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**National Security
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Active Assignments**

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Foreword

This report was prepared primarily to inform Congressional members and key staff of ongoing assignments in the General Accounting Office's National Security Analysis 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 Richard Davis, Director, on (202) 512-3504; or Jess Ford, Associate Director, on (202) 512-4268.

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ROLES AND MISSIONS

TITLE: CLOSE-FIRE SUPPORT ROLES AND FUNCTIONS (701013)

BACKGROUND : All four military services are planning to execute expensive, autonomous close-fire support modernization programs, despite changes in the threat and reductions in overall force structure, without consideration of the complimentary capabilities that exist in other systems within an individual military service or in other military services.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Do current close fire support capabilities collectively fulfill war-fighting mission needs? (2) In setting research, development, and acquisition priorities for close fire support systems, to what extent does the Department of Defense jointly assess and oversee the military services' requirements determination process? (3) Are the military services' modernization programs for close support systems justified?

TITLE: SURVEY OF THEATER INTERDICTION (701039)

BACKGROUND : Currently all four military services' air components perform theater interdiction, and other assets may increasingly contribute in the future. Due to threat changes and force reductions commensurate with declining defense budgets, there may be a need to realign and consolidate service theater interdiction responsibilities and capabilities.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What are the opportunities to reduce or eliminate the services' excessive overlap and duplication of theater interdiction capabilities? (2) What are the options for addressing shortfalls in theater interdiction capabilities? (3) How affordable are service plans to modernize and acquire future theater interdiction capabilities?

TITLE: HOW CAN U.S. COMBAT AIR POWER BE RESTRUCTURED AND MODERNIZED TO PROVIDE AN AFFORDABLE AND EFFECTIVE FORCE? (701040)

BACKGROUND : Military services rely heavily on combat air power, with the acquisition, operation, and support of these forces roughly projected to consume over \$70 billion in FY 1994.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) How can the roles and functions of U.S. air power be best accomplished? (2) How can combat air power be restructured to achieve a more affordable, efficient, and effective force? (3) How should air power be modernized to provide needed capabilities? (4) How can DOD improve its management of air power training and support functions and infrastructure?

ROLES AND MISSIONS

TITLE: ROLE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN DETERRENCE (701047)

BACKGROUND : The role of nuclear weapons in deterrence during the Cold War was primarily directed against the former Soviet Union's nuclear weapons capabilities. Deterrence remains part of our national security strategy, but it is evolving given the changed threat environment, arms control agreements, and efforts to prevent weapons proliferation.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What is the role of nuclear weapons, and for what purposes would they be used? (2) What are the U.S. inventory and projected requirements? (3) How/where are they stored and readiness maintained? (4) What types of costs are associated with nuclear weapons? (5) What is the status of GAO's 9/92 findings on the strategic triad? (6) What are the alternatives to nuclear weapons?

TITLE: TRAINING OF U.S. FORCES FOR PEACE OPERATIONS (701054)

BACKGROUND : The frequency and scope of U.S. forces' involvement in peace operations have increased in recent years. To the extent these operations differ from combat, many believe that specialized training is needed. A 1994 Presidential Decision Directive required the services to include peace operations in their training. The Bottom-Up Review and the DOD IG also indicated the need for training.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What skills and training are required for peace operations? (2) What training is provided to prepare U.S. forces for peace operations? (3) Are U.S. forces ready for peace operations in terms of effective training and necessary weapons and equipment? (4) How much retraining for combat is necessary after a peace operation?

TITLE: ARMY/MARINE CORPS PROGRAM TO DEVELOP A LIGHT-WEIGHT TOWED 155MM HOWITZER (701070)

BACKGROUND : The Army and Marine Corps are developing a light-weight 155mm towed howitzer. The new howitzer is being justified as a replacement for a heavier howitzer, which is difficult to move and maintain. The Army and Marine Corps expect to procure about 1100 of these weapons at a cost of about \$1.2 billion.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Why is a lighter-weight howitzer needed? (2) Will the M198 towed howitzer currently in use be able to meet its projected service life? (3) Will the proposed light weight howitzer meet Army and Marine Corps mobility and range requirements?

ROLES AND MISSIONS

TITLE: COMBAT AIR POWER COMMAND AND CONTROL WARFARE ROLES, CAPABILITIES, AND FUNDING (707075)

BACKGROUND : All four services conduct command and control warfare (C2W) to enhance their air combat effectiveness by reducing the enemy's capabilities to plan, direct, and control military operations. Due to threat changes, force reductions, and declining budgets, there may be a need to realign and consolidate air combat C2W responsibilities and capabilities.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What roles do each service have in the combat air power C2W area? (2) What assets and capabilities are available to conduct C2W and what are the plans to modernize C2W capabilities? (3) To what extent do the services' C2W roles, assets, and capabilities overlap?

FORCE STRUCTURE

TITLE: REVIEW OF DOD'S BACKUP AIRCRAFT REQUIREMENTS (701024)

BACKGROUND : The tactical aviation force is being reduced to about 2,230 fixed-wing combat aircraft. In addition to that base force, "backup" aircraft are procured and maintained for training, testing, replacement for maintenance, and peacetime losses. Prior DOD and GAO studies have noted that the criteria used to determine the number of backup aircraft should be validated.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Why has the relative number of aircraft grown? (2) Why have recommendations on the criteria not been fully acted on? (3) How many excess aircraft have been removed from inventory? Are there more opportunities for achieving the force level objective? (4) Can maintenance funds be more effectively used to improve combat force readiness?

TITLE: THE SERVICES' AERIAL REFUELING REQUIREMENTS (701041)

BACKGROUND : Aerial refueling enhances the utility of military aircraft. It extends their range and allows greater flexibility in their employemnt. While each service has provided its own unique refueling assets, Air Force tankers successfully refueled Navy and Marine aircraft during Operation Desert Storm. This is one of the jobs in NSIAD's plan to address the "four" air force issue.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Are the services' refueling assets adequate to meet emerging security requirements? (2) Are there alternatives to current systems and procedures that can provide needed aerial refueling capabilities? (3) Are there options to reduce overlap and duplication among the services' refueling capabilities while maintaing the ability to provide effective support?

FORCE STRUCTURE

TITLE: NAVY SURFACE COMBATANT SHIP FORCE STRUCTURE ISSUE AND OPTIONS (701044)

BACKGROUND : By 1999, the Navy plans to have 114 active cruisers and destroyers and 10 reserve frigates. It intends to continue building DDG-51s while keeping its 124-ship force level through retirement of its oldest, less-capable combatants. Although smaller in size, the active force will have a larger percentage of higher-capability, more expensive ships than Cold War levels.

KEY QUESTIONS : Does the Navy's planned mix and number of surface combatants provide an affordable and effective force structure, and are there more affordable options?

TITLE: SERVICE EFFORTS TO REORGANIZE FORCE STRUCTURE (701046)

BACKGROUND : In drawing down its force structure, the Air Force has reduced the number of aircraft in each wing. Without a corresponding reduction in wing organizations and associated infrastructure, reducing wing size could increase the per aircraft operating, maintenance and support costs without enhancing capability.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What are the operational and combat capability enhancements resulting from reduced wing sizes? (2) What are the cost implications of the Air Force operating its forces in smaller wing sizes? (3) Does the Air Force have feasible alternatives for operating its aircraft in larger, more economical wing sizes?

TITLE: REVIEW OF NATIONAL GUARD DIVISIONS AND ENHANCED BRIGADES (701052)

BACKGROUND : National Guard combat forces consist of primarily 8 divisions and 15 separate brigades. The brigades will reinforce active divisions under extreme circumstances. DOD plans to enhance these brigades to meet wartime requirements. The divisions have no wartime missions. These divisions could be a source of personnel, equipment, and funding for the brigades.

KEY QUESTIONS : 1)What are the state and federal roles, missions, and funding needs for the 8 Guard divisions and 15 separate brigades? 2)How are these 15 brigades being "enhanced" to accomplish their wartime missions? 3)Are there alternative ways to organize the structure the 8 divisions to better achieve state and national missions and support the brigades?

FORCE STRUCTURE

TITLE: ROLE AND AFFORDABILITY OF DOD'S PLANNED BOMBER FORCE (701053)

BACKGROUND : DOD's Bottom Up Review and Heavy Bomber study concluded that heavy bombers will play an important role in future conventional conflicts while continuing to have a nuclear mission. DOD plans to keep 182 B-52, B-1B, and B-2 bombers in the force structure. Congressional committees have raised concerns about the number, types and associated costs of these bombers.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) How did DOD determine the number and types of bombers needed to support nuclear and conventional missions? (2) What is the Air Force's operational concept for using bombers and what assumptions guide the concept? (3) What will it cost to keep the bombers in the force and to modify them to use precision guided munitions?

TITLE: ARMY PLANS TO IMPLEMENT DOD'S BOTTOM-UP REVIEW FORCE STRUCTURE (701065)

BACKGROUND : The Army will soon complete its drawdown to 495,000 active Army troops. The drawdown has mostly affected combat and combat support units. It has also affected overhead units which consume about 28 percent of active endstrength but some have questioned if the Army's planned allocation is the most efficient and effective way to support the bottom-up review strategy.

KEY QUESTIONS : 1. How is active endstrength allocated between deploying units versus overhead units? 2. How much progress has the Army made in drawing down overhead units? 3. Could reserve components or civilians perform some functions currently provided by active forces? 4. Are there alternative ways of structuring active forces to eliminate imbalances and better support DOD's strategy?

BUDGET AND AFFORDABILITY

TITLE: COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF THE NAVY'S USE OF NUCLEAR-POWERED AIRCRAFT CARRIERS AND SUBMARINES (701030)

BACKGROUND : The Defense Appropriations Act of 1994 Conference Report directs the Comptroller General to study the cost effectiveness to the Navy of the utilization of nuclear powered aircraft carriers.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Are nuclear ships cost effective? (2) What are the life cycle costs of nuclear and conventional aircraft carriers? (3) What are the costs of maintaining continuous presence in three overseas regions, with and without a Japanese homeport, using conventional or nuclear carriers? (4) What DOD and DOE programs relate to naval propulsion?

BUDGET AND AFFORDABILITY

TITLE: AFFORDABILITY OF NAVY AND MARINE CORPS EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR OVER-THE-HORIZON (OTH) CAPABILITY (701031)

BACKGROUND : The Subcommittee is concerned about the Marine Corps' capability to conduct amphibious operations and the affordability of the equipment the Marine Corps will need in the future. In an era of declining defense budgets, it is critical that the affordability of these programs be considered at an early date.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What is the Marine Corps' capability to conduct amphibious operations for the rest of the decade? (2) What are the adequacy and readiness of the equipment now available for these operations? (3) Will the Navy and Marine Corps be able to afford the equipment they need to meet their future operational plan for amphibious operations?

TITLE: ANALYSIS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM (FYDP) (701055)

BACKGROUND : This is a continuing assignment. The objective is to develop and use methodology to review the DOD budget and FYDP. Both are voluminous and difficult to analyze. Continued effort is needed to analyze them to provide useful analytical data for internal NSIAD Issue Area staff use and for use by the Armed Services, Appropriations, and Budget Committees.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What analyses of the DOD budget and FYDP can be undertaken annually to provide meaningful insight into DOD programs? (2) How best can our analyses of the voluminous amount of data in these documents be accomplished? (3) What do these documents indicate about future trends in defense programs?

TITLE: TESTIMONY CONCERNING THE FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM AND THE BOTTOM UP REVIEW (701060)

BUDGET AND AFFORDABILITY

TITLE: REVIEW OF DOD STUDY ON THE HISTORY OF WEAPONS PROCUREMENT, "ANATOMY OF DECLINE" (701061)

BACKGROUND : "Anatomy of Decline", a study sponsored by DOD PA&E, examines 30 years of weapons procurement data derived from past and present editions of the Future Years Defense Program. The study concludes the data show a systematic bias to underestimate costs and overestimate production quantities. As a result, DOD procures fewer systems, at higher unit costs, with available resources.

KEY QUESTIONS : The requestors asked us to examine the following issues: 1) Are the procurement data valid? 2) Do the data demonstrate the systematic bias concluded in the study?

TITLE: COMPARISON OF DOD'S FY 1996-01 FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM (FYDP) TO LAST YEARS FY 1995-99 FYDP (701062)

BACKGROUND : Last year we reported that DOD used optimistic planning assumptions to include more programs in its Future Years Defense Program (FYDP) than proposed future budgets could support. This year we have been requested to compare the new FYDP with the last to determine what program adjustments have been made and the implications of those adjustments.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What have been the significant program adjustments to the FY 1996 FYDP when compared to the 1995 FYDP? (2) What are the implications of these adjustments? (3) Does the FYDP comply with the requirements of section 221 of title 10 of the U.S. Code.

TITLE: ANALYSIS OF MILITARY PERSONNEL COMPENSATION ACCOUNT (701064)

BACKGROUND : DOD has requested \$68.7 billion for fiscal year 1996 for pay and allowances to military personnel. This represents about 28 percent of DOD's budget request of \$246 billion. The Military Personnel Appropriation Account has grown to be the second largest of DOD's appropriation accounts.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What components make up the Military Personnel Compensation Account? (2) How are the budgets for each of those components derived? (3) What are the budgetary trends for each of those components and are those trends in line with force projections?

National Security Analysis

BUDGET AND AFFORDABILITY

TITLE: THE RELIABILITY OF DOD'S INCREMENTAL COSTS FOR CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS (701068)

BACKGROUND : For the past several years, DOD has been reporting incremental costs associated with its participation in contingency operations, including peace operations. To cover these costs, DOD often requests supplemental appropriations.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What are the methodologies by which DOD identifies its incremental costs for contingency operations? (2) To what extent are these methodologies accurate and valid? (3) What steps does DOD take to ensure that only incremental costs are identified? (4) How reliable are the reported incremental costs? (5) To what extent are requests for supplemental appropriations accurate?

INTELLIGENCE

TITLE: REVIEW OF SELECTED INTELLIGENCE AGENCY PERSONNEL PRACTICES (701048)

BACKGROUND : Due to reasons of national security, intelligence agencies such as the CIA, DIA, and NSA are exempt from selected personnel practices such as whistle blower protections, merit systems protection boards, and General Service pay schedules. In lieu of these standard federal practices, the agencies have developed their own personnel systems.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Are the EEO and AA exemptions granted to CIA, DIA, and NSA warranted on the basis of national security? (2) How do these agencies' programs compare to others in the federal government?

TITLE: INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS SUPPORTING THE NAVY'S NEW ATTACK SUBMARINE PROGRAM (701057)

BACKGROUND : DOD's Bottom Up Review (BUR) considered two alternatives for maintaining the capacity to build the Navy's nuclear submarines: Shutdown, then restart production later in the decade; and bridge production by building a third Seawolf. The BUR opted to complete the third SSN 21 (Seawolf) at Electric Boat in order to maintain two nuclear capable shipyards.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What is the Navy's intelligence assessment of the present and future Russian submarine threat? (2) How does the Navy's assessment compare to assessments prepared by the DIA or other intelligence agencies? (3) What has DIA done to fulfill its role as a "validator" of the Navy's assessment, and what scrutiny do either estimates receive at the JCS or OSD level?

OTHER ISSUE AREA WORK-NSA

TITLE: GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ACQUIRING, CLASSIFYING, RETAINING, AND DISPOSING OF OFFICAL GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS (701034)

BACKGROUND : Congressman Schiff requested information from DOD on a balloon crash that reportedly happened in Roswell, New Mexico, in 1947. He was directed to the National Archives which said the information did not exist. He asked GAO to examine the policies and procedures in DOD and other government agencies on the handling, retention, and disposition of official government records.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) What regulations govern the inspection, reporting, and disposing of documents concerned with air vehicle crashes? (2) Have these regulations changed over the past several years? (3) How have these regulations been administered?

TITLE: REVIEW OF DOD'S VALIDATION OF BOTTUM UP REVIEW ASSUMPTIONS (701072)

BACKGROUND : DOD's 1992 mobility requirements study (MRS) recommended lift and repositioning improvements. DOD's bottom-up review (BUR) endorsed the MRS and added repositioning. Changes from BUR and delays in MRS program prompted DOD to review mobility requirements. DOD updated the MRS in March 1995. GAO has reported on problems with the initial MRS and BUR assumptions.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Did DOD's MRS update assumptions provide a reasonable basis for DOD's conclusions and recommendations reached?; (2) What is the impact of alternative assumptions, such as those of warfighting commands, on mobility requirements; (3) Could DOD's requirements be met more effectively and/or savings be achieved with different alternatives?

TITLE: EVALUATION OF DOD AIR SUPERIORITY MISSION (707074)

BACKGROUND : This assignment is a part of the plan for assessing U.S. combat air power. The Air Force, Navy, Marines, and Army perform air superiority functions with aircraft, missiles, other ordnance and equipment. Because of threat changes, force reductions, and declining defense budgets, there may be a need to realign and consolidate service responsibilities.

KEY QUESTIONS : (1) Are there opportunities to reduce or eliminate overlap of the services' air superiority roles and/or capabilities? (2) Are existing force structures properly aligned to carry out National Policy? (3) Are service modernization plans affordable? (4) Are there alternative means for providing the existing and future planned capabilities?


