



At a Glance

What Are Management Challenges?

The Reports Consolidation Act of 2000 requires each inspector general to prepare an annual statement summarizing what the inspector general considers to be “the most serious management and performance challenges facing the agency” and to briefly assess the agency’s progress in addressing those challenges.

To identify these top challenges for fiscal year 2022, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Office of Inspector General considered the body of our work, as well as our objective and professional observations; work conducted by the U.S. Government Accountability Office; and Agency documentation and statements.

Our top management challenges report covering fiscal years 2020–2021 (Report No. [20-N-0231](#)) identified eight such challenges facing the Agency. We’ve retained three of these challenges—*enhancing information technology security*, *communicating risks*, and *integrating and leading environmental justice*—for this fiscal year 2022 report but reshaped and refocused them into two.

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List of [OIG reports](#).

EPA’s Fiscal Year 2022 Top Management Challenges

What We Found

After robust research and analysis, the EPA OIG identified seven top management challenges that we believe represent the EPA’s greatest vulnerabilities to waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement and the EPA’s most significant barriers to accomplishing its mission during fiscal year 2022. In addition to three challenges retained from our previous top management challenges report, which we reshaped and refocused into two, we identified five new top challenges that focus on emerging or increased environmental and operational threats. These seven top challenges reflect overarching issues that affect multiple EPA programs and responsibilities and that may prevent the Agency from efficiently and effectively protecting human health and the environment:

- 1. Mitigating the Causes and Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change.** The EPA must take a leadership role in limiting climate change and mitigating its effect on human health and the environment.
- 2. Integrating and Leading Environmental Justice Across the Agency and Government.** As part of its effort to integrate environmental justice across its programs, the EPA must address the environmental hazards and cumulative risk facing at-risk communities and effectively communicate that risk to those communities.
- 3. Ensuring the Safe Use of Chemicals.** The EPA must develop timely and accurate chemical risk assessments to identify acceptable exposure levels for humans and the environment.
- 4. Safeguarding Scientific Integrity Principles.** Science-based decisions at the EPA must be based on principles of scientific integrity to ensure that human health and the environment are protected by using the best-available science.
- 5. Ensuring Information Technology and Systems Are Protected Against Cyberthreats.** Information technology is a fundamental and essential resource for the EPA to carry out its mission.
- 6. Managing Infrastructure Funding and Business Operations.** The EPA must effectively oversee the funding and operation of America’s water, wastewater, and other environmental infrastructure.
- 7. Enforcing Environmental Laws and Regulations.** Through enforcement, the EPA ensures that regulated entities are following environmental laws and will continue to do so, as enforcement actions effectively deter future noncompliance.