningful terms the benefits that are to result from implementation of these capabilities (e.g., X percent reduction in inspection times or Y percent reduction in false positive matches against watch lists).



## Objective 3 Results Observations: Value of First Increment

- In fact, because DHS has not yet defined the processes that are to govern the extent to which planned Increment 1 system capabilities will be implemented (as discussed previously), and because these processes are to be constrained by existing facilities and personnel and are not to result in increases in wait times for traffic crossings, it is not possible at this point to reliably project tangible and measurable Increment 1 mission benefits.

The expenditure plan also does not identify the estimated cost of Increment 1. The Program Director told us that the \$375 million requested in the plan includes not only all the funding required for Increment 1, but also funding for later increments. However, the plan does not separate the funds by increment, and program officials did not provide this information.

To DHS's credit, the expenditure plan does identify certain program risks, such as not having established clear decision authorities for policy and other operational questions and schedule slippage due to the aggressive milestones. However, it has yet to address how these risks will be mitigated, and the extent to which the status of program risks that are deemed "high impact/high probability of occurrence" will be disclosed to program executives.



Objective 3 Results  
**Observations: Value of First Increment**

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In February 2003, DHS developed a benefits and cost analysis for the former entry exit program. However, this analysis had limitations, such as an absence of meaningful benefit descriptions, and program officials acknowledged that it is out of date and is not reflective of current US-VISIT plans. According to these officials, an updated analysis will be prepared; however, a date and plan for doing so has not been set.

Without a reliable understanding of whether Increment 1 will produce mission value commensurate with costs and whether known risks can be effectively mitigated, DHS is investing in and implementing a near-term solution that is not adequately justified.



## Conclusions

The fiscal year 2003 US-VISIT expenditure plan (with related program office documentation and representations) either partially satisfies or provides for satisfying the legislative conditions imposed by Congress.

The US-VISIT program leadership has expressly committed to developing and implementing the program acquisition management capabilities and the expenditure plan content described in our open recommendations. However, much remains to be accomplished before these recommendations are fully implemented.

By definition, US-VISIT is a risky undertaking because it is to perform a critical mission, its scope is large and complex, it must meet a demanding implementation schedule, and its potential cost is enormous. Generally, these risk factors are inherent to the program and cannot be easily changed.





## Conclusions

However, compounding these inherent risk factors are a number of others that are attributable to the program's current state of governance and management and its acquisition approach. These include relying on existing systems to provide the foundation for the first three program increments (and thus having to accept the performance limitations of these existing systems), not having a governance structure to guide and direct the program office, not having a mature program management capability, not having stabilized the operational context within which the program is to operate (and thus having to make assumptions about this context), not having fully defined near-term facilities solutions, and not knowing the mission value that is to be derived from the first US-VISIT increment.

Because of all these risk factors, the ability of US-VISIT to measurably and appreciably achieve DHS's stated goals of facilitate legitimate travel and trade, enhance national security, and adhere to U.S. privacy laws and policies is uncertain. Moreover, DHS's near-term investment in the program is at risk of not delivering promised capabilities on time and within budget, and not producing mission value commensurate with investment costs. Thus, it is imperative that the factors that contribute to this level of risk are addressed thoroughly and expeditiously.



## Recommendations for Executive Action

To address US-VISIT as a governmentwide program and to minimize the risks facing the program, we recommend that the Secretary of Homeland Security, in collaboration with cabinet officials from US-VISIT stakeholder departments and agencies,

- establish and charter an executive body, chaired by the Secretary's designee, potentially co-chaired by the leadership from key stakeholder departments and agencies, and composed of appropriate senior-level representatives from DHS and each stakeholder organization, to guide and direct the US-VISIT program; and
- direct this executive body to immediately take steps to (1) ensure that the human capital and financial resources are expeditiously provided to establish a fully functional and effective US-VISIT program office and associated management capability, (2) clarify the operational context within which US-VISIT must operate, and (3) decide whether proposed US-VISIT increments will produce mission value commensurate with costs and risks and disclose to the Congress planned actions based on this body's decisions.



## Recommendations

Further, we recommend that the Secretary, through the Under Secretary for Border and Transportation Security, direct the US-VISIT Program Director to expeditiously establish an effective program management capability, including immediately

- defining program office positional roles, responsibilities, and relationships;
- developing and implementing a human capital strategy that provides for staffing these positions with individuals who have the requisite core competencies (knowledge, skills, and abilities);
- developing and implementing a plan for satisfying key SEI acquisition management controls, to include acquisition planning, solicitation, requirements development and management, project management, contractor tracking and oversight, evaluation, and transition to support;
- developing and implementing a risk management plan and ensuring that all high risks and their status are reported regularly to the executive body;



## Recommendations

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- defining performance standards for each US-VISIT system increment that are measurable and reflect the limitations imposed by relying on existing systems to form these system increments; and
- developing an analysis of incremental program cost, benefits, and risks, and providing this analysis to the executive body, to assist it in the body's deliberations and decision-making.



## Agency Comments

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We provided DHS a draft of this briefing and discussed its contents with the US-VISIT Program Director and Deputy Director. In its oral comments, DHS agreed with our findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The department also provided some technical comments, which we have incorporated into the briefing, as appropriate. Further, the US-VISIT Program Director stated that our work was very helpful to him and to the program.



**Attachment I  
Legislative History**

<b>Legislation</b>	<b>Key requirements</b>
Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 P.L. 104-208 September 30, 1996	By September 30, 1998, the Attorney General shall develop an automated entry exit control system that— (1) collects a record of departure for every alien departing the United States and matches it with the corresponding arrival record and (2) identifies, through on-line searching procedures, lawfully admitted aliens who overstay their visas. Overstay information identified through the system shall be integrated into appropriate databases of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and the Department of State, including those used at ports of entry and at consular offices. Notwithstanding any other provision of federal, state, or local law, a federal, state, or local government entity or official may not prohibit or in any way restrict any government entity or official from sending to or receiving from INS information regarding the citizenship or immigration status, lawful or unlawful, of any individual.
INS Data Management Improvement Act of 2000 P.L. 106-215 June 15, 2000	For the purposes of this section, the term “integrated entry and exit data system” means an electronic system that— (1) provides access to, and integrates, alien arrival and departure data that are (a) authorized or required to be created or collected under law; (b) in an electronic format; and (c) in a database of the Department of Justice or the Department of State, including those created or used at ports of entry and at consular offices; (2) uses available data described above to produce a report of arriving and departing aliens by country of nationality, classification as an immigrant or nonimmigrant, and date of arrival in and departure from the United States; (3) matches an alien’s available arrival data with the alien’s available departure data; (4) identifies, through on-line searching procedures, lawfully admitted nonimmigrants who may have remained in the United States beyond the period authorized by the Attorney General; and

**Appendix I  
Briefing to the Staffs of the Subcommittees  
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Committees on Appropriations**



**Attachment I  
Legislative History**

Legislation	Key requirements
INS Data Management Improvement Act of 2000 P.L. 106-215 June 15, 2000 (cont'd)	<p>(5) otherwise uses available alien arrival and departure data described in paragraph (1) above to permit the Attorney General to make the reports required under 8 U.S.C. section 1365a(e):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of departure records collected, with an accounting by nationality.</li> <li>• Number of departure records that were successfully matched to records of arrival, with an accounting by nationality and classification as an immigrant or nonimmigrant.</li> <li>• Number of aliens who arrived pursuant to a nonimmigrant visa, or the Visa Waiver Program, for whom no matching departure data have been obtained through the system or by other means as of the end of the alien's authorized period of stay, with an accounting by nationality and arrival date in the United States.</li> <li>• Number of lawfully admitted nonimmigrants identified as visa overstays, with an accounting by nationality.</li> </ul> <p>The Attorney General shall implement the integrated entry exit system at airports and seaports by December 31, 2003. System requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• include available arrival/departure data,</li> <li>• ensure that the arrival/departure data, when collected or created by an immigration officer, are entered into the system and can be accessed by other officers at other air/seaports.</li> </ul> <p>The Attorney General must implement the system at the 50 busiest land border ports of entry by December 31, 2004. System requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as specified above</li> <li>• Arrival/departure data on aliens shall be accessible at other high-traffic land border ports of entry.</li> </ul> <p>The system shall be fully implemented at all remaining ports of entry by December 31, 2005.</p>



## Attachment I Legislative History

Legislation	Key requirements
Visa Waiver Permanent Program Act P.L. 106-396 October 30, 2000	<p>Not later than October 1, 2001, the Attorney General shall develop and implement a fully automated entry exit control system that will collect a record of arrival and departure for every alien who arrives and departs by sea or air at a port of entry in the United States and is provided a waiver. Not later than October 1, 2002, the system shall enable immigration officers conducting inspections at ports of entry to obtain from the system, with respect to aliens seeking a waiver, (1) any photograph of the alien that may be contained in the records of the State Department or INS; and (2) information on whether the alien has ever been determined to be ineligible to receive a visa or be admitted to the United States.</p> <p>The system shall maintain, for a minimum of 10 years, information about each application for admission made by an alien seeking a waiver.</p> <p>On and after October 1, 2007, the alien at the time of application for admission must have a valid unexpired machine-readable passport that satisfies the internationally accepted standard for machine readability.</p> <p>Countries designated to participate before May 1, 2000, shall issue machine-readable passports no later than October 1, 2003.</p> <p>All Visa Waiver Program (VWP) applicants are to be checked against lookout systems. By October 1, 2002, no waiver may be provided to an alien arriving by air or sea at a port of entry on a carrier unless the carrier is electronically transmitting passenger data to the entry exit system.</p> <p>Not less than 1 hour before arrival at port of entry, signatory aircraft transporting VWP aliens must electronically furnish the passenger data required by the Attorney General in regulations.</p> <p>The system shall contain sufficient data to permit the Attorney General to calculate, for each program country and each fiscal year, the portion of nationals of that country who arrive under VWP at air and sea ports of entry but for whom no record of departure exists, expressed as a percentage of the total number of such VWP aliens for the particular country.</p>



**Appendix I  
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**Attachment I  
Legislative History**

<b>Legislation</b>	<b>Key requirements</b>
USA PATRIOT ACT P.L. 107-56 October 26, 2001	<p>Focus of system development shall be on (a) utilization of biometric technology and (b) tamper-resistant documents readable at ports of entry.</p> <p>The system must be accessible to (a) all consular officers responsible for visa issuance, (b) all federal inspection agents at all U.S. border inspection points, and (c) all law enforcement and intelligence officers responsible for investigation or identification of aliens.</p> <p>The entry exit system must be able to interface with law enforcement databases to be used by federal law enforcement to identify and detain individuals who pose a threat to the national security of the United States.</p>
Aviation and Transportation Security Act P.L. 107-71 November 19, 2001	<p>(1) Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment, each air carrier and foreign air carrier operating a passenger flight in foreign air transportation to the United States shall provide to the Commissioner of Customs by electronic transmission a passenger and crew manifest containing the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The full name of each passenger and crew member.</li> <li>• The date of birth and citizenship of each passenger and crew member.</li> <li>• The sex of each passenger and crew member.</li> <li>• The passport number and country of issuance of each passenger and crew member if required for travel.</li> <li>• The U.S. visa number or resident alien card number of each passenger and crew member, as applicable.</li> <li>• Such other information as the Under Secretary of Transportation for Security, in consultation with the Commissioner of Customs, determines is reasonably necessary to ensure aviation safety.</li> </ul> <p>Carriers may use the advanced passenger information system established under section 431 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1431) to provide the information required by the preceding sentence.</p>

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**Attachment I  
Legislative History**

<b>Legislation</b>	<b>Key requirements</b>
Aviation and Transportation Security Act P.L. 107-71 November 19, 2001 (cont'd)	<p>(2) Passenger name records—The carriers shall make passenger name record information available to the Customs Service upon request.</p> <p>(3) Transmission of manifest—a passenger and crew manifest required for a flight under paragraph (1) above shall be transmitted to the Customs Service in advance of the aircraft landing in the United States in such manner, time, and form as the Customs Service prescribes.</p> <p>(4) Transmission of manifests to other federal agencies—Upon request, information provided to the Under Secretary or the Customs Service under this subsection may be shared with other federal agencies for the purpose of protecting national security.</p>
Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act of 2002 P.L. 107-173 May 14, 2002	<p>No later than October 26, 2004, the Secretary of State and the Attorney General shall issue to aliens only machine-readable, tamper-resistant visas and other travel and entry documents that use biometrics. In addition to the requirement for biometric identifiers, name-search capacity and support must also be implemented between 18 months and 4.5 years after the date of enactment.</p> <p>Not later than October 26, 2004, the Attorney General and Secretary of State shall install at all U.S. ports of entry equipment and software to allow biometric comparison and authentication of all U.S. visas and other travel and entry documents issued to aliens.</p> <p>Not later than January 1, 2003, arrival and departure manifests must be electronically provided to appropriate immigration officers for each passenger (including crew members and any other occupants) of air and sea carriers at port of entry.</p> <p>The information to be provided with respect to each person listed on a manifest shall include (1) complete name; (2) date of birth; (3) citizenship; (4) sex; (5) passport number and country of issuance; (6) country of residence; (7) U.S. visa number, date, and place of issuance, where applicable; (8) alien registration number, where applicable; (9) U.S. address while in the United States; and (10) such other information that the Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretaries of State and the Treasury, determines as being necessary for the identification of the persons transported and for the enforcement of the immigration laws and to protect safety and national security.</p>



## Attachment II Scope and Methodology

To accomplish our objectives, we

- analyzed the expenditure plan against legislative conditions and other relevant federal requirements, guidance, and best practices to determine the extent to which the conditions were met;
- analyzed supporting documentation and interviewed program officials to determine capabilities in key program management areas, such as acquisition planning, enterprise architecture, and project management;
- analyzed key acquisition management controls documentation and interviewed program officials to determine the status of our open recommendations;
- attended program working group meetings; and
- assessed DHS's plans and ongoing and completed actions to establish and implement the US-VISIT program (including acquiring the US-VISIT system, expanding and modifying existing port of entry facilities, and developing and implementing policies and procedures) and compared them to existing guidance to assess risks.



Attachment II  
**Scope and Methodology**

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We did not independently validate DHS's provided information.

We conducted our work at DHS headquarters in Washington, D.C., from April through July 2003 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

# Comments from the Department of Homeland Security

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

September 3, 2003

Mr. Randolph C. Hite  
Director, Information Technology Architecture  
And Systems Issues  
U.S. General Accounting Office  
441 G Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Hite:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft report, *Information Technology: Risks Facing Key Homeland Security Program Need to Be Addressed* (GAO-03-1083). We appreciate the time the General Accounting office has taken to review the FY 2003 spending plan for the United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Technology (US-VISIT) Program. Overall, we concur with your recommendations to establish an effective program management capability and a proper governance structure. We are pleased to report that, subsequent to your findings, significant progress has been made in both areas. Nevertheless, we realize that much needs to be done.

In terms of your specific findings and observations, we believe the US-VISIT program has made considerable progress, and we recommend that you consider adding these updates to your final report.

The proposed organizational structure for US-VISIT has received Departmental approval. The necessary staff positions have been identified and work has begun with the Office of Personnel Management to draft position descriptions and prepare for recruitment. Meanwhile, the current staff of 51 includes detailees and dedicated personnel from Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, other components within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and other agencies who have been brought on board to ensure that essential work is performed pending full staffing with 115 government employees, including 8 senior executives. In coordination with the General Services Administration, adequate office space has been identified and is being secured.

Washington, D.C. 20528

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**Appendix II**  
**Comments from the Department of Homeland**  
**Security**

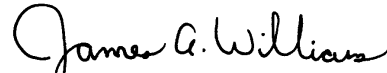
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In the area of program governance, a DHS Investment Review Board is already in place; US-VISIT was the first program to undergo a review by this board, and it has now been reviewed twice. In addition, a DHS policy framework is now in place through which important policy questions can be addressed. Finally, we are in the process of setting up a US-VISIT Advisory Council.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or a member of your staff may contact Thomas Harner at (202) 305-0845.

Sincerely,



James A. Williams  
Director, US-VISIT Program

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