



Why This Matters

After the 2001 terrorist attacks, the Nation developed a greater awareness of potential targets. For example, chemical facilities became viewed as potentially attractive to terrorists because these facilities could be sabotaged and materials released, stolen, or used as weapons of mass destruction.

To address these concerns, Congress granted DHS the authority to regulate the security of high-risk chemical facilities. Within the National Protection and Programs Directorate's (NPPD) Office of Infrastructure Protection, ISCD has developed the regulatory framework and associated tools and procedures for the CFATS Program.

DHS Response

NPPD concurred with 19 recommendations, partially concurred with 1, and did not concur with 4. Based on information in NPPD's response, all recommendations are open.

Effectiveness of the ISCD's Management Practices to Implement the CFATS Program

What We Determined

The Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards (CFATS) Program has not yet been fully implemented, and concerns remain over whether it can achieve its mission, given the challenges the program continues to face. The Infrastructure Security Compliance Division (ISCD) tried frequently to progress the program without fully addressing numerous issues, such as the Chemical Security Assessment Tool and the Site Security Plan review process. A common explanation by program officials for the challenges is that CFATS is a new program. The following areas need attention to improve the CFATS Program:

Submission tools and processes: Program progress has been slowed by inadequate tools, poorly executed processes, and insufficient feedback on chemical facility submissions.

Representation and oversight: Program oversight had been limited, and confusing terminology and the absence of appropriate metrics led to misunderstandings of progress.

Human capital: ISCD has struggled with applying sound government practices to performance reviews, leadership assignments, use of contractors, and pay administration.

Fiscal stewardship: ISCD purchased equipment and leased vehicles excessively, while also building open secret storage office space unnecessarily.

What We Recommend

Director ISCD:

We made 24 recommendations to modify program tools, processes, and guidance to allow for facility submission approvals that are timely and accurate; develop training for employees on these modifications. To limit the premature spending of funds. To develop and implement metrics to measure CFATS Program value accurately. To reduce overall reliance on contract personnel. To ensure that all employees receive position descriptions and performance reviews, and fill vacant leadership positions with permanent, qualified personnel. To establish internal controls to ensure accountability for all appropriated funds and that sufficient justification exists for all procurements.

For Further Information:

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