

The Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General (OIG) issued the 2012 list of Top Management and Performance Challenges facing the Department of Justice (Department). The OIG has prepared similar lists since 1998. The list is included in the Department's annual *Performance and Accountability Report*.

These challenges are based on the OIG's oversight work, research, and judgment. While we do not present the challenges in priority order, we continue to believe that *Safeguarding National Security* presents the greatest challenge to the Department. We also have highlighted the many challenges the Department faces in enforcing federal law in a coordinated and effective fashion, and we have highlighted the continuing importance of Restoring Confidence in the Department, as recent events – most notably the events detailed in our August 2012 report on the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives' Operation Fast and Furious and Related Matters – have once more placed the Department's role as a custodian of the public's trust under intense scrutiny.

In addition, our report poses many questions that go to the heart of the Department's structure and operations, such as whether the Department is adequately addressing the growing costs of the federal prison system, how to better consolidate and coordinate the activities of the Department's four law enforcement components -- the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and the United States Marshals Service (USMS), and whether the Department's operations duplicate efforts of other federal agencies and efficiently address the challenges of law enforcement at home and abroad. These questions are not all new, but they take on new importance in this era of significant budget constraints.

Inspector General Horowitz stated that, "The issues raised in this year's list pose a clear, if daunting, challenge: the Department must put in place an innovative and transparent strategic vision for how to fulfill its critical missions without additional resources."

The full list of challenges for the Department in the 2012 report is as follows: <http://www.justice.gov/oig/challenges/2012.htm>.

1. Safeguarding National Security
2. Enhancing Cyber Security
3. Managing the Federal Prison System
4. Leading the Department in an Era of Budget Constraints
5. Protecting Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
6. Restoring Confidence
7. Coordinating Among Law Enforcement Agencies
8. Enforcing Against Fraud and Financial Offenses
9. Administering Grants and Contracts
10. Ensuring Effective International Law Enforcement

The report we released describes each challenge in detail, evaluates the Department's current efforts in responding to the challenge, and identifies areas for improvement and additional action.