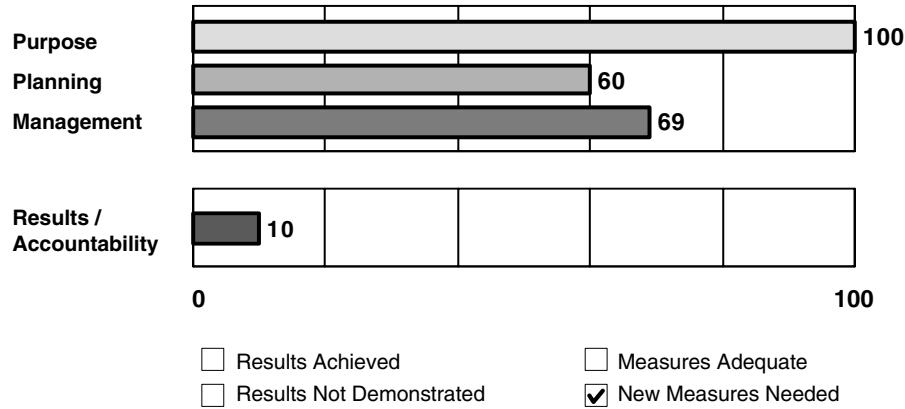


Program: Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Compliance

Agency: Department of the Treasury

Bureau: Internal Revenue Service



Key Performance Measures

Year Target Actual

Long-term Measure: Percent of EITC dollars paid that should not have been paid This means that more than one dollar in four paid under EITC should not have been paid. (Targets under development)	1997		24 to 26%
	1999		27 to 32%
Annual Measure: Revenue protected, i.e., dollars incorrectly claimed by taxpayers that IRS either did not pay or later recovered (\$ in billions) (Targets under development)	2001		\$1.169
Annual Measure: EITC returns audited	2001		453,947
	2002	413,331	437,799
	2003	349,000	
	2004	364,000	

Rating: Ineffective

Program Type: Direct Federal

Program Summary:

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Compliance Initiative is intended to reduce erroneous payments of the Earned Income Tax Credit. It is run by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

This assessment indicates the EITC compliance initiative has failed to reduce EITC erroneous payments to acceptable levels.

1. IRS has a strong planning process closely linked to its budget process, but it has not yet used this outcome information to set performance targets that allow it to demonstrate results.
2. While IRS prevents roughly \$1 billion in erroneous EITC payments per year, annual data reveals that 27 to 32 percent of all EITC payments were still made in error in tax year 1999. The magnitude of this error rate compels a rating of "ineffective."
3. IRS has made numerous management improvements in recent years. However, its financial management systems remain weak.

Treasury formed a Task Force in the spring of 2002 to recommend solutions to the EITC high error rate. The Budget provides a \$100 million increase for the following initiatives recommended by the Task Force to improve EITC compliance.

1. IRS will require high-risk EITC applicants to pre-certify that the children claimed on their return are really qualifying children under EITC. Incorrectly claimed qualifying children have been a major source of EITC error. High risk applicants will be identified through databases such as the Federal Case Registry (information on child custody) and by focusing on taxpayers with characteristics linked to high error rates in compliance studies (e.g., relatives other than parents who claim a child for EITC purposes).
2. IRS will delay refunds on returns deemed to be high risk for filing status or income errors while agents take action to resolve cases. High-risk returns will be identified by researching taxpayer historical compliance and by requiring new information on EITC returns.

Note these initiatives will reduce EITC audits as resources are focused on correcting errors earlier in the process.

Program Funding Level (in millions of dollars)

<u>2002 Actual</u>	<u>2003 Estimate</u>	<u>2004 Estimate</u>
146	146	251