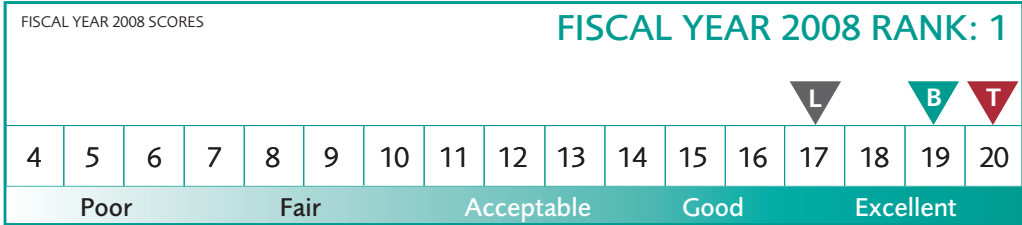


DEPARTMENT OF LABOR



Total Score: 56 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- The department’s home page has a direct link to the report, which is downloadable in a single file or multiple files. Report-specific contact information is in the report and online. The secretary’s transmittal letter highlights the department’s key achievements over time as well as fiscal year 2008 results for each strategic goal area.
- The accompanying citizens’ report is concise, well organized, and reader friendly.
- Baseline and trend data are shown for each measure. As a best practice, there is a “Program Perspective and Logic” discussion on performance for each goal.

Public Benefits (B)

- All four strategic goals and many performance goals are strongly outcome oriented.
- Performance measures also include some activity, output, and efficiency-type measures.
- Strong, outcome-oriented performance metrics superbly demonstrate contributions in a compelling way that an ordinary citizen can easily appreciate.
- The report links costs to strategic and performance goals, as well as to numerous individual performance measures for the current and two previous fiscal years.

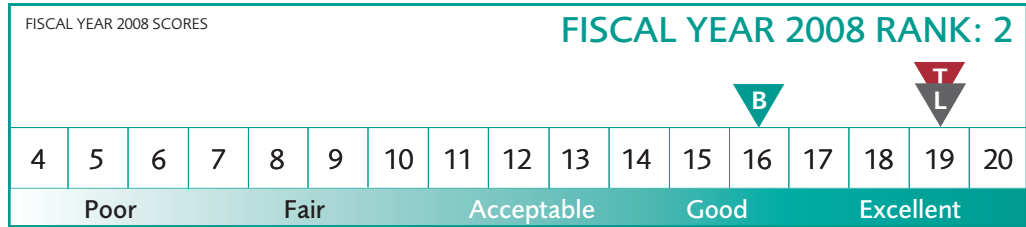
Leadership (L)

- The transmittal letter and narratives describe the public benefits that the department achieves.
- The report clearly discloses performance results, including shortfalls, and consistently offers explanations of shortfalls, many of which are insightful.
- The inspector general and department assessments provide confidence that the department is working seriously and effectively to address major management challenges.
- The report does an excellent job of describing future challenges that transcend individual goals and measures and how the department plans to meet them.
- The Department of Labor is a leader in developing innovations and improvements on many fronts with respect to performance accountability and reporting.

RANKING HISTORY



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS



Transparency (T)

- The report is posted via a prominent home page link, which includes previous year versions and multiple download options.
- The report is lengthy yet provides useful tables and is accompanied by a more concise and informative citizens' report.
- There is a detailed discussion on data quality and verification, as well as data limitations.
- The report includes considerable baseline and trend data, with discussions of performance trends and evidence of increasingly challenging performance targets from year to year.

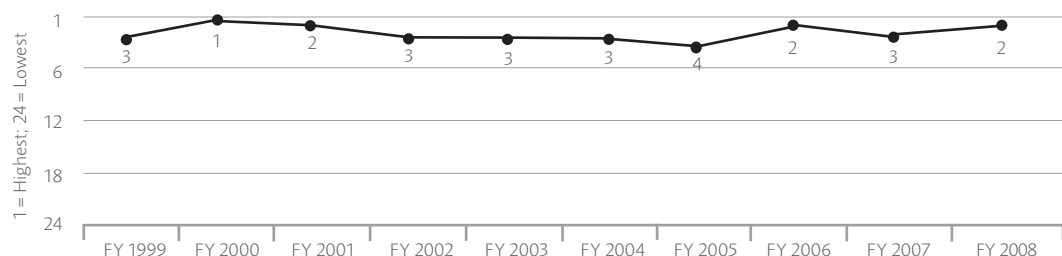
Public Benefits (B)

- Three out of four strategic goals and their related objectives are stated as end or intermediate outcomes.
- The most relevant performance measures are outcome oriented or capture efficiencies that are central to the department's missions.
- The report links budget costs to the department's strategic goals and objectives as well as to 7 of the 25 key performance measures.

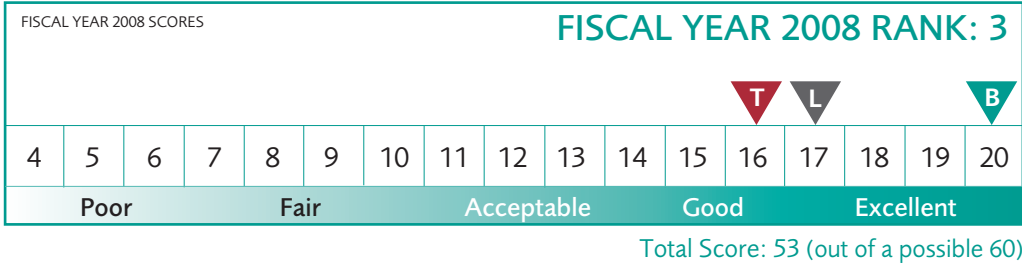
Leadership (L)

- The transmittal letter and report narratives do an excellent job of describing the department's accomplishments and the public benefits that flow from them. The narratives are backed up by solid performance metrics.
- The report contains a specific section titled "Performance Shortfall Analysis" that describes the causes of and the resolution strategies for significant performance shortfalls.
- The report has extensive and elaborate content on major management challenges and specific remedial actions for this fiscal year and the next, along with their anticipated impacts.
- The report thoroughly discusses performance and management shortfalls, is generally forward looking in content, and evidences continued enhancement to reporting formats.

RANKING HISTORY



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



Transparency (T)

- The report begins with an excellent transmittal letter that highlights major performance achievements in a results-oriented way and candidly highlights several concerns.
- The report conveys substantive information about the department's performance, but parts could be condensed and enhanced by greater use of summary tables.
- The transmittal letter lacks the statutorily required data assessment, but the body of the report provides detailed backup on data completeness and reliability.
- The performance section narratives add valuable context for assessing performance, but the department set targets below current performance levels for some key safety outcome measures.

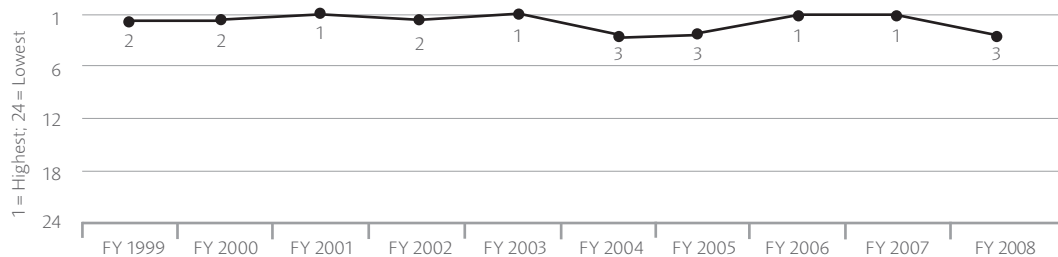
Public Benefits (B)

- The department's programmatic strategic goals are highly outcome oriented; most of their accompanying objectives also focus on end or intermediate outcomes.
- Most of 32 programmatic performance measures depict end or intermediate outcomes.
- The narratives in the performance section complement the highly results-oriented performance metrics and are highly effective in elaborating upon the department's performance results.

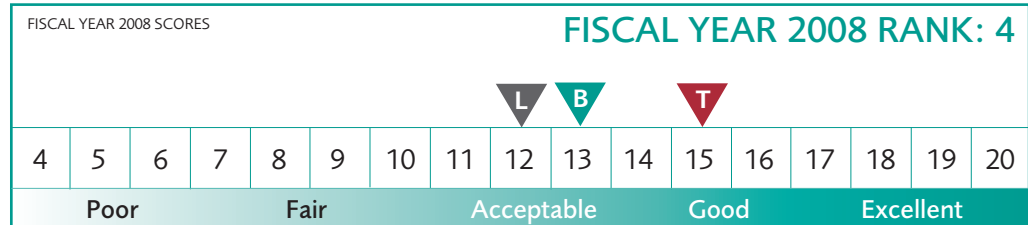
Leadership (L)

- Complementing the strong performance metrics, the report's narratives do an excellent job of demonstrating the key public benefits that flow from the department's work.
- The report consistently provides insightful commentary on performance results and describes improvement strategies even where targets were not missed.
- The inspector general's presentation on major management challenges is weak, but the department uses a "progress meter" to self-assess its steps to resolving each challenge.
- The report is thorough on improvement strategies, providing ample evidence that the department is forward looking and focused on enhancing its performance.

RANKING HISTORY



DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (PILOT)



Total Score: 40 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- A prominent link on the home page leads to the citizens' report, other relevant documents, and prior years' reports. There is contact information in the report but not online.
- The report is well organized, concise, and easy to read, focusing on 31 "highlighted" measures. However, some highlighted measures have limited value to the public because they use arcane terms or their results are classified.
- The narratives in the citizens' and performance reports show prior-year targets, but they could be expanded to provide more insight into performance trends and the extent of progress.

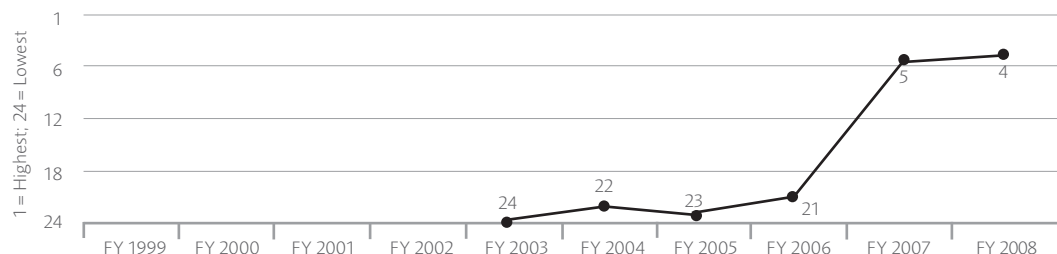
Public Benefits (B)

- The department's strategic goals and objectives are highly outcome oriented.
- Its measures are much less outcome oriented than the goals. Some measures would be more outcome oriented if expressed as percentages (e.g., proportion of secure national borders) instead of raw numbers (e.g., border miles under effective control).
- The narratives on performance results need to better explain the significance of the measures and performance trends relating to them.

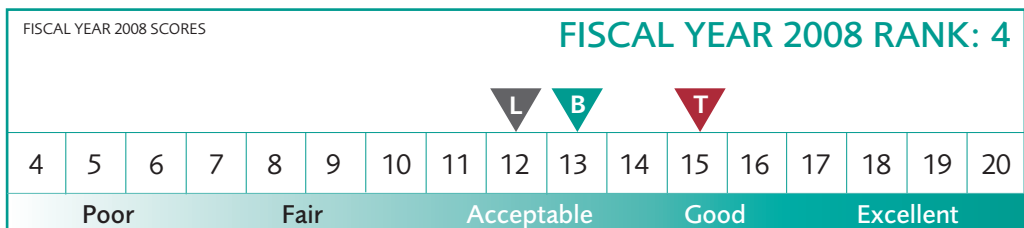
Leadership (L)

- The citizens' report and transmittal letter highlight public benefits from the department's work, but they could use more narrative content on results for the key measures.
- The detailed performance report systematically covers the department's results, including shortfalls; the citizens' report could use more content on results for the key measures.
- The financial report has extensive, specific content on major management challenges, including a strong presentation by the inspector general. It evidences a firm commitment to address the challenges, although the department has far to go to resolve most of them.
- The department's financial and performance reports describe improvement strategies to tackle specific management challenges and programmatic performance shortfalls well.

RANKING HISTORY



NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



Transparency (T)

- The department's home page has a prominent direct link to the report. The report is downloadable in a single file or multiple files. There is no report-specific contact information online or in the report.
- The report is concise and its presentations are straightforward.
- The chairman's transmittal letter states that the report's financial and performance data are reliable and complete; the report contains substantial background on data.
- While some of the programmatic targets reflect zero tolerance for shortfalls, others are set significantly above current and historical performance levels.

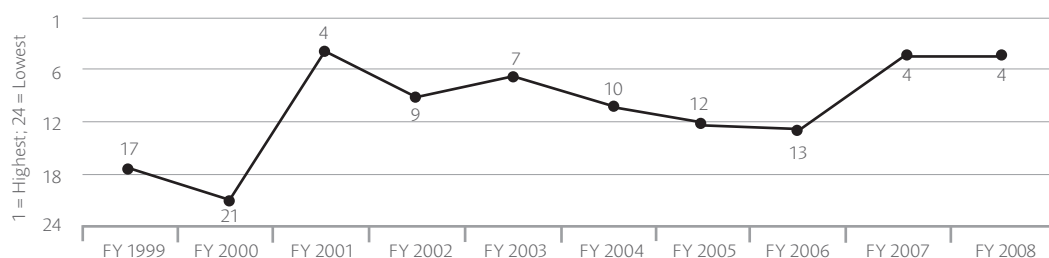
Public Benefits (B)

- The programmatic strategic goals and objectives are strongly outcome oriented but could be improved with the addition of intermediate outcomes.
- The safety and security performance measures are highly outcome oriented, and the operations and management measures focus on timeliness, efficiency, and customer service.
- The report links budgetary resources only to the programmatic strategic goals, yet indicates that the agency is working to better align costs with outcomes.

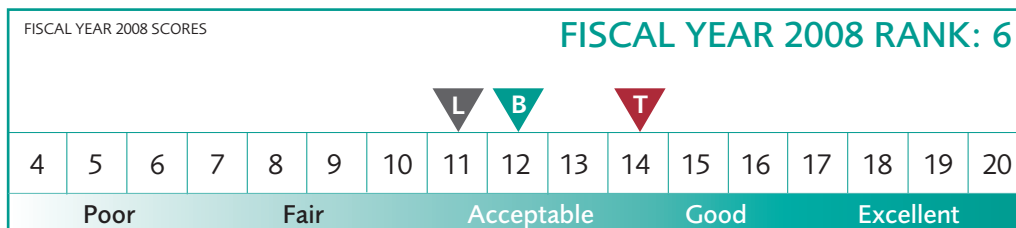
Leadership (L)

- The performance measures and narratives establish the public benefits the agency achieves, but the transmittal letter could be improved by highlighting some specific accomplishments.
- The report disclosed shortfalls and minimal explanations for operational and management metrics.
- The inspector general presents management challenges and indicates the agency is working on addressing them. The report could be more specific in assessing progress.
- The report discusses future performance challenges and ideas for improvement.

RANKING HISTORY



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Total Score: 37 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- The home page links current and prior-year reports with report-specific contact information.
- The report is well formatted, clearly written, and effectively uses tables and graphics.
- The department faces major data challenges due to the long-term nature of its outcomes and its need to rely on external data, but the report indicates the department is working to ameliorate these challenges.
- The report contains best practice “target context” descriptions and good presentations on educational results and trends over many years, but has incomplete data for many measures.

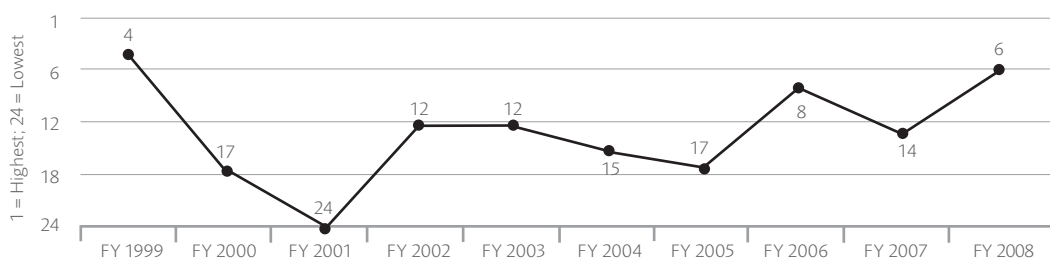
Public Benefits (B)

- The department’s strategic goals are new and much improved this year, clearly capturing end or intermediate outcomes of obvious public importance.
- Most measures are very outcome oriented, supporting outcome goals and objectives.
- The measures reported as raw numbers could be improved if they were restated as percentages of outcomes sought.
- The report does not allocate budget resources to the performance metrics, but explains why the department finds it difficult to link annual funds to performance results.

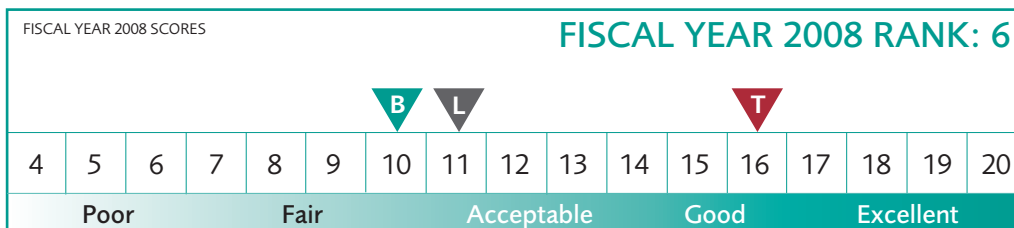
Leadership (L)

- The report’s narrative portions describe the benefits that flow from the department’s work. The secretary’s letter should highlight specific education-related results.
- The report shows performance shortfalls for three measures but gives weak explanations for the shortfalls.
- The inspector general’s concise presentation on major management challenges includes an assessment of the department’s progress on each of the six challenges and gives the department credit for taking positive steps to address them.
- The report has little content on changes to improve on specific performance shortfalls, perhaps because few results are reported; the narratives in the performance section do describe improvement strategies more generally.

RANKING HISTORY



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR



Total Score: 37 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- The home page links directly to the report, which has multiple download options.
- Interior has more than 200 performance metrics; the report looks at 25 “representative” measures.
- The secretary’s substantive transmittal letter provides interesting background and highlights several specific accomplishments in each mission area.
- The citizens’ report is well organized and rich in vignettes, photographs, and graphics.
- The performance section concisely describes the department’s performance measurement system as well as its data validation and verification processes. It also includes baseline and trend data back to fiscal year 2005, but it lacks accompanying narratives for most of the measures.

Public Benefits (B)

- Most of the strategic goals and objectives fall short of supplying clear, measurable outcomes and could be improved with increased specificity.
- As with last year, about half of the representative measures (13 of 25) are outcome oriented.
- The report allocates budget costs to the 25 representative performance measures and analyzes the impact of funding levels on performance for them. This is a potential best practice and should be carried over to the bulk of the department’s performance measures.

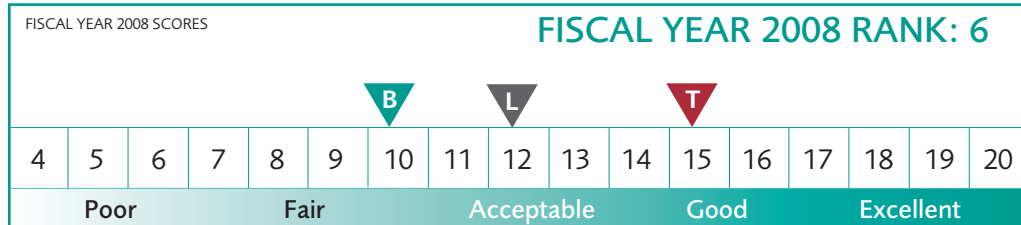
Leadership (L)

- The department’s performance metrics are limited in demonstrating public benefits, but the transmittal letter and report narratives show the public benefits from Interior’s work.
- The report clearly discloses results and explains performance shortfalls for key measures.
- The department’s progress in dealing with major management challenges is lacking, but the transmittal letter candidly highlights and addresses some serious management challenges.
- The department is improving performance reporting with innovative and useful techniques. The report provides insight into improvements for key measures but contains limited discussion for non-representative measures.

RANKING HISTORY



DEPARTMENT OF STATE (PILOT)



Total Score: 37 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- The department's Web page containing the report had other relevant fiscal year 2008 documents and linked to prior-year versions of the report; there was no report-specific contact information online.
- The report is concise, well organized, and informative; it uses tables and graphics very well.
- The report has data source and verification and validation descriptions for its 18 measures.
- The prior-year data are limited since many measures date back only to fiscal year 2007. However, the report provides useful narrative information on the significance of the measures and performance trends.

Public Benefits (B)

- The report has elaborated on its strategic goals this year to describe the intended outcomes more clearly and with greater specificity.
- In contrast to its goals, the department's performance measures are less outcome oriented than last year. Most are raw number measures dealing with activities or outputs.
- The department's predominant output and activity measures do not provide a strong foundation to demonstrate contributions toward its outcome goals.
- The report links budget costs to the strategic goals and to the strategic objectives.

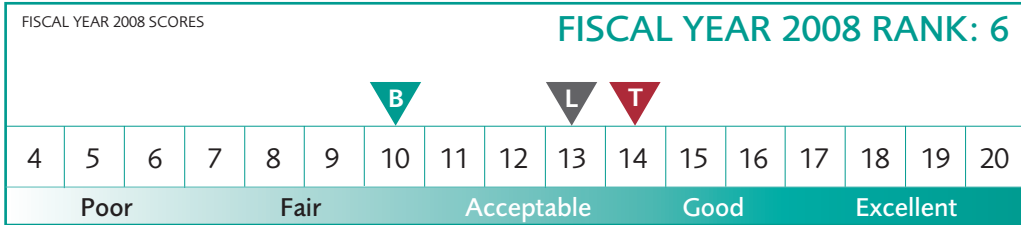
Leadership (L)

- The transmittal letter and the narrative portions of the report highlight a number of specific accomplishments and describe how they serve the public.
- The report provides brief explanations for missed measures, but their quality varies.
- The report summarizes major management challenges identified by the inspector general along with current and future remedial actions. The department improved this year from a disclaimer to an unqualified opinion on its financial statements, which means auditors found the financial statements fully and fairly represent the agency's financial condition.
- The report contains some descriptions of changes to address specific programmatic and management shortcomings and has some content on broader challenges.

RANKING HISTORY



DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY



Total Score: 37 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- The department's home page does not link directly to the report. Previous year versions and report-specific contact information are available online.
- The report highlights the agency's actions and accomplishments, particularly with respect to the current financial crisis, and performance accomplishments by strategic goal.
- The report contains innovative features but has some readability challenges.
- The report gives a thorough presentation of baseline and trend data. The use of graphics to show trends for target achievements and actual performance over time is an innovative feature and a potential best practice.

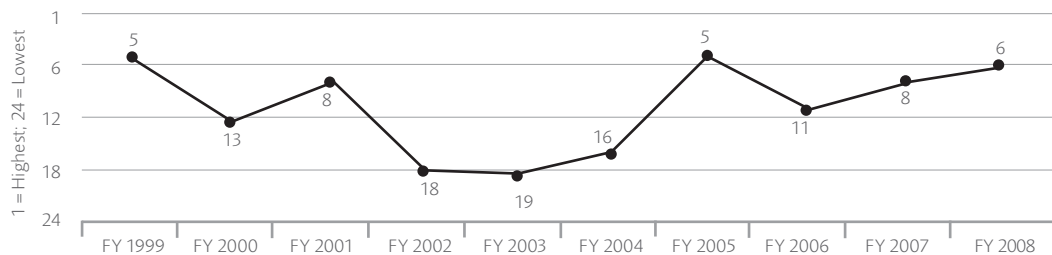
Public Benefits (B)

- The programmatic strategic goals and their related objectives are fairly outcome oriented in relation to the department's functions, but further specificity could improve them.
- Less than 20 percent of the performance measures clearly capture outcomes. The majority focus on efficiency, cost effectiveness, or customer satisfaction.
- The department's weak performance metrics, particularly the measures, have limited effectiveness in demonstrating public benefits.
- The report innovatively allocates performance costs to strategic goals, strategic objectives, and performance goals.

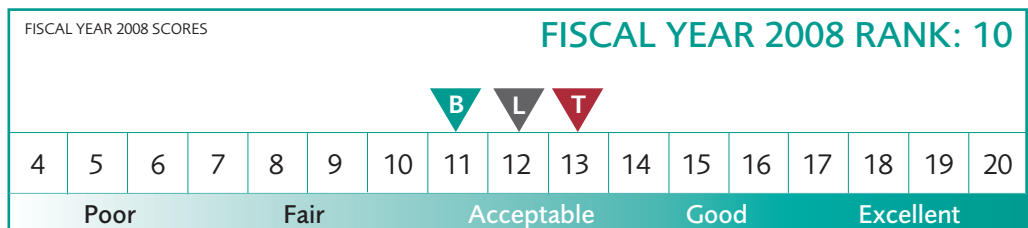
Leadership (L)

- The report's narrative portions describe the department's functions and their importance and achievements, with particular attention to the current financial crisis.
- The report discloses shortfalls and provides brief but informative explanations.
- The report does a thorough job of describing major management challenges and the remedial actions taking place and evinces some progress from the previous year's issues.
- The forward-looking report describes future programmatic and management improvements.

RANKING HISTORY



DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (PILOT)



Total Score: 36 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- The department's home page has a link to the current and prior-year reports. There is contact information in the citizens' report, but the information is not listed separately on the Web site.
- The report is visually appealing, well organized, and user friendly.
- The secretary's transmittal letter is substantive and assures the reader that the data are complete and reliable. It references the fiscal year 2008 performance report for further information on data.
- The citizens' report has prior-year data for only a handful of measures. The performance report has more prior-year data, but the presentations are often technical and confusing.

Public Benefits (B)

- The strategic goals and objectives are mainly outcome oriented, capturing clear outcomes of obvious public importance.
- The department has only a few outcome-oriented performance measures; most of the 220 measures are technical and activity oriented.
- The department's budget is linked to its programmatic strategic goals and also to the annual performance goals.

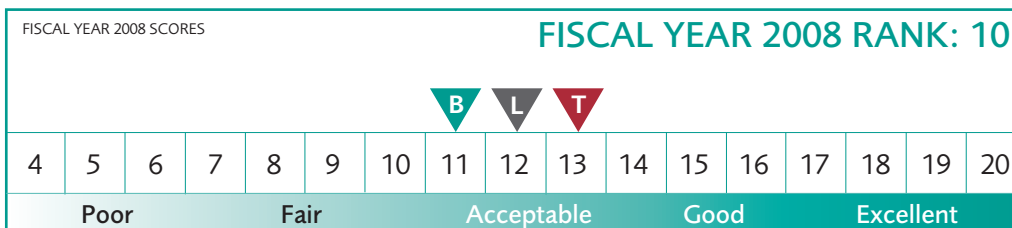
Leadership (L)

- The transmittal letter and other report narratives adequately describe the department's accomplishments and the public benefits they achieve.
- The citizens' report and detailed performance report clearly disclose performance shortfalls and offer explanations for them.
- The citizens' report summarizes major management challenges from the inspector general's presentation and the GAO.
- The report provides overviews of future challenges and strategies to address them. The performance and financial reports, respectively, discuss improvements for individual performance and management shortcomings.

RANKING HISTORY



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY



Total Score: 36 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- The home page link produces the report, prior-year versions, and contact information.
- The inclusion of an e-mail address at the bottom of each page of the report for submitting comments or questions about the report is a useful and unique feature.
- The performance report is lengthy, technical, laborious to read, and could be greatly enhanced with more summary presentations.
- Although it was difficult to find online, the voluntary citizens' report is concise, visually appealing, and clearly written with ordinary citizens in mind.
- The administrator's transmittal letter is a candid and informative assessment of the agency's serious data challenges and time lags.

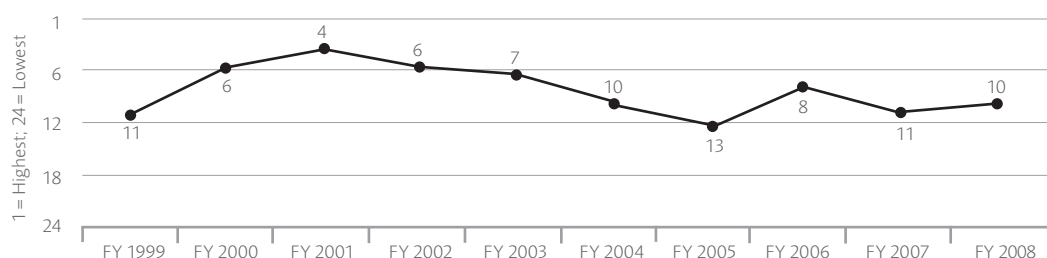
Public Benefits (B)

- The strategic goals capture outcomes of clear public importance. Some strategic objectives are outcome oriented; some are too abbreviated to indicate measurable outcomes.
- While many of the agency's performance measures are stated in outcome terms, they are often highly technical and difficult for a non-expert to comprehend.
- The report links budget costs to the agency's strategic goals and objectives but not to individual performance measures.

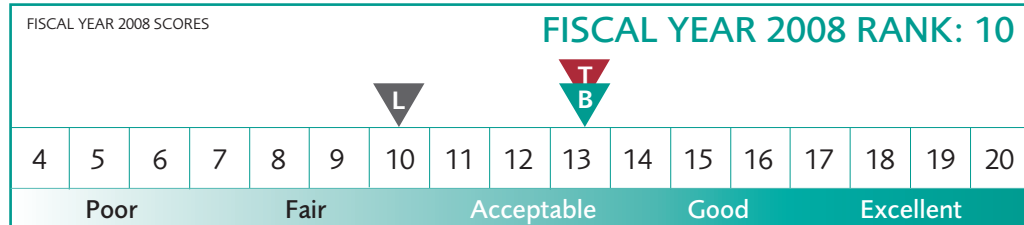
Leadership (L)

- The narratives in the report highlight the public benefits that flow from EPA's work.
- The performance section provides some explanations for missed measures although they generally are not very insightful and often lack any description of improvement steps.
- The report treats major management challenges comprehensively. It includes descriptions of corrective actions the agency is taking as well as time estimates for completion.
- Improvement actions for management challenges are more useful than specific programmatic shortfalls. Mission-related programmatic challenges are generally covered.

RANKING HISTORY



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES (PILOT)



Total Score: 36 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- The department's home page has a prominent link to the citizens' report, related documents, and a contact for the office producing the report.
- The report is somewhat text heavy, and the graphics can be hard to interpret due to the absence of numbers to accompany the bars.
- The completeness of data is a major issue. Fiscal year 2008 results are available for well under half of the agency's performance targets. The agency uses the most recent results to fill in the gaps.
- The report provides prior-year baseline and trend data generally going back to fiscal year 2005 as well as longer-term future targets for most measures.

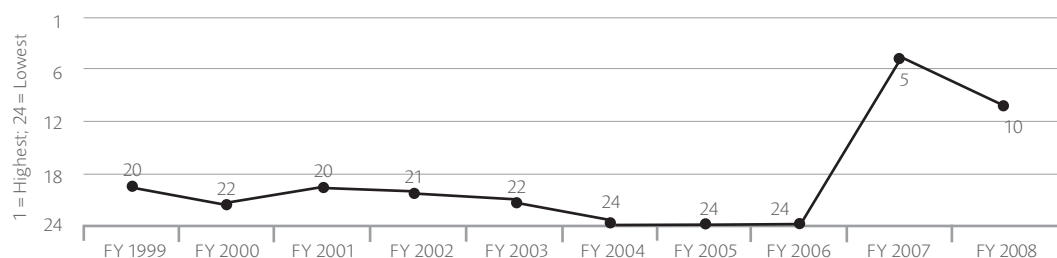
Public Benefits (B)

- The strategic goals and objectives are, for the most part, clear and outcome oriented and capture public benefits of obvious public importance.
- Three-quarters of the 16 "spotlight" measures capture intermediate or end outcomes; 75 percent of the remaining 24 measures also appear to be at least intermediate outcomes.
- The department's performance metrics are highly outcome oriented; data lags, narrow measures, and targets set below performance levels are negative features.
- The report links funding to each strategic goal and strategic objective.

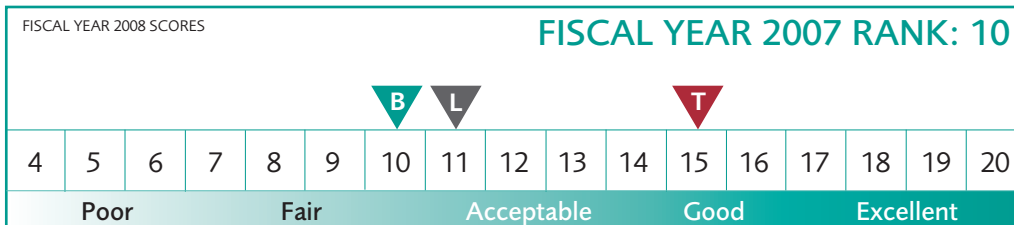
Leadership (L)

- The report effectively demonstrates the important public benefits of the department's work. The secretary's transmittal letter could highlight performance outcomes better.
- The report does not highlight performance shortfalls and explanations for them, so it can be hard to find these in the report. Moreover, once found, the explanations for missed measures tend to be weak.
- The report identifies management challenges addressed by the inspector general and provides an assessment of progress, a response by departmental management, and a description of future remedial plans.

RANKING HISTORY



U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PILOT)



Total Score: 36 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- The link to the report also includes an introductory video by the agency head. The hard copy has report-specific contact information, but the online version does not.
- The citizens' report is concise and informative; the stand-alone performance report details the agency's overall performance under each strategic goal and performance measure.
- The transmittal letter states the report's performance and financial data are complete and reliable. Though it raises some red flags about data quality, it provides no details.
- The report is formatted to show prior-year results, but not targets, back to fiscal year 2005, but less than half of the measures have results going back that far. The report does include preliminary targets going forward to fiscal year 2009.

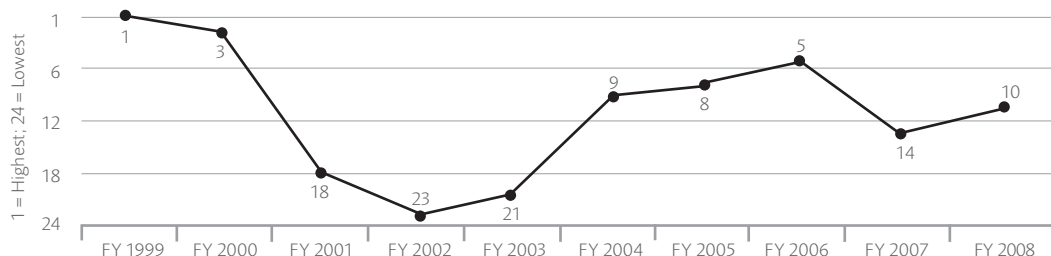
Public Benefits (B)

- The agency added text to better describe its strategic goals, but it lacks specific and measurable outcomes. Adding strategic objectives would help the agency flesh out its goals.
- One-third of the agency's measures appear to be outcomes, mainly intermediate ones. Raw number measures could be improved if the report expressed them as a percentage of the end achievement.
- The report links budget costs only to the strategic goals.

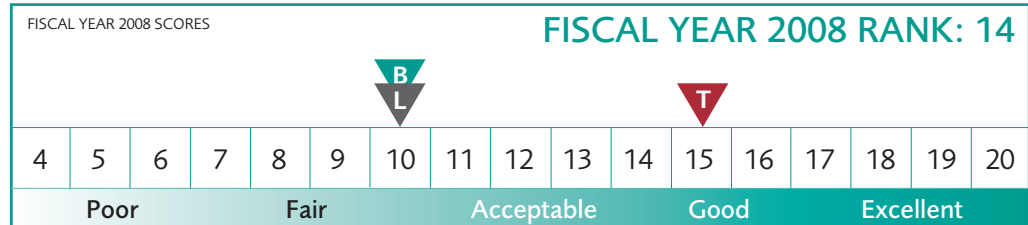
Leadership (L)

- The transmittal letter and narratives explain the public benefits of the agency's work.
- The report clearly discloses performance results, including shortfalls, but does not consistently provide explanations for missed targets.
- The report summarizes the major management challenges identified by the inspector general, the remedial actions taken, and future actions to take, but it does not methodically address the extent of progress.
- The report should have more content on specific performance shortfalls since USAID missed 60 percent of fiscal year 2008 targets. It is stronger in describing changes to address major management challenges and broader programmatic challenges.

RANKING HISTORY



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



Total Score: 35 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- A link from the home page produces the report in single or multiple files, along with prior reports, but a direct and report-specific link for contact information would be useful.
- The report is lengthy, but it is well formatted and makes good use of tables and graphics.
- The reader could better grasp the department's overall performance if the goals, measures, and results were brought together in a summary table. Less jargon would also improve readability.
- The appendix on performance measures shows baseline and prior years' data, but these data show that the department frequently set current targets well below prior-year performance levels.

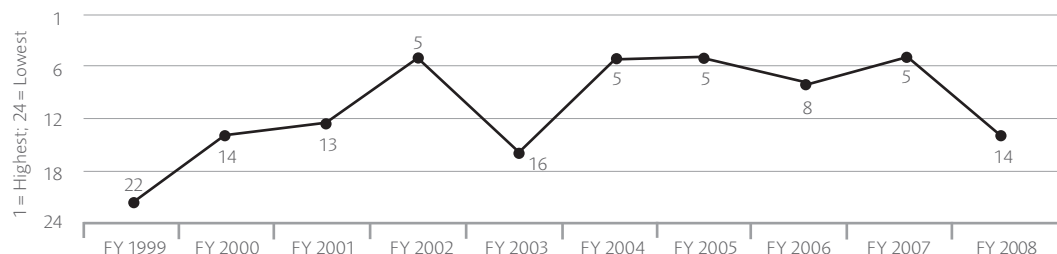
Public Benefits (B)

- The strategic goals and objectives need more specificity about intended outcomes.
- About one-third of the 42 programmatic performance measures seem outcome oriented. The rest are activity, output, efficiency, and customer-satisfaction measures.
- The department's performance metrics are slightly more outcome oriented than last year, but still leave much room for improvement.
- The report links budget costs to the department's strategic goals and objectives as well as to its annual performance goals.

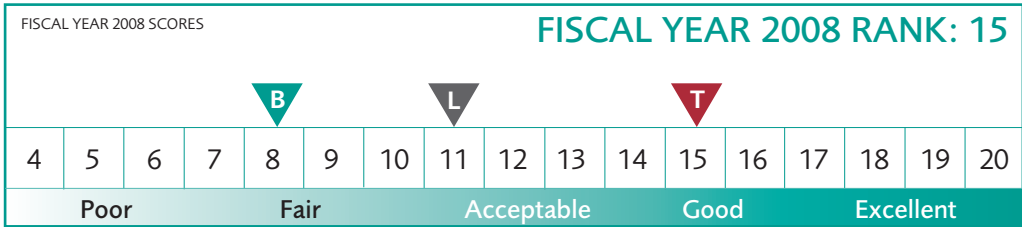
Leadership (L)

- The secretary's transmittal letter and the narrative portions of the report generally do a good job of describing the department's accomplishments.
- The report clearly discloses performance results, including shortfalls, but does not consistently explain the shortfalls.
- The inspector general's presentation on major management challenges and the department's response show little progress in addressing the challenges.

RANKING HISTORY



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE



Total Score: 34 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- The department's home page has a prominent direct link to the report, which offers single file or multiple file downloads. There is no report-specific contact information in the report or online.
- The report is well formatted and lays out the department's performance results clearly.
- The department voluntarily produced an excellent citizens' report, which reads like a document specifically prepared for the general public.
- Performance baselines and trend data for each measure are provided in reader-friendly graphs. The information includes longer-term future goals as well.

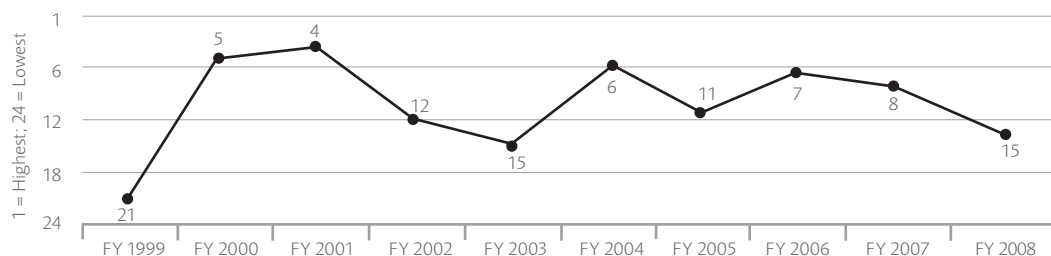
Public Benefits (B)

- All of the strategic goals and half the strategic objectives reference outcomes, but the goals would be more compelling if they were stated with greater specificity.
- The performance measures generally relate directly to the applicable goals and incorporate important outcomes. However, pass/fail metrics and raw-number targets do not provide insight to assess annual progress.
- The report links performance metrics to costs only at the strategic goal level.

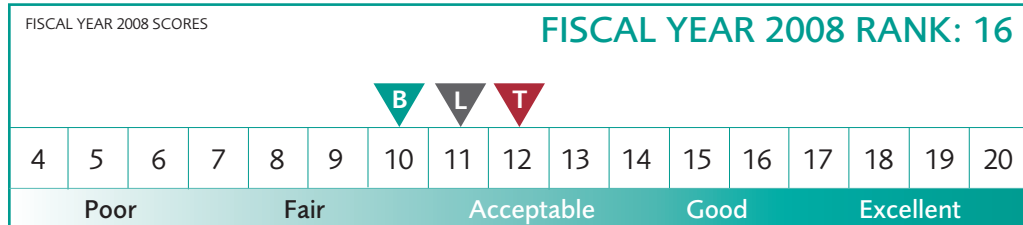
Leadership (L)

- The report narratives do a good job of describing the department's missions and the public benefits it seeks to achieve.
- Performance results, including shortfalls, are clearly disclosed and accompanied by summary explanations.
- The inspector general's presentation thoroughly describes management challenges but lacks insight on resolution progress. The department's response is more specific.
- The department's continued failure to develop measures related to illegal drugs is a concern.

RANKING HISTORY



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Total Score: 33 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- A prominent link leads to the report, but the report is downloadable only in a large single file. There is no report-specific contact information in the report or online.
- The report is well organized and features a summary “performance scorecard.” It uses reader-friendly formats and tables to clarify the department’s performance results.
- The performance section provides data sources for measures and, along with the transmittal letter, provides an assessment of data completeness, reliability, and quality.
- The performance section tables include baseline, trend data, and narratives back to fiscal year 2004.

Public Benefits (B)

- The strategic goals are stated in outcome terms, but the outcomes are at such a high level that measurement and attribution to the department’s contributions pose challenges.
- The 34 annual performance goals mix outcomes and intermediate outcomes, activity and output, and efficiency measures.
- The department’s performance metrics would be more effective in demonstrating results if they provided more outcomes expressed with greater clarity for lay readers.
- The report links program obligations and staff years to the strategic goals only.

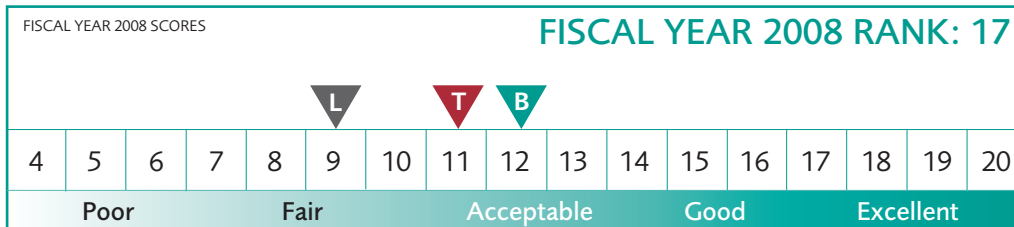
Leadership (L)

- The performance section narratives and transmittal letter provide a useful supplement to the performance metrics regarding the public benefits that flow from the department’s work.
- The report clearly discloses performance results, including shortfalls, but it offers weak explanations for the four missed measures.
- The inspector general’s presentation on major management challenges could be more concise and pointed, but it gives credit for the remedial actions the department is taking.
- Although the explanations for missed measures are weak, the report includes analyses of results for each measure and future challenges that are generally informative.

RANKING HISTORY



GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION



Total Score: 32 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- The report is not directly linked on the home page and is downloadable only as a very large single file. There is no report-specific contact information online.
- The report seems verbose and redundant in parts, and the performance section is organized primarily by agency component rather than by strategic goal, making it somewhat disjointed for a lay reader. The citizens' report adds little value to the full report.
- The report provides little detail on performance data validation and verification. The reported results are incomplete, and the inspector general raises questions about the agency's data quality.
- The performance section shows baseline and trend data for the key measures from prior years, but it does not include prior-year targets. No results are given for any non-key measures.

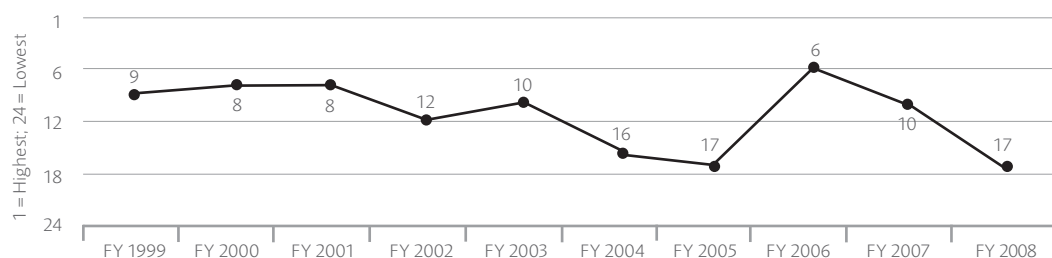
Public Benefits (B)

- The report has the same four strategic goals as last year, but they are reasonably outcome oriented in terms of the value GSA offers American taxpayers, especially given GSA's largely intra-governmental functions.
- About half of the 16 key measures focus on cost savings or public service enhancements that might be regarded as outcomes or intermediate outcomes of direct public relevance.
- The report links agency's key and non-key budget costs to individual performance measures.

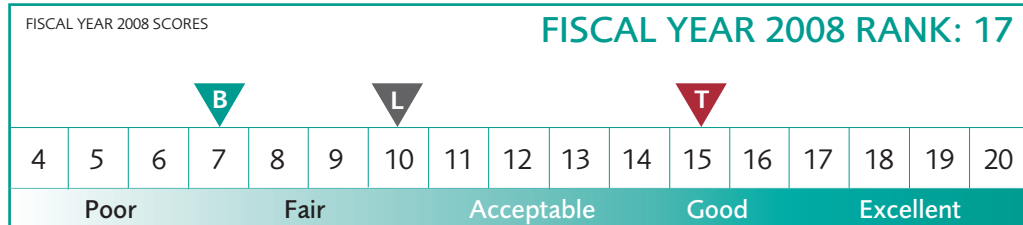
Leadership (L)

- Narratives describe the agency's operations and their benefits to the public.
- The report is incomplete since it discloses fiscal year 2008 results for only 16 of over 90 performance measures. It clearly discloses key measure results, including shortfalls.
- It is difficult to determine whether the agency is adequately addressing its major management challenges. The agency disagrees with the inspector general on most points.
- The report provides little insight on improvement plans for specific program performance or management shortcomings.

RANKING HISTORY



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (PILOT)



Total Score: 32 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- The agency's home page links to the citizens' report, related documents, and to prior-year reports.
- The report is brief, easy to read, and makes good use of tables.
- NSF's use of a qualitative, instead of quantitative, system to measure program performance provides no baseline or other prior-year data that would enable the reader to assess performance trends over time or put the agency's performance in context.

Public Benefits (B)

- Strategic goals are stated as high-level outcomes, but they lack annual goals and outcomes.
- Performance measures, where present, focus on processes and activities rather than results.
- The agency's performance metrics are not geared to demonstrate results to the general public.
- The report links costs only at the strategic goal level.

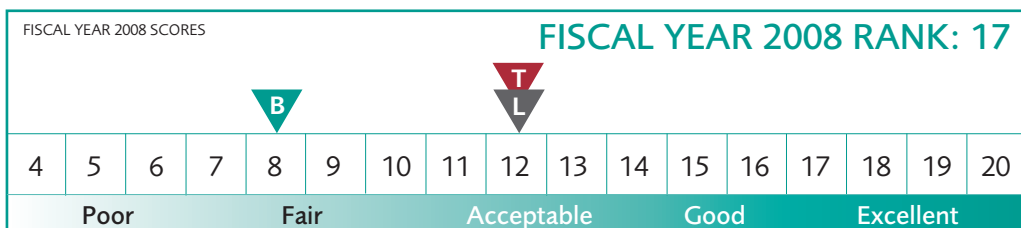
Leadership (L)

- The report refers and links to a Web site that describes additional project accomplishments. More examples of this nature would enhance the report's value to lay readers.
- The citizens' report indicates one performance target shortfall, but does not explain or describe it.
- The inspector general's presentation and the agency's responses detail management challenges and current and future remedial actions.
- The report has some improvement strategies for management but no discernable content on changes to improve program performance.

RANKING HISTORY



SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION



Transparency (T)

- The report has multiple download options, but no report-specific contact information online or in the hard copy. A series of links provides prior-year reports back to fiscal year 1998.
- The report is reasonably concise by federal reporting standards and is well formatted.
- Six of the 26 performance measures are missing fiscal year 2008 results due to data lags, and an inspector general report's audits found data unreliable for 6 of 8 performance measures.
- The baseline and trend data are limited since many of the measures are fairly new. The agency does not set ambitious targets for many measures although narratives do explain the reasons for some low targets.

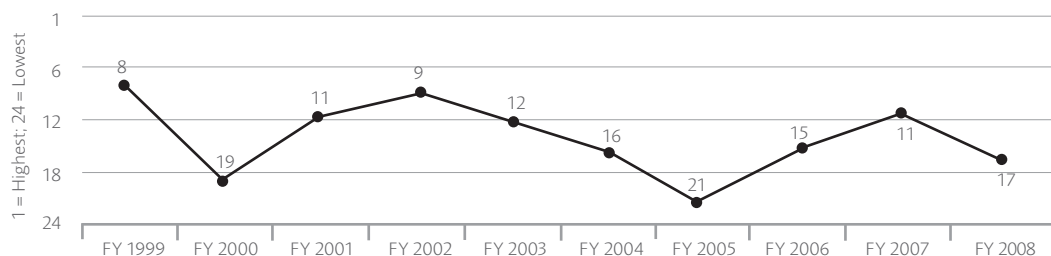
Public Benefits (B)

- The agency's current goals and objectives reference some outcomes but they could be refined to specify more precisely the intended results directly attributable to the agency's work.
- More of the agency's 26 performance measures are outcome oriented than last year, but some measures that are expressed as raw numbers would be more outcome oriented if they had been stated as percentages.
- Performance is deteriorating in some key areas even though the agency is meeting its targets.
- The report does not link budget costs to the agency's performance metrics.

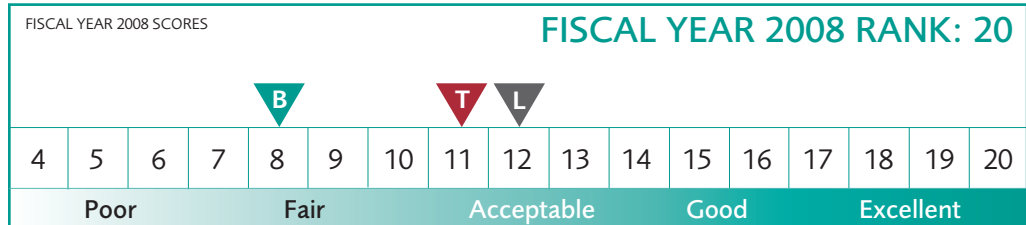
Leadership (L)

- The narratives are stronger than the performance metrics in explaining public benefit successes.
- The report clearly discloses fiscal year 2008 performance results, including shortfalls, attributing shortfalls to high workloads and inadequate staff.
- The inspector general's presentation on major management challenges does not convey how much progress the agency is making or when it might resolve the challenges.
- The forward-looking narratives describe plans to improve performance for individual measures even where targets were met.

RANKING HISTORY



NATIONAL AERONAUTICS & SPACE ADMINISTRATION



Transparency (T)

- Although bookmarks permit online navigation through various sections, the report is downloadable as a single file only. There is report-specific contact information in the report.
- The Management’s Discussion and Analysis section provides the public with a useful overview of the agency’s undertakings, but the rest of the report is less useful to a lay reader.
- The transmittal letter provides “reasonable assurance” that the report’s performance data are complete and reliable; the body of the report offers little backup for this assurance.
- The report offers little baseline or trend data to assist the reader in assessing progress over time since many measures are judgmental rather than quantifiable.

Public Benefits (B)

- The agency’s strategic goals are a mix of outcomes and activities.
- Most performance measures address highly technical activities.
- The performance metrics and assessment system afford little basis for the public to evaluate the agency’s progress from year to year or to appreciate its accomplishments.
- Efforts to explain the link between budget costs and goals are confusing, and the performance section shows cost linkages only to the strategic goals and subgoals.

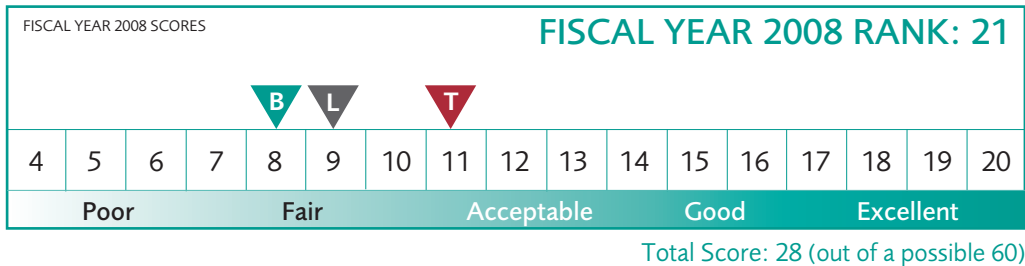
Leadership (L)

- The transmittal letter and performance highlights usefully describe NASA’s missions and accomplishments in a high-level way that a lay reader can understand.
- In what is a best practice, a table in the report lists each measure that was not fully achieved, explains why, and outlines plans for achieving the measure in the future.
- The inspector general’s presentation on management challenges does not methodically assess agency’s progress on the challenges, and the report shows little progress in key management areas.
- On the programmatic side, the report does a good job of describing changes for next year, but it is weaker on the management side.

RANKING HISTORY



OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT (PILOT)



Transparency (T)

- There is a prominent direct link on the home page to the citizens' report and the fiscal year 2008 performance report, as well as prior-year versions. No report-specific contact information is online or within the report.
- The citizens' report is concise and makes good use of tables, but performance narratives are found only in the accompanying performance report.
- The citizens' report provides prior-year results for performance measures, but no narratives to explain the results. Some narratives in the performance report are confusing.

Public Benefits (B)

- The department's strategic goals and performance measures lack clear, measurable outcomes.
- Performance metrics do little to demonstrate public benefit contributions or indicate achievement of agency missions.
- The citizens' report links budget resources only to strategic goals while the performance report includes some links to strategic objectives.

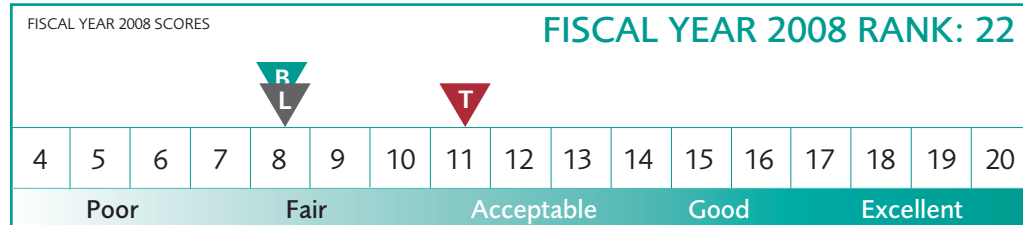
Leadership (L)

- Confusing narratives and weak performance metrics do not sufficiently demonstrate accomplishments and results.
- The citizens' report discloses but does not adequately explain performance shortfalls.
- The report lists major management challenges identified by the agency's inspector general and self-assesses the agency's progress in addressing them.
- The report contains improvement strategies to address management challenges but has little clear and insightful content on program performance improvement.

RANKING HISTORY



DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT



Total Score: 27 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- The department's home page has a direct link to the report, which can be downloaded as a single file or multiple files.
- The performance report is lengthy and text heavy; the voluntarily produced citizens' report is much more concise and reader friendly.
- The secretary's transmittal letter states that the report's data are complete and reliable, but the contents of the report indicate otherwise.
- The department frequently sets non-challenging targets that aspire to performance levels lower than those of prior years.

Public Benefits (B)

- Two-thirds of the programmatic strategic goals and one-third of the cross-cutting strategic goals are clearly stated as outcomes.
- Most of the department's performance measures deal with outputs, activities, or efficiencies; few are outcome measures.
- Budget resources are linked to the performance metrics at the strategic goal level only.

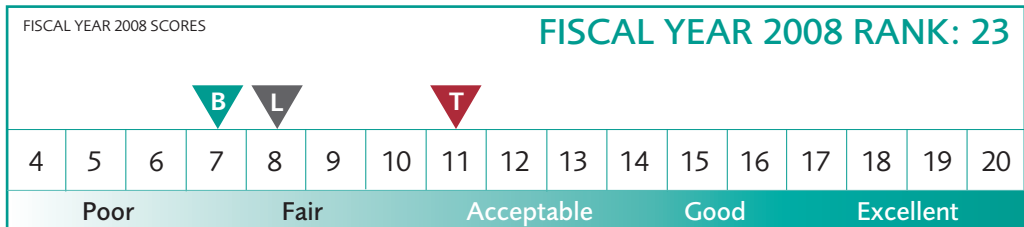
Leadership (L)

- The narratives in the report convey some useful information about the department's accomplishments, yet do not compensate for the department's weak performance metrics.
- The report clearly discloses performance shortfalls and offers narrative explanations for missed targets and future improvement plans. However, the information is rarely insightful.
- The inspector general's presentation on management challenges provides little specific assessment of progress.
- The report has some discussion of improvement strategies for programmatic shortfalls and management challenges, but it shows little ambition to enhance performance.

RANKING HISTORY



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (PILOT)



Total Score: 26 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- The department's home page has a prominent direct link to the citizens' report, but the department's fiscal year 2008 performance report was not posted at the time of our evaluation. No link was found for reports from previous years.
- The citizens' report was concise and easy to read, but had sparse performance content.
- There was no content on data sources or quality, and the department continues to have a disclaimer of opinion on its financial statements.
- Very little baseline or trend data are included.

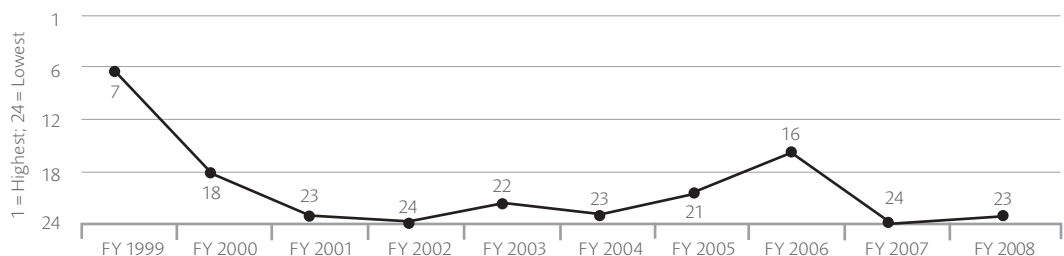
Public Benefits (B)

- No strategic goals are outcome oriented, and less than half of the strategic objectives have intermediate or end outcomes.
- Few of the 16 key performance measures capture outcomes. Most are raw numbers or efficiency measures.
- The performance metrics presented in the report are limited in scope and weak in outcome orientation.
- The report has no content linking performance to costs.

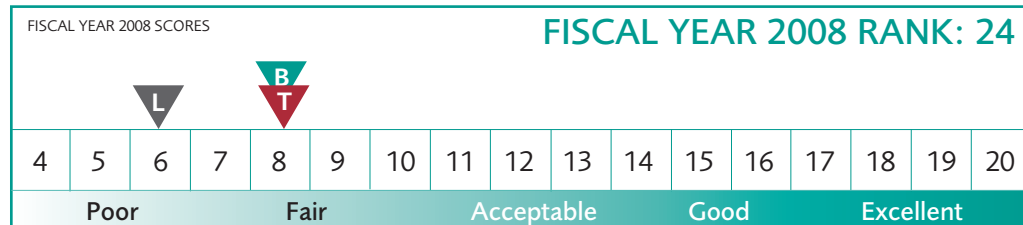
Leadership (L)

- The report narratives and performance metrics do not convey results and public benefits.
- The results for the 16 key measures are clearly disclosed, including performance shortfalls, but the shortfalls lack specific explanations.
- The citizens' report references the financial report for the inspector general's presentation on management challenges as well as the department's response. A number of steps are being taken to address the management challenges, but the challenges remain pervasive.
- While the report describes management-related improvements, there is virtually no content on changes to improve program performance.

RANKING HISTORY



SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (PILOT)



Total Score: 22 (out of a possible 60)

Transparency (T)

- The citizens' report and performance report were not posted online in a timely manner.
- The report is brief and easy to read but falls far short of providing the overview of agency performance that a citizens' report is supposed to convey.
- The report has no transmittal letter, but the transmittal letter for the financial report asserts that the financial and performance data in that report are reliable and complete.
- The report shows prior-year results for the few performance measures it covers, but there is no accompanying explanation of performance results or trends.

Public Benefits (B)

- Two of the agency's three programmatic strategic goals are outcomes, but they are at a high level of generality and are sometimes vague; the third is more specific but is stated in activity rather than outcome terms.
- The report describes most measures as "outcomes," but most are not.
- The report has little content about the agency's performance results or accomplishments.
- The report links the agency's budget costs to its strategic goals but not to lower levels of its performance metrics.

Leadership (L)

- The report clearly discloses fiscal year 2008 results, including shortfalls, for the few listed measures. There are no explanations for the shortfalls shown.
- The inspector general's presentation on major management challenges is one of the most informative, but the report makes no mention of it.
- The report has no content on changes in policies and procedures to do better next year.

RANKING HISTORY

