



Cloudy Insourcing Data Fogs DoD Rebalancing

Mixed metrics fog DOD's workforce fixes

By Matthew Weigelt Feb 10, 2012

Despite having a lot of workforce data, the Defense Department is unable to determine whether it has made any progress toward getting the right balance of civilian, military and contractor employees, according to a new report.

Ideally, the department should be able to line up the data underlying its strategic workforce plans with the data collected on insourcing initiatives. The problem is that they collected the data in different ways, making it difficult to correlate, the Government Accountability Office said in a report released Feb. 9.

So although officials in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness said the department's fiscal 2010 insourcing efforts advanced the goals of its workforce planning, they cannot prove it.

"It was unclear to what extent the insourcing actions aligned with DOD's plan due to differences in the types of data," GAO wrote.

Congress required DOD to report on its insourcing efforts. But lawmakers did not mandate that the insourcing report align with the strategic workforce objectives.

GAO recommended that defense officials align the insourcing data with the strategic plan and also set metrics to measure insourcing is meeting expectations.

Insourcing is one of various tools agencies can use to ensure the government has the appropriate skills among its employees to carry out their duties and avoid relying too much on contractors.

One of DOD's goals with insourcing was to get a good mix of skills among of its civilian employees, military personnel and contractors. Defense officials are aiming to ensure their own employees were handling inherently governmental functions, or work that only government employees should be doing, such as setting policies and buying on the government's behalf.