



Why This Matters

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) operates and maintains 20 land mobile radio networks serving more than 120,000 frontline agents and officers. DHS manages radio equipment items and infrastructure sites with a reported value of more than \$1 billion. DHS urgently needs to modernize these systems to meet Federal and DHS mandates. DHS has estimated that full modernization of its existing end-of-life radio systems would require a \$3.2 billion investment. The audit objective was to determine whether DHS is managing its radio program and related inventory in a cost-effective manner to avoid wasting taxpayer dollars.

DHS Response

DHS concurred with our recommendations. DHS said that it is working to develop and implement department level portfolio management of tactical communications. In addition, DHS said it has made significant progress in collecting the data necessary to develop a single profile of DHS assets, infrastructure, and services across Components. DHS said it will complete a review of existing policies and procedures and will revise, as necessary, its personal property manual to align with the findings.

For Further Information:

Contact our Office of Public Affairs at (202)254-4100, or email us at DHS-OIG.OfficePublicAffairs@oig.dhs.gov

DHS Needs to Manage Its Radio Communications Program Better

What We Determined

DHS is unable to make sound investment decisions for radio equipment and supporting infrastructure because the Department is not effectively managing its radio communication program. DHS does not have reliable Department-wide inventory data or an effective governance structure to guide investment decision-making. As a result, DHS risks wasting taxpayer dollars on equipment purchases and radio system investments that are not needed, sustainable, supportable, or affordable. Two Components we visited stored more than 8,000 radio equipment items valued at \$28 million for a year or longer at their maintenance and warehouse facilities, while some programs faced critical equipment shortages. Portfolio management is central to making informed decisions about how to best allocate available equipment to ensure the right equipment is in place at the right locations and in the quantities needed to conduct mission operations.

What We Recommend

The Under Secretary for Management:

- (1) Establish a single point of accountability at the Department level with the authority, resources, and information to ensure a portfolio approach is implemented for its radio communication program; and
- (2) Develop a single portfolio of radio equipment and infrastructure, which will
 - Identify and describe the data elements needed to manage radio equipment and infrastructure;
 - Develop policies and implement procedures for standard data reporting of radio equipment and infrastructure; and
 - Develop policies and implement procedures for verifying the accuracy and completeness of reported radio inventory data.