

Observations on GAO Access to Information on Programs and Activities

In the era of digital information and the ever-growing complexity of government operations, it is more important than ever to have access to reliable and transparent information about the programs and activities of our government agencies. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) plays a vital role in ensuring this transparency by providing independent, nonpartisan analyses, reports, and testimonies.



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This comprehensive guide aims to shed light on the various ways to access information on government programs and activities through the GAO. By understanding the different resources available and how to navigate them effectively, you can empower yourself with the knowledge necessary to hold your government accountable and make informed decisions.

GAO's Role in Access to Information

The GAO is an independent agency within the legislative branch of the US government. Its primary mission is to provide Congress and other federal agencies with objective, nonpartisan, and fact-based information to support their decision-making processes.

One of the key ways the GAO fulfills this mission is by providing access to information on government programs and activities. This information is gathered through a variety of methods, including:

- Audits and investigations
- Reviews and evaluations
- Testimony before Congress
- Reports and other publications

The GAO's findings and recommendations are often used by Congress to inform legislation and oversight activities, and by federal agencies to improve their programs and operations.

Accessing Information through the GAO Website

The GAO maintains a comprehensive website that serves as a central repository for all of its reports, testimonies, and other publications. The website is user-friendly and offers a variety of search options to help you find the information you need quickly and easily.

To access information on government programs and activities through the GAO website, follow these steps:

1. Visit the GAO website at <https://www.gao.gov/>.
2. In the search bar at the top of the page, enter a keyword or phrase related to the program or activity you are interested in.
3. Click on the "Search" button.
4. The search results will display a list of relevant reports, testimonies, and other publications. You can filter the results by publication type, date, and other criteria.
5. Click on the title of the document you wish to view.

Once you have accessed a document, you can download it in PDF format or read it online. You can also share the document with others using the social media buttons provided.

Other Ways to Access GAO Information

In addition to the GAO website, there are a number of other ways to access GAO information on government programs and activities. These include:

- **GAO Reports App:** The GAO Reports app is available for free download on iOS and Android devices. The app provides easy access to GAO reports, testimonies, and other publications, as well as the ability to search, save, and share documents.
- **GAO Document Request Service:** If you are unable to find the information you need on the GAO website or through the GAO Reports app, you can request a copy of the document by contacting the GAO Document Request Service at pubrequest@gao.gov.

- **GAO Archive:** The GAO Archive contains a collection of historical GAO reports and other publications dating back to the early 1900s. The archive is located at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in College Park, Maryland.

Using GAO Information Effectively

Once you have accessed GAO information on government programs and activities, it is important to use it effectively. Here are a few tips:

- **Read the document carefully.** Pay attention to the key findings and recommendations.
- **Consider the source.** The GAO is an independent, nonpartisan agency. Its findings and recommendations are based on objective evidence.
- **Use the information to make informed decisions.** GAO information can help you understand the effectiveness of government programs and activities, and make informed decisions about how to allocate your resources.
- **Share the information with others.** GAO information is a valuable resource for everyone. Share it with your friends, family, and colleagues to help them stay informed about their government.

The GAO plays a vital role in ensuring transparency and accountability in government. By providing access to information on government programs and activities, the GAO empowers citizens with the knowledge they need to hold their government accountable and make informed decisions.

This guide has provided you with an overview of the various ways to access GAO information. By understanding these resources and using them effectively, you can become a more informed and engaged citizen.



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