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Integration Still a Challenge for DHS

More than a decade after it was created, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) continues to face significant challenges in accomplishing its diverse mission, according to a new report by the DHS Office of Inspector General (OIG).

The report, OIG 15-09 “Major Management and Performance Challenges Facing the Department of Homeland Security”, is based on the results of OIG audits and inspections performed during Fiscal Year 2014. It lists “DHS Operations Integration” as the agency’s top challenge, and also cites concerns with management of acquisitions, finances, and information technology among the nine major tasks facing DHS. For example the OIG has reported that:

- DHS has not adequately managed component agencies’ vast fleet of vehicles, nor does it have adequate authority to do so. In FY 2012, underused DHS vehicles cost taxpayers up to \$48 million in funds that could be put to better use.
- Components don’t always follow DHS acquisition guidance, which has led to cost overruns, and missed delivery schedules.
- Radio communications continue to lack coordination and connectivity, potentially leaving DHS components unable to contact one another during emergencies.

“Our audits and inspections have identified many instances of wasteful duplication of effort by DHS component agencies, as well as a lack of effective overall policies and controls at DHS,” said Inspector General John Roth. He urged DHS and component officials to coordinate and integrate their resources under the “Unity of Effort Initiative” launched by DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson.

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