



Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-05-687](#), a report to the Honorable David R. Obey, Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives

Why GAO Did This Study

Following the end of the Cold War, the Department of Defense (DOD) significantly reduced its purchases of small and medium caliber ammunition and reduced the number of government-owned plants that produce small and medium caliber ammunition. Since 2000, however, DOD's requirements for these types of ammunition have increased notably.

Because the success of military operations depends in part on DOD having a sufficient national technology and industrial base to meet its ammunition needs, you asked GAO to review DOD's ability to assess if its supplier base can meet small and medium caliber ammunition needs. Specifically, we (1) identified changes over the past several years that have increased the requirement for small and medium caliber ammunition, (2) assessed the actions DOD has taken to address the increased requirement, and (3) determined how DOD plans to ensure that it can meet future small and medium caliber ammunition needs.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is making recommendations aimed at strengthening DOD's ability to implement its plan and ensure accountability.

In commenting on a draft of this report, DOD concurred with GAO's recommendations and provided information on its planned steps to implement them.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-05-687.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Ann Calvaresi-Barr at (202) 512-4281 or calvaresbarra@gao.gov.

DEFENSE AMMUNITION

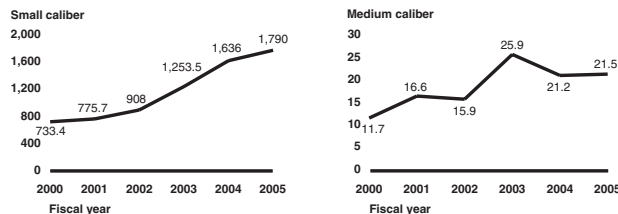
DOD Meeting Small and Medium Caliber Ammunition Needs, but Additional Actions Are Necessary

What GAO Found

DOD's increased requirements for small and medium caliber ammunition over the past several years are largely the result of increased weapons training requirements needed to support the Army's transformation to a more self-sustaining and lethal force—an effort accelerated after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001—and the deployment of forces to conduct recent U.S. military actions in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Between fiscal years 2000 and 2005, total requirements for small caliber ammunitions more than doubled, from about 730 million to nearly 1.8 billion rounds, while total requirements for medium caliber ammunitions increased from 11.7 million rounds to almost 22 million rounds.

Total Small and Medium Caliber Requirements, Fiscal Years 2000 to 2005 (in millions of rounds)



Source: PEO for Ammunition data, GAO analysis.

DOD has initiated several steps to meet the increased demand, including funding about \$93.3 million for modernization improvements at the three government-owned ammunition plants producing small and medium caliber ammunition. DOD is currently able to meet its medium caliber requirement through modernization efforts at the government-owned ammunition plants and through contracts with commercial producers. The government-owned plant producing small caliber ammunition cannot meet the increased requirements, even with these modernization efforts. Also, commercial producers within the national technology and industrial base have not had the capacity to meet these requirements. As a result, DOD has had to rely at least in part on foreign commercial producers to meet its small caliber ammunition needs.

DOD has taken steps to ensure that the national technology and industrial base can meet future small caliber ammunition needs by building flexibility into the acquisition system to address fluctuations. In addition, a planning process has been put in place to ensure that the base can respond to longer-term DOD ammunition needs, including small and medium caliber ammunition. While the process is ongoing, information to effectively implement the plan and timely performance measures to ensure accountability are lacking.