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A typical agency description includes:

- A list of officials heading major operating units.
- A summary statement of the agency's purpose and role in the Federal Government.
- A brief history of the agency, including its legislative or executive authority.
- A description of its programs and activities.
- Information, addresses, and phone numbers to help users locate detailed information on consumer activities, contracts and grants, employment, publications, and other matters of public interest.

GPO Access contains the U.S. Government Manual from 1995-96 through to the present. The new edition of the Manual is available to the public each year in the late summer. Files are available as ASCII text and Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF).

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