
May 1996

National Security Analysis Issue Area Plan

Fiscal Years 1996-98



Foreword

As the investigative arm of Congress and the nation's auditor, the General Accounting Office is charged with following the federal dollar wherever it goes. Reflecting stringent standards of objectivity and independence, GAO's audits, evaluations, and investigations promote a more efficient and cost-effective government; expose waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement in federal programs; help Congress target budget reductions; assess financial information management; and alert Congress to developing trends that may have significant fiscal or budgetary consequences. In fulfilling its responsibilities, GAO performs original research and uses hundreds of databases or creates its own when information is unavailable elsewhere.

To ensure that GAO's resources are directed toward the most important issues facing Congress, each of GAO's 35 issue areas develops a strategic plan that describes the significance of the issues it addresses, its objectives, and the focus of its work. Each issue area relies heavily on input from congressional committees, agency officials, and subject-matter experts in developing its strategic plan.

The National Security Analysis issue area covers programs of the Department of Defense (DOD), the individual military services, and other supporting defense agencies. GAO's work in the National Security Analysis issue area focuses on roles and functions of the military services, force structure, budget and affordability, and the activities of the intelligence community. The principal issues we cover are the following:

- the military services' roles and functions and how they can best be accomplished,
- the effectiveness and affordability of DOD's planned force structure,
- the extent to which planned defense budgets are affordable and consistent with national security priorities, and
- the extent to which the intelligence community is adequately addressing the changed threat and new requirements.

Our planned work will emphasize the issues of force structure and budget and affordability. In the pages that follow, we describe our key planned work.

Foreword

Because events may significantly affect even the best of plans, our process allows for updating the plan and provides the flexibility to respond quickly to emerging issues. If you have any questions or suggestions about this plan, please call me at (202) 512-3504.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Davis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent underline under the name "Davis".

Richard Davis
Director
National Security Analysis

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Table I: Key Issues

| Issue | Significance |
|---|---|
| Roles and functions: What roles and functions should U.S. military forces fulfill and how can they best be accomplished? | During the Cold War, the services spent billions of dollars developing costly, overlapping capabilities. Efforts to reduce or eliminate overlapping capabilities are becoming more important as DOD seeks to identify funds that can be shifted to support force modernization. |
| Force structure: Are DOD's restructuring plans likely to produce an affordable and effective force? | The Congress continues to be concerned about the adequacy of DOD's planned force structure. There is likely to be a major reassessment of the nation's national security strategy and military needs in 1997. |
| Budget and affordability: Are budgets for national security programs affordable and consistent with security priorities? | There is a widespread concern in the Congress that planned defense budgets are inadequate to support the planned military force and that defense budgets may be insufficient to fund planned modernization. |
| Intelligence: Is the U.S. intelligence community adequately addressing the changed threat and new requirements? | The United States spends tens of billions of dollars each year on intelligence programs, most of which were developed during the Cold War years. The intelligence community is undergoing major changes under its new director. |

Table I: Key Issues

| Objectives | Focus of work |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate the changing role of U.S. forces in carrying out new missions.• Assess DOD's process for identifying needed changes in service roles and functions.• Identify opportunities for greater specialization or consolidation of key combat functions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunities to better adapt air power to the changing national security environment within reduced defense budgets• Implementation of the recommendations on roles and functions made by the Commission on Roles and Missions and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess whether the force structure is properly shaped to support warfighting requirements.• Assess the active/reserve force mix.• Evaluate options for meeting changing requirements for forward presence.• Assess DOD's requirements for nuclear forces and evaluate alternative force structure options. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Composition of active forces• Size and role of reserve forces• DOD's forward presence requirements• Future U.S. nuclear posture |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate affordability of DOD's proposed programs.• Assess whether DOD's budgets are based on accurate data and realistic assumptions.• Assess whether DOD's financial plan and budget execution match its priorities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Affordability of defense programs within planned defense budgets• Budgetary analysis of infrastructure, personnel, and operation and maintenance accounts• Comparison of spending plans, military deficiencies, and stated defense priorities |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determine whether unnecessary duplication exists between intelligence organizations and programs.• Evaluate the accuracy of intelligence estimates used to support force structure and weapon acquisitions.• Assess the role of intelligence agencies in supporting new missions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistency of force structure and weapons needs with threat estimates• Intelligence support for peace operations |

Table II: Planned Major Work

| Issue | Planned major job starts |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Roles and functions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capping report encompassing the results of our six comprehensive cross-service reviews of combat air power to offer opportunities for improved matching of assets to requirements • Evaluations of selected DOD reviews stemming from the Commission on Roles and Missions report |
| Force structure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of alternatives for providing overseas presence^a • Individual reviews of Air Force, Army, and Navy planned distribution of personnel among combat, support, and other activities^a • Assessment of the savings in force structure that might be achieved by introducing selected technological innovations • Evaluation of how DOD uses computer modeling in assessing the adequacy of force structure • Adequacy of current force structure to support the deployment of forces to implement the Bosnia peace accord • Evaluation of an anticipated reevaluation of the National Security and Military Strategies |
| Budget and affordability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of infrastructure costs in the Future Years Defense Program^a • Compilation and costing of GAO options for reducing DOD's infrastructure^a • Comparison of fiscal years 1996 and 1997 Future Years Defense Programs • Continuing analysis of costs and funding to conduct peace operations^a • Analysis of selected appropriations accounts (operation and maintenance, military personnel, research and development) |
| Intelligence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews of selected intelligence programs as congressional interests dictate |

^aOngoing jobs

Table III: GAO Contacts

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|----------|---------------|----------------|
| Director | Richard Davis | (202) 512-3504 |
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