



Highlights of [GAO-10-585](#), a report to the Subcommittee on Readiness, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives

## Why GAO Did This Study

The Navy's depots provide critical maintenance support to operations around the world. The Department of Defense's (DOD) increased reliance on the private sector for depot maintenance support coupled with downsizing led to a deterioration of depots' capabilities and cost increases. In 2007, the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) directed each service to submit a depot maintenance strategic plan and provided direction for the content of those plans. The 2007 *U.S. Navy Depot Maintenance Strategic Plan* contained a separate plan for each of five functional areas and an executive summary. GAO used qualitative content analyses to determine the extent to which two of the plans address (1) elements of a results-oriented management framework and (2) OSD's direction for the plan's content. GAO examined the plans for Navy aviation (NAVAIR) and ships (NAVSEA), which account for 94 percent of Navy depot workload.

## What GAO Recommends

GAO is recommending that the Navy revise its plans to fully address all elements of the framework and all Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics (OUSD [AT&L])–directed issues, demonstrate linkages in future strategic plans, and implement oversight procedures for reviewing future plan revisions and plan implementation. DOD concurred with our recommendations.

View [GAO-10-585](#) or [key components](#). For more information, contact Jack Edwards at (202) 512-8246 or [edwardsj@gao.gov](mailto:edwardsj@gao.gov).

## DEPOT MAINTENANCE

### Improved Strategic Planning Needed to Ensure That Navy Depots Can Meet Future Maintenance Requirements

#### What GAO Found

While the Navy's plans for aviation and shipyard depot maintenance focus efforts on weapon system and equipment availability, they do not fully address the elements of a results-oriented management framework. GAO's prior work has shown that seven elements of a results-oriented management framework are critical for comprehensive strategic planning. The NAVAIR and NAVSEA plans both fully address one of the elements by including mission statements that summarize their depots' major functions and operations, but the plans partially address or do not address the other six elements. For example, even though the plans describe goals for the depots' mission-related functions, they do not specify interim milestones or time frames for achieving the goals. Additionally, the plans include some measurable warfighter support metrics to gauge progress toward achieving the NAVAIR and NAVSEA plans' long-term goals; however, the plans do not describe how these metrics directly correspond to each long-term goal, desired levels for each, or how they will be used to evaluate each goal. Further, the Navy does not have an integrated Navy-wide depot maintenance strategic plan, but instead uses an overarching executive summary that does not have clear linkages to the separate plans and has the weaknesses resulting from the separate plans' missing or limited information on some elements. The NAVAIR and NAVSEA plans do not fully address these concerns because of weaknesses in oversight. Although OSD established an oversight body, which included senior representatives from OSD and the services, to review the services' plans, this body did not review the plans. Also, the Navy did not establish an oversight mechanism to review its plans. The plans' weaknesses may limit the Navy's ability to use its plan as a tool to meet future challenges effectively and efficiently.

In addition, the NAVAIR and NAVSEA plans are not fully responsive to OSD's direction to the services that was designed to provide the services with a framework to meet future challenges. OSD directed the services to address 10 specific issues in four general areas: logistics transformation, core logistics capability assurance, workforce revitalization, and capital investment. Both plans partially address 8 of these issues and do not address the remaining 2. For example, both plans discuss management approaches for integrating public- and private-sector depot sources, but the plans are silent with regard to integrating joint, interservice, or multinational depot capabilities. The plans do not discuss the methods for estimating the amount of workload or the projected effects on depot workload caused by weapon system retirements and locating weapon systems at specific installations. The plans do not fully respond to OSD's direction for the plans' content in part because of weaknesses in oversight in both OSD and the Navy. As a result, these weaknesses could additionally limit the Navy's efforts to posture and resource its depots to meet future maintenance challenges.