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REPORT BY THE
COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES

STATUS OF THE CG-47 CRUISER
AND DDG-51 DESTROYER
SHIPBUILDING PROGRAMS

D I G E S T

The Navy's CG-47 cruiser is to provide quick reaction air defense against enemy aircraft and high performance antiship missiles. The DDG-51 destroyer is intended to be a surface combatant, similar to the CG-47 but costing sufficiently less to allow procurement in greater numbers. Both ships will have the latest systems for combating enemy air, surface, and undersea threats expected through the 1990s.

Because the CG-47 and the DDG-51 are high priority surface combatants needed to counter the enemy threat to the proposed 15 carrier battle group Navy, the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Defense, House Appropriations Committee, asked GAO to examine the status of the CG-47 and DDG-51 shipbuilding programs and to followup on issues raised in prior GAO reports. (See app. I.) Briefly, GAO found that:

- Operational testing of the CG-47's AEGIS combat system is scheduled for the May through September 1983 period. Consequently, the AEGIS combat system was not adequately tested before it was commissioned in January 1983. (See p. 9.)
- The Navy plans to install SPS-49 radar systems on the CG-47 class against the wishes of the House Appropriations Committee and contrary to a recommendation in a prior GAO report. (See p. 13.)
- The CG-47's displacement and center of gravity exceed design goals which could have an adverse effect on the ship's speed and stability. (See p. 15.)
- The estimated cost of the DDG-51 destroyer has increased to the point where the Chief of Naval Operations has said that it is not



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affordable and is not a lower cost alternative to the CG-47 as the Navy had intended. (See p. 22.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Secretary of Defense should closely monitor the Navy's February 1983 review of its proposal to fully test AEGIS. If the Secretary is convinced that the proposal will meet testing requirements, GAO recommends approval to start development.

GAO also recommends that the Secretary of Defense direct the Navy to:

- Discontinue the acquisition of SPS-49 radars for future CG-47 ships.
- Determine, before adding lower priority systems to the CG-47, that the incremental improvement to mission capability offsets the detrimental effects the increased weight will have on the ship's speed and stability.
- Reduce the cost of the DDG-51, as the Chief of Naval Operations has requested, to make the Navy's anti-air requirements affordable. Alternatively, if DDG-51 cost targets cannot be met or if significant reductions in combat capability are necessary to reduce costs, the Navy should consider buying an appropriate number of additional CG-47s. This issue should be resolved at the March 1983 meeting of the Defense Systems Acquisition Review Council.

AGENCY COMMENTS

Comments were received from the Department of Defense and were incorporated throughout the report as appropriate. The comments concerning major topics of the report are summarized below.

- The CG-47's weapon system will not be fully tested against certain enemy threats before it is commissioned. (See p. 10.)

- The SPS-49 radar should remain on the CG-47 because it enhances the flexibility and capabilities of the ship's weapon system during periods of heavy enemy radar jamming. GAO believes, however, that the Navy has not demonstrated that the SPS-49 radar is essential to mission performance and believes it should not be purchased. (See p. 13.)

- The Navy does not consider the CG-47 to be overweight or unsafe, but officials will closely monitor equipment and other changes that could adversely affect the ship's performance and stability. (See p. 17.)

- If the current target cost of the DDG-51 (75 percent of CG-47 costs on a per ship basis) becomes unattainable or if reductions in capability are required to meet that goal, the Navy will consider buying additional CG-47s instead of DDG-51s. (See p. 23.)