



Highlights of [GAO-10-602](#), a report to the Subcommittee on Readiness, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives

Why GAO Did This Study

The Army is concurrently implementing several major force structure and basing initiatives, including Base Realignment and Closure, Grow the Force, and Army Modularity. The resulting large increase in personnel associated with these initiatives at many installations has required and will continue to require significant facility planning and construction to meet needs.

GAO was asked to (1) describe the Army's investment in domestic facilities to meet the needs associated with the initiatives; (2) determine the extent to which the Army's facility planning systems are complete, current, and accurate; and (3) assess whether stationing information has been provided to installations far enough in advance to permit facility planning and acquisition to accommodate arriving personnel. To address these objectives, GAO reviewed relevant documentation; analyzed budget documents, information from Army planning systems, and facility criteria standards; visited installations; and interviewed relevant officials.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is recommending improvements to the Army's facility planning systems and actions to improve communication and timeliness of stationing information provided to affected installations. DOD concurred with all of GAO's recommendations.

[View GAO-10-602 or key components.](#)
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DEFENSE INFRASTRUCTURE

Army Needs to Improve Its Facility Planning Systems to Better Support Installations Experiencing Significant Growth

What GAO Found

For fiscal years 2006 through 2015, the Army plans to have spent about \$31 billion to meet domestic installation facility needs associated with the personnel increases resulting from several major force structure and infrastructure initiatives. This investment will reduce facility shortages at the affected installations, but some shortages will still exist for certain types of facilities, including tactical vehicle maintenance facilities and battalion and company headquarters. The Army estimates that it could cost an additional \$19 billion to eliminate the shortages. Yet, without these buildings, the Army will continue to rely on legacy facilities that often do not meet current Army standards or use relocatable facilities. The Army plans to evaluate these requirements and priorities in preparing future budget requests.

The systems used by the Army to determine the number, type, and size of facilities needed to accommodate forces stationed at domestic installations have not always produced reliable results for some types of facilities because the systems have often relied on data that are not complete, current, or accurate. GAO examined the criteria system for 62 essential facility types and found that the system did not include the Army's current standard design criteria for 51 of the 62 facilities. Without current criteria embedded into the facility planning systems, the systems cannot help planners accurately calculate facility requirements. Additionally, GAO found that the automated calculations that produce facility allowances—a baseline for determining facility requirements—were questionable in several cases, such as producing a requirement for 74 baseball fields for Fort Bragg. Moreover, because the information from the planning systems is used to identify facility shortages and support budget decisions, incomplete, out-of-date, or inaccurate data could adversely affect management decisions about the construction and renovation of facilities.

The Army has not always provided installation planners with information on stationing actions far enough in advance to allow the installations to prepare the permanent facilities necessary for arriving personnel. Army guidance recommends 5 years' lead time for submitting stationing packages for approval that require new construction; however, the size of ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, which has led to an increase in the movement of Army personnel, has made this difficult. For example, GAO found cases where installations were informed of stationing decisions with less than a year's notice, which installation officials said was far less time than needed to prepare the required facilities. As a result, new facilities have not always been available for arriving units and installations have had to employ interim measures, such as using relocatable facilities or using sustainment funds to build facilities, which, in turn, could result in needed sustainment work going unmet. GAO also found that installations were not always being notified when proposed stationing actions had been delayed or canceled, potentially leading to funds being wasted on unnecessary preparations.