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**Military Operations and
Capabilities Issue Area**

Active Assignments

Foreword

This report was prepared primarily to inform Congressional members and key staff of ongoing assignments in the General Accounting Office's Military Operations and Capabilities issue area. This report contains assignments that were ongoing as of July 6, 1995, and presents a brief background statement and a list of key questions to be answered on each assignment. The report will be issued quarterly.

This report was compiled from information available in GAO's internal management information systems. Because the information was downloaded from computerized data bases intended for internal use, some information may appear in abbreviated form.

If you have questions or would like additional information about assignments listed, please contact Mark Gebicke, Director, on (202) 512-5140; or Sharon Cekala, Associate Director, on (202) 512-4050.

Contents

	Page
OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENTS	
• JOINT TRAINING AND EXERCISE ISSUES.	1
• DOD/SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS IN USING LESSONS-LEARNED INFORMATION.	1
• NAVY MINE WARFARE.	1
• C-5 AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONAL RELIABILITY.	2
• SURVEY OF U.S. FORCES' CAPABILITY TO SURVIVE AND OPERATE IN A CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT.	2
• CHANGES IN MILITARY READINESS SINCE 1990.	2
• DOD STRATEGY FOR TRAINING SIMULATIONS.	3
<i>New</i> • IMPCT OF HIGH PERSONNEL TEMPO ON READINESS.	3
<i>New</i> • READINESS AND SUSTAINABILITY OF COMBAT AIR POWER.	3
<i>New</i> • SURVEY OF THE IMPACT OF FREQUENT PERSONNEL ROTATION POLICIES.	4
PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS	
• DO RACIAL DISPARITIES EXIST IN THE MILITARY.	4
• RETENTION BONUSES FOR MILITARY SERVICEMEMBERS.	4
SUPPORT CAPABILITIES	
• DOD DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT PROCESS.	5
• ARE SHIPS OPERATED BY CONTRACTORS FOR THE NAVY BEING PROPERLY REPAIRED, MAINTAINED, AND CREWED?.	5
• MAINTENANCE AND STORAGE OF AMMUNITION IN THE UNITED STATES.	5
• GLOBAL REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS AND EQUIPMENT FOR USE IN THE DEMINING OF LANDMINES AND OTHER UNEXPLODED ORNANCE.	6
• ACCURACY OF DATA USED IN DETERMINING SPARE PARTS REQUIREMENTS AND BUDGET REQUEST.	6
• HRA 7: REQUIREMENT COMPUTATIONS FOR AIRCRAFT ENGINE PARTS.	6
<i>New</i> • REVIEW OF DOD'S ABILITY TO ACCESS RESERVE VOLUNTEERS TO SUPPORT PEACETIME OPERATIONS.	7
<i>New</i> • HOW CAN THE SERVICES IMPROVE THEIR WARTIME MEDICAL CAPABILITIES TO BEST MEET POST-COLD WAR REQUIREMENTS?.	7
<i>New</i> • EVALUATION OF THE REASONABLENESS OF THE MODELS USED BY EACH OF THE SERVICES FOR DETERMINING THE APPROPRIATE WARTIME FORCE LEVEL FOR MEDICAL PERSONNEL.	7
<i>New</i> • DOD MILITARY HOUSING POLICIES, PRACTICES, AND ALTERNIVES.	8
OPERATIONAL BUDGETS	
• FY1996 O&M BUDGET REQUESTS FROM THE ARMY, NAVY, AIR FORCE, AND DEFENSE AGENCIES.	8
OTHER ISSUE AREA WORK-MO&C	
• WHITE HOUSE STAFF USE OF HELICOPTERS.	8
• GOVERNMENT AIRCRAFT: OBSERVATIONS ON TRAVEL BY SENIOR OFFICIALS.	9
<i>New</i> • SURVEY OF MILITARY AVIATION ACCIDENTS.	9

Military Operations & Capabilities

OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

TITLE: JOINT TRAINING AND EXERCISE ISSUES (703041)

BACKGROUND : The Persian Gulf War and other contingencies in recent years highlighted the growing importance of joint operations. Yet, studies of those conflicts revealed major shortcomings in the ability of the armed forces to conduct joint operations.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What is the scope and value of DOD's joint training? (2) Has DOD effectively managed joint training activities? (3) What actions have been taken and what further actions are needed to improve joint training?

TITLE: DOD/SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS IN USING LESSONS-LEARNED INFORMATION (703048)

BACKGROUND : Military operations and exercises provide an opportunity for the JCS and the services to assess the performance and capabilities of their forces. Moreover, this experience results in lessons-learned information that can be used to correct training and doctrine deficiencies. This assignment parallels a recently issued report on Army lessons learned.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Have JCS and the services developed and implemented lessons-learned systems that effectively capture, analyze, and disseminate information from training exercises and operations? (2) Do JCS and the services have effective follow-up processes to address major, recurring weaknesses, to include development of corrective action programs?

TITLE: NAVY MINE WARFARE (703077)

BACKGROUND : Desert Storm highlighted major problems with the Navy's capability to detect and disarm enemy mines. As a result, DOD proposed significant changes to enhance that capability. While initial indications are that the Navy has stepped up investments in development and acquisition of mine warfare ships and fleet training, little is known about how effective these changes have been.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What is the current mine countermeasures mission and how has the Navy reassessed its requirements to meet this mission? (2) How capable is the Navy to meet the mine countermeasures mission? (3) What steps is the Navy taking to address those areas where it is not mission ready?

Military Operations & Capabilities

OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

TITLE: C-5 AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONAL RELIABILITY (703080)

BACKGROUND : War plans call for the C-5 to deliver 30% of airlifted cargo. The Air Force received its first C-5A in 1969 and the C-5B starting in the mid 1980s. The C-5 is maintenance intensive, with the numbers of aircraft in depot increasing and mission capable rates falling over the years. Such low C-5 availability could affect our wartime airlift capabilities.

KEY QUESTIONS : 1. What is the status of the C-5's reliability, maintainability, and performance? 2. What is the impact on strategic airlift capability if the C-5 fleet is not as ready or as capable as assumed? 3. What actions/programs are planned or needed, at what cost, to improve the readiness of the C-5 fleet?

TITLE: SURVEY OF U.S. FORCES' CAPABILITY TO SURVIVE AND OPERATE IN A CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT (703082)

BACKGROUND : U.S. security is threatened by weapons of mass destruction--especially chemical and biological (CB) agents being developed by countries that may not respond to traditional deterrence approaches. U.S. capability to confront these weapons during the Gulf War was poor and still remains questionable. Also, the adequacy of DOD's guidance, doctrine, and training is unclear.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What are the CB threats facing U.S. forces? (2) Is DOD structured to deal with developing CB threats and problems in defending against CB agents? (3) Do policies/doctrine/training programs help ensure troop survivability in CB warfare? (4) Does detection/ protection/decontamination equipment meet combat needs?

TITLE: CHANGES IN MILITARY READINESS SINCE 1990 (703083)

BACKGROUND : There are concerns in Congress that declining defense budgets are increasing the potential for a return to the days of "hollow forces" that prevailed during the 1970s. Our recently completed work (code 703014) focused on assessing the adequacy of current indicators for measuring readiness and determining whether there are other indicators that can predict readiness change.

KEY QUESTIONS : What do key readiness indicators show when applied to military forces today as compared with a baseline period that represents a high state of readiness?

Military Operations & Capabilities

OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

TITLE: DOD STRATEGY FOR TRAINING SIMULATIONS (703092)

BACKGROUND : Congress has supported the increased use of simulations for military training but has expressed concerns about independent and sometimes duplicative simulation efforts by the services. Independent development has led to extraordinary efforts to tie together service models for joint exercises that have had questionable results.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Do simulations realistically portray a valid joint operational environment for training? (2) Is DOD effectively coordinating emerging programs to avoid overlap and duplication? (3) Is DOD effectively managing short-term and long-term simulation investments?

TITLE: IMPCT OF HIGH PERSONNEL TEMPO ON READINESS (703096)

BACKGROUND : In the midst of reduced forces and defense budgets U.S. forces are being called upon for operational contingencies that cut into time available for training needed to hone traditional combat skills. Moreover, with greater numbers of missions and fewer personnel, the frequency and length of deployments away from home have resulted in morale and other personnel problems.

KEY QUESTIONS : Our objectives are to determine (1) the frequency and length of deployments away from home for U.S. forces over the past 5 years, (2) how increased personnel tempos have affected the readiness of early deploying and follow-on forces, and (3) options for restricting participation of early deploying forces in peacetime operations.

TITLE: READINESS AND SUSTAINABILITY OF COMBAT AIR POWER (703099)

BACKGROUND : With the demise of the Soviet Union, DOD is faced with significant cutbacks in defense spending. This job will compliment our ongoing job which is assessing DOD's combat air power and will address readiness and sustainability of combat air power.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What do the readiness indicators show as the readiness of aircraft such as F-15s, F-16s, F-14s, F/A-18s, AV-8Bs, Apaches, and support aircraft such as tankers? (2) What is the supportability of these aircraft, i.e. do they have needed spare parts, etc.? (3) Are there differences in the readiness and sustainability of combat aircraft versus combat support aircraft?

Military Operations & Capabilities

OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

TITLE: SURVEY OF THE IMPACT OF FREQUENT PERSONNEL ROTATION POLICIES (703101)

BACKGROUND : The services frequently rotate active duty members into and out of units for various reasons and spend about \$1.5 billion a year on permanent change of station (PCS) moves. Force downsizing raises questions about the impact frequent rotations may have on unit readiness and training. With smaller budgets, questions arise about incurring large PCS costs just for rotations.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What is the impact of downsizing and reduced U.S. forward presence on the frequency and costs of personnel rotations? (2) How have such rotations impacted unit integrity, readiness, and training? (3) What are the alternatives to current rotation policies that would preserve unit readiness and lower costs?

PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS

TITLE: DO RACIAL DISPARITIES EXIST IN THE MILITARY (703054)

BACKGROUND : The Ranking Minority Member of the House National Security Committee asked GAO to examine DOD's efforts to ensure an equal opportunity (EO) environment. In particular, we are examining DOD's efforts to detect apparent racial disparities and address them through affirmative action.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) How adequate are the services' analyses of EO data? (2) How adequate are the services' affirmative action plans in addressing apparent racial disparities? (3) Are OSD and the services' management oversight and tracking systems adequate to ensure EO throughout the military?

TITLE: RETENTION BONUSES FOR MILITARY SERVICEMEMBERS (703074)

BACKGROUND : Retention bonuses such as Selective Reenlistment Bonuses are authorized for categories of personnel in short supply. Preliminary data indicates that in some cases retention bonuses are being paid to non-shortage categories of personnel.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What are the rules and methods for determining bonus eligibility? (2) Are the bonuses being targeted to shortage categories? (3) To what extent are categories receiving both exit and retention bonuses? (4) To what extent are bonuses given in categories with fill rates of 90% or higher and what justifications are used in these cases?

Military Operations & Capabilities

SUPPORT CAPABILITIES

TITLE: DOD DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT PROCESS (703055)

BACKGROUND : The Ranking Minority Member of the House National Security Committee asked GAO to evaluate the services' discrimination complaints processes. In particular, we are examining the services' efforts to establish systems for resolving discrimination complaints without fear of reprisal.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What are the services' discrimination complaint processes? (2) What is the frequency and nature of complaints? What are the results? (3) Do complainants experience reprisal after filing complaints?

TITLE: ARE SHIPS OPERATED BY CONTRACTORS FOR THE NAVY BEING PROPERLY REPAIRED, MAINTAINED, AND CREWED? (703061)

BACKGROUND : Recent audit work regarding contractor-operated, Navy-chartered tankers revealed numerous serious operating, repair, maintenance, and crewing problems affecting the performance of these ships before, during, and after Desert Shield/Storm. There are indications that these problems are more widespread than the tankers.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Does the Military Sealift Command have effective controls to ensure that (a) operating contractors do the repair and maintenance work required by the contract, (b) crew contractor personnel have appropriate background checks and security clearances, (c) operating contracts make use of best practices to maximize government savings, and (d) payments are justified?

TITLE: MAINTENANCE AND STORAGE OF AMMUNITION IN THE UNITED STATES (703064)

BACKGROUND : The wholesale ammunition stockpile consists of items essential to the operation of a unit or a weapon system, including peacetime needs and war reserve requirements. Amounts to be retained should provide reasonable quantities to support the number of weapon systems in use. Quantities on hand that exceed these needs are to be withdrawn from the active inventory.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Can the wholesale ammunition stockpile meet wartime readiness requirements? (2) Will the Army's plan to improve stockpile management and readiness materialize? (3) Does the stockpile contain excess or unneeded ammunition items? (4) Is the stockpile manager meeting the needs of customers?

Military Operations & Capabilities

SUPPORT CAPABILITIES

TITLE: GLOBAL REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS AND EQUIPMENT FOR USE IN THE DEMINING OF LANDMINES AND OTHER UNEXPLODED ORNANCE (703066)

BACKGROUND : The HASC is interested in global demining equipment and R&D for use in operations other than war. In May the Senate learned that buried mines and other unexploded ordnance (UXO) in 62 countries annually kill or maim over 40,000 people many of which are children. The detection and removal of UXO is important to peacekeeping and humanitarian initiatives and to BRAC- related cleanups.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What are the best or most cost-effective demining techniques, technologies, and research and development efforts worldwide? (2) What are the respective or projected costs for each? (3) Where and how are these efforts managed and coordinated, both domestically and internationally?

TITLE: ACCURACY OF DATA USED IN DETERMINING SPARE PARTS REQUIREMENTS AND BUDGET REQUEST (703086)

BACKGROUND : A recently completed assignment showed that many errors were in the database used to determine spare parts requirements. Because this database is also an integral part of the budget determination process, the validity of the budget request for spare parts is questionable.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) How extensive are the database errors? (2) What is the effect of these errors on item requirements and the budget requests?

TITLE: HRA 7: REQUIREMENT COMPUTATIONS FOR AIRCRAFT ENGINE PARTS (703094)

BACKGROUND : For FY 1995, the F-100 engine used on F-15 and F-16 aircraft accounted for 30 percent of the Air Force's \$1.8 billion budget for aircraft spares. The F-100 engine recently underwent major changes to increase engine life and overhaul intervals. Failure to properly consider these changes in computing requirements can result in excess inventories or shortages affecting readiness.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Are buy and repair requirements for F-100 engine parts based on accurate, up-to-date maintenance factors? (2) If not, what is the impact on funding and readiness? (3) Does the Navy have similar engines that have recently undergone major changes and account for a large share of their 1996 spares budget?

Military Operations & Capabilities

SUPPORT CAPABILITIES

TITLE: REVIEW OF DOD'S ABILITY TO ACCESS RESERVE VOLUNTEERS TO SUPPORT PEACETIME OPERATIONS (703097)

BACKGROUND : The U.S. military strategy gives the Reserve Component (RC) broad duties in potential post-Cold War operations. However, access to RC forces is limited to volunteers, except for a Presidential call-up or national emergency. Thus, DOD officials are expanding existing voluntary programs and considering incentives to encourage more reservists to volunteer for operations other than war.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Have the services been successful in obtaining volunteers with the skills and training to meet operational demands? (2) Which existing systems have been most effective in ensuring access to volunteer reservists with needed skills? (3) What potential incentives should be considered to increase the effectiveness of reserve support for peacetime operations.

TITLE: HOW CAN THE SERVICES IMPROVE THEIR WARTIME MEDICAL CAPABILITIES TO BEST MEET POST-COLD WAR REQUIREMENTS? (703104)

BACKGROUND : In response to problems identified during Operation Desert Shield/Storm, DOD issued a Medical Readiness Strategic Plan (MRSP) in March 1995. The plan includes 42 recommendations for improving wartime medical capabilities. The services and the joint staff also have major initiatives underway to redefine medical requirements based on new combat scenarios.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) How reasonable was DOD's methodology for developing the MRSP and for identifying future medical demands? (2) Will implementation of the MRSP and the reengineering programs meet future medical demands? (3) Have the services developed a coordinated approach to providing combat medical care so that joint resources may be more efficiently utilized?

TITLE: EVALUATION OF THE REASONABLENESS OF THE MODELS USED BY EACH OF THE SERVICES FOR DETERMINING THE APPROPRIATE WARTIME FORCE LEVEL FOR MEDICAL PERSONNEL (703105)

Military Operations & Capabilities

SUPPORT CAPABILITIES

TITLE: DOD MILITARY HOUSING POLICIES, PRACTICES, AND ALTERNATIVES (703106)

BACKGROUND : DOD seeks to provide active-duty military personnel with access to adequate, affordable housing. At a cost of \$7 billion annually, the department meets this requirement through cash allowances paid to members for private-sector housing or direct assignment of members to government-owned or leased housing.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Is DOD meeting congressional guidance for providing adequate housing for military personnel? (2) How do DOD's military housing policies and practices affect readiness, force morale, and retention? (3) Do housing alternatives exist to reduce costs without lowering military quality of life?

OPERATIONAL BUDGETS

TITLE: FY1996 O&M BUDGET REQUESTS FROM THE ARMY, NAVY, AIR FORCE, AND DEFENSE AGENCIES (703091)

BACKGROUND : This assignment is our annual scrub of the services' O&M budget requests. The principal customers will be the House and Senate Authorizing and Appropriations Committees and the House Budget Committee.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Are the amounts requested justified? (2) What documentation is available to support the amounts requested? (3) Have the services communicated changes to the budget requests since the requests were developed about 18 months before being submitted?

OTHER ISSUE AREA WORK-MO&C

TITLE: WHITE HOUSE STAFF USE OF HELICOPTERS (703079)

BACKGROUND : As a result of news reports of White House staff using the President's helicopter to go golfing, GAO was requested to review the policy and procedures for authorizing use of the helicopters.

KEY QUESTIONS : 1. What was the frequency of helicopter use by the White House staff between 1/21/93 through 05/24/94 (excluding use by the President and Vice President)? 2. What policies and procedures were in place to approve the staff's use of helicopters during the above time frame?

Military Operations & Capabilities

OTHER ISSUE AREA WORK-MO&C

TITLE: GOVERNMENT AIRCRAFT: OBSERVATIONS ON TRAVEL BY SENIOR OFFICIALS (703095)

BACKGROUND : GAO and the IG's have reported on abuses of DOD and civilian administrative aircraft since the early 1970's. OMB and GSA have issued stronger regulations and guidance concerning the justification and use of government aircraft to transport senior civilian and military personnel. Abuses continue to be reported in the press--leading to this request.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Is the number of existing government aircraft excessive to DOD requirements to support the current military strategy? (2) How were DOD and civilian agencies' aircraft used by senior level officials during fiscal years 1993, 1994 and 1995 (through February 28, 1995)? (3) Do the rules and regulation governing the use of these aircraft need to be revised?

TITLE: SURVEY OF MILITARY AVIATION ACCIDENTS (703108)



