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MILITARY TRAINING

Actions Needed to Enhance DOD's Program to Transform Joint Training



G A O

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Highlights of [GAO-05-548](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

U.S. forces are conducting more complex operations, requiring increased interoperability between the military commands, services, and other organizations. Department of Defense (DOD) planning guidance calls for transforming military training by increasing the jointness in training. The overall intent of DOD's Training Transformation Program is to assure commanders that forces deployed to their theater are not experiencing joint operations for the first time. Therefore, the program's strategic goals focus on providing joint training that meets commanders' needs and links to readiness assessments. Given the significant investment planned in the program and the impact it will have on the military, this report provides a program overview, including (1) DOD's overall management approach and status of key initiatives, and (2) some significant management challenges that have emerged early in the program's implementation.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that DOD assess its efforts to communicate and coordinate with stakeholders, and elevate outreach efforts to include the senior leadership of non-DOD organizations. GAO also recommends that DOD use its established Joint Training System process to determine all joint training requirements. In written comments, DOD generally agreed with GAO's recommendations.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-05-548.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Janet St. Laurent at (202) 512-4402 or stlaurentj@gao.gov.

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Actions Needed to Enhance DOD's Program to Transform Joint Training

What GAO Found

Currently in its early implementation stages, DOD expects its Training Transformation Program to be fully operational by 2009, when it has established a robust network of training capabilities that are integrated throughout the department to provide enhanced joint individual and unit training focused on combatant commanders' needs and linked to readiness assessments. Thus far, the department has established program accountability and authority by assigning senior leadership management and oversight roles and responsibilities. DOD has also established three training transformation initiatives designed to prepare individuals, units, and staffs for joint operations and to provide enabling tools and processes to carry out missions. The initiatives are being developed incrementally, wherein each initiative matures through the "build a little, test a little" philosophy. DOD plans to complete its first program assessment later this year.

Two significant challenges that have emerged early and will require continued focus include:

- (1) Establishing effective partnerships with program stakeholders via comprehensive communication and coordination to gain their full participation and buy-in to achieve training transformation goals. DOD has taken positive steps to communicate and coordinate with these stakeholders, which include DOD's combatant commanders, services, and training commands, as well as representatives from the Federal departments, agencies, and organizations that comprise the national security interagency community. However, GAO found an inconsistent understanding among some DOD stakeholders of the strategic vision and rationale behind the implementation and development pace of the initiatives. DOD has not assessed its communication and coordination efforts to determine why some stakeholders may not fully understand the overall vision. Similarly, DOD officials have been proactive in engaging external stakeholders in identifying potential joint training opportunities. However, DOD's outreach to the senior-level leadership of external organizations has been limited to date, thus risking their full commitment to future planning and implementation of joint training.
- (2) Developing joint training requirements—and the specific training tasks that support the requirements—that meet combatant command mission needs. Rather than identifying joint training tasks through DOD's established process called the "Joint Training System" that is used to translate combatant command needs into training requirements, the department is developing some joint tasks through a working group process that does not ensure widespread participation by the combatant commands' and services' representatives. As a result, the department risks developing joint training requirements that combatant commands and services may not fully support.

Both these challenges, if left unaddressed, have the potential for eroding support among program stakeholders, which in turn places the goals of the Training Transformation Program at risk.

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Abbreviations

DOD	Department of Defense
GAO	Government Accountability Office
JKDDC	Joint Knowledge Development and Distribution Capability
JAEC	Joint Assessment and Enabling Capability
JNTC	Joint National Training Capability

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United States Government Accountability Office
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Congressional Committees

As recently demonstrated in Afghanistan and Iraq, U.S. forces are conducting significantly more complex operations, requiring increased interoperability between and among the military services, combatant commands, and other Department of Defense (DOD) and non-DOD organizations. In the past, military services experienced some joint operations training during joint exercises, but most service training focused on individual service competencies with limited joint context. To successfully conduct today's joint missions, DOD's planning guidance calls for transforming military training to better enable joint force operations by increasing the level of joint context in military training. The overall intent of the department's Training Transformation Program is to assure combatant commanders that forces deployed to their theater are not experiencing joint operations for the first time. The strategic goals of training transformation are to provide joint training that is (1) focused on combatant commanders' operational requirements, and (2) linked to readiness assessments through a robust network of training capabilities that are integrated throughout the department.

The overall objective of this report is to provide an overview of DOD's Training Transformation Program and its implementation challenges, especially given DOD's plans for significant investments in the program and the impact that training transformation will have on the combatant commands and the services. Specifically, we (1) determined DOD's overall management approach and status in implementing the Training Transformation Program, and (2) identified some significant management challenges that have emerged early in the program's implementation. We prepared this report under the authority of the Comptroller General, and are addressing this report to you because of your committee's oversight in this area.

To address these objectives, we obtained and analyzed key departmentwide documents—including the Office of the Secretary of Defense's 2004 revised *Training Transformation Implementation Plan*—to identify milestones for each of three training transformation initiatives. Additionally, we met with key officials in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff, as well as officials from the combatant commands and service organizations that are affected by the Training Transformation Program's implementation. We performed our work from June 2004 to May 2005 in accordance with generally accepted government

auditing standards. Further information on our scope and methodology appears in appendix I.

Results in Brief

DOD's efforts to implement the Training Transformation Program have focused on establishing program plans and accountability, but much remains to be done to achieve full operational capability. While still in the program's early implementation stages, DOD expects, by 2009, to have established a robust network of training capabilities that are integrated throughout the department to provide enhanced joint training focused on the combatant commanders' needs and linked to readiness assessments. DOD has taken steps to establish program accountability and authority by designating an executive agent to carry out specific responsibilities and functions. DOD's approach to transforming training focuses on three initiatives designed to prepare individuals, units, and staffs for the new strategic environment, and to provide enabling tools and processes to carry out missions. These three training transformation initiatives are being developed incrementally, wherein each initiative matures through the "build a little, test a little" philosophy. The most advanced of these initiatives is focused on providing enhanced collective joint training for units or other military and defense organizations. Of the department's planned \$1.76 billion investment in training transformation for fiscal years 2003-11, \$1.48 billion has been allocated to this initiative. A second initiative is intended to enhance individual servicemember joint training while a third initiative, which has only recently begun, is focused on continually monitoring program results and identifying improvements in joint training. While a management structure for each training transformation initiative has been identified and officials have begun taking steps towards their respective initiative goals, a great deal remains to be done to achieve overall program goals.

Two significant challenges that have emerged early in DOD's Training Transformation Program include (1) establishing effective partnerships with program stakeholders through comprehensive communication and coordination and (2) developing joint training requirements that meet combatant commanders' needs. Establishing effective partnerships with DOD's combatant commanders, services, and other federal organizations is important given their key roles in planning, funding, and participating in training events. Department officials have taken some positive steps to communicate with DOD stakeholders and address this challenge; however, we found an inconsistent understanding among some stakeholders of the strategic vision and the rationale behind the implementation and development pace of the initiatives. In addition, efforts to collaborate with

the senior leadership of non-DOD organizations and obtain their full commitment to training transformation have been limited to date. Without stakeholders' full understanding and participation, DOD risks not being able to fully achieve its program goals. Furthermore, DOD is developing some joint training requirements—and the specific training tasks that support the requirements—through a working group process and not through the existing Joint Training System, DOD's established, authoritative process that translates commanders' needs into training requirements. For example, the working group identified 43 tactical tasks,¹ about half of which did not originate through the Joint Training System. Many stakeholders we spoke with expressed reservations about the validity of some of the tasks developed in this manner. As a result, the department's approach risks developing joint training requirements that combatant commands and services may not fully support.

To improve comprehensive communication and coordination, we are recommending that DOD assess the effectiveness of its efforts in this regard to facilitate stakeholders' full understanding of the Training Transformation Program's goals and initiatives. We are also recommending that, as DOD continues its outreach efforts to non-DOD organizations, it extend these efforts to include the senior leadership of these non-DOD organizations. To mitigate the risk of establishing joint training requirements that may not be fully supported by the combatant commands and services, we are recommending that DOD use the Joint Training System to establish all the training requirements at the joint tactical level, which would promote widespread participation and better opportunities for stakeholders' acceptance of the requirements. DOD generally agreed with GAO's recommendations and is planning actions to implement our recommendations.

Background

Service military training has historically focused on individual service competencies, with less emphasis on joint operations involving joint commands, other services, and emerging operations with other governmental and nongovernmental agencies and international partners. While this has allowed the services to meet their core training responsibilities, it has also contributed to forces entering combat without having had previous experience or training in joint operations. For

¹ Tactical tasks refer to combat and combat support-level activities that are normally performed by DOD service components to achieve combat objectives.

example, in Operation Iraqi Freedom, many forces had to be given some level of basic joint operations training after they had already entered the Iraqi theater of war, because they were experiencing joint operations for the first time. In a changing security environment, joint operations are becoming more important given the complex nature of military operations. Specifically, this importance is being driven by the combatant commands' need to combine the capabilities of multiple services to address the global threat as well as the growing interdependence of capabilities among the services.

Under Title 10, both combatant commanders and the military services are given the authority to determine training requirements, plan training exercises, and execute training activities. Specifically, combatant commanders oversee all aspects of military operations, joint training, and logistics using the forces assigned to them,² while the military service secretaries are generally responsible for recruiting, organizing, supplying, equipping, and training their service personnel.³ Furthermore, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff are responsible for formulating joint training policy and doctrine.⁴ The Joint Forces Command is DOD's lead in providing joint warfighting capability through joint training.

The idea to transform training in the department initially surfaced in 2001, when the department, in its 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review,⁵ recognized that training was a key to dealing with a continuously changing environment, and emphasized a need to enhance jointness and capitalize on technology advances. Defense guidance issued shortly thereafter directed the Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness, to work with the services, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the combatant commander of the U.S. Joint Forces Command to develop a plan for transforming military training that would better enable joint force operations. The department's vision for the Training Transformation Program is to provide "dynamic, capabilities-based training for DOD in

² 10 U.S.C. § 164.

³ 10 USC §§ 3013(b), 5013(b), and 8013(b).

⁴ 10 U.S.C. § 153. Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction (CJCSI) 3500.01B, *Joint Training Policy for the Armed Forces of the United States*.

⁵ The Quadrennial Defense Review is a congressionally imposed DOD effort to be conducted every 4 years to set defense strategy and goals.

support of national security requirements across the full spectrum of service, joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational operations,”⁶ and is built upon a foundation of three capabilities.

According to the 2004 *Training Transformation Implementation Plan*, these three capabilities, or initiatives, are designed to prepare individuals, units, and staffs for the new strategic environment, and to provide enabling tools and processes to carry out missions. Through these three capabilities, combatant commanders are expected to receive better-prepared forces that align with their joint operational needs.

- The Joint National Training Capability (JNTC) is expected to prepare forces by providing units and command staffs with an integrated live, virtual, and constructive training environment.⁷ This capability would add enhanced service and combatant command training that emphasizes jointness and enables global training and mission rehearsal in support of combatant command operations.
- The Joint Knowledge Development and Distribution Capability (JKDDC) is intended to prepare future decision makers and leaders to better understand joint operations and the common operational picture, as well as respond innovatively to adversaries. Program officials believe this capability will enhance existing joint individual education with newly developed courses and make these courses readily accessible through an expanded knowledge distribution network.
- The Joint Assessment and Enabling Capability (JAEC) is expected to assist leaders in assessing the value of transformational training initiatives on individuals, organizations, and processes, and link the impact of the Training Transformation Program to combatant commanders’ readiness requirements. This capability is also supposed to provide the processes and tools to continuously improve joint training.

⁶ DOD, Strategic Plan for Transforming DOD Training, March 1, 2002, p. 5.

⁷ Live training refers to live simulations involving real people operating real systems in a live environment. Virtual training involves virtual simulations using real people operating simulated systems. Constructive training refers to simulated people operating simulated systems, often referred to as war games.

DOD's Efforts Have Focused on Establishing Plans and Program Accountability, but Much Remains to be Done to Achieve Full Operational Capability

Currently in its early implementation stages, DOD expects its Training Transformation Program to be fully operational by 2009, when it has established a robust network of training capabilities that are integrated throughout the department to provide enhanced joint individual and collective training focused on the combatant commanders' needs and linked to readiness assessments. Through its 2003 *Training Transformation Implementation Plan*, the department established program accountability and authority by assigning senior leadership management and oversight roles and responsibilities. While each program initiative has focused on developing a management structure, defining joint training requirements, and developing mechanisms and networks to deliver enhanced joint training, all three still have a great deal remaining to be accomplished to meet program goals.

DOD Has Established Training Transformation Program Accountability and Authorities

In early 2003, DOD issued its first *Training Transformation Implementation Plan*, which established the basic management approach for implementing the Training Transformation Program. As part of this approach, the department has taken action to establish program accountability and authority.

The department designated the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness with overall responsibility for implementing the Training Transformation Program. Furthermore, the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Readiness has been given executive agent responsibility for training transformation planning, programming, budgeting, and execution progress. To carry out their responsibilities, these offices use three standing working groups, as follows:

- The Executive Steering Group is made up of senior executive-level officials—including four star general officers/flag officers and equivalent senior executive service civilians—and is headed by the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. In addition to high-level program execution oversight, this group, according to program officials, makes department-level policy decisions and deals with unresolved issues as it pertains to training transformation.
- Subordinate to this executive group, the Senior Advisory Group is led by the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Readiness and consists of senior-level officials, including three star general officers/flag officers and equivalent senior executive service civilians. This group, according to program officials, has directive authority and is responsible for overseeing the execution and updates to the *Training Transformation*

Implementation Plan, and the timely allocation, transfer, and execution of the program's resources.

- The Joint Integrated Process Team, being subordinate to the above two groups, serves as the primary collaborative working forum that provides input to the oversight groups and responds to their guidance. Led by the Director of Readiness and Training Plans and Policy, this team consists of senior analysts, planners, and action officers from staffs, agencies, and commands contributing to the department's Training Transformation Program.

Each of these groups has representatives from the services, the Joint Forces Command, the Special Operations Command, the Joint Staff, and a wide cross-section of department-level offices, such as the Offices of Program Analysis and Evaluation, and Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics.

DOD is employing an incremental approach to developing and implementing the Training Transformation Program, designed to reduce development cycle time and increase the speed at which advanced capabilities are delivered. According to a DOD official, DOD's approach to developing and implementing the training transformation initiatives follows a "build a little, test a little" philosophy that is unlike a more traditional development approach, where initiatives within a program are developed sequentially with planning, development, implementation, and assessment phases. Under this development approach, some elements of the three training transformation initiatives—the JNTC, the JKDDC, and the JAEC—are developed concurrently, while other elements are sequentially developed. The department's expectation is that the three initiatives will work together to successively build a training environment that meets combatant command needs in three phases. Phase 1 (2005) focuses on providing combatant commanders with a steady flow of joint-trained individuals, units, and staff. Phase 2 (2007) places an emphasis on supporting an innovative training environment for new joint operational capabilities based on combatant commanders' demands. Phase 3 (2009) will transition joint training into a real-time mission planning and rehearsal environment.

Reflective of the iterative implementation approach described above, DOD's framework for assessing Training Transformation Program performance will likewise follow the three phases of the program's development. Performance metrics are being continuously developed during each of these phases to mirror the actual development and evolution of each initiative's capabilities. Similarly, formal program

assessments using these metrics to measure training transformation's impact on joint force readiness and guide subsequent investments in training transformation capabilities will begin in 2005, at the end of Phase 1, and occur every 2 years thereafter.

The management of each of the three training transformation initiatives is carried out largely by joint management offices within each initiative's sponsoring organization. For example, the JNTC joint management office is in the Joint Training Directorate of the Joint Forces Command. These offices serve as the primary focal points for planning, program preparation, and execution of all resources and events associated with their respective training transformation capability. The joint management office directors, having the responsibility to implement their respective initiative, report directly to the organization sponsoring their initiative. Each of the joint management offices also reports to the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Readiness through the Joint Integrated Process Team. The offices are organized functionally to align with their primary goals and objectives.

Status and Funding of Training Transformation Initiatives Vary

The implementation status of each of DOD's three initiatives—the JNTC, the JKDDC, and the JAEC—varies, as program managers are intentionally staggering the rollout of the initiatives in accordance with the incremental development approach aimed at reducing development cycle time and increasing the speed at which advanced capabilities are delivered. The current and planned funding of these initiatives also reflects this development plan.

Overall, the three initiatives are designed to prepare individuals, units, and staffs for a new strategic environment that requires services and combatant commands to work together, and to provide enabling tools and processes to carry out missions. These initiatives to transform military training are expected to result in a robust network of training capabilities integrated throughout DOD that provides enhanced joint individual and collective training focused on the combatant commanders' needs and is linked to readiness assessments. Program managers designated the JNTC initiative as the leading effort to transform military training, and thus its progress is further advanced than the other two initiatives. However, officials responsible for both the JKDDC and JAEC have established a management structure and initiated a number of efforts to meet program goals.

The Joint National Training Capability

The JNTC initiative is focused on providing enhanced collective joint training for units or other military and defense organizations. During the 2002–03 time frame, a joint management office for the JNTC initiative within Joint Forces Command was established and resourced. Early JNTC efforts have been targeted at identifying and analyzing combatant commanders' joint training requirements for an enhanced joint training environment that will cut horizontally—to improve interoperability among services—and vertically—to improve joint planning and execution of training—across various components and command levels. This effort includes, but is not limited to, analyzing combatant commands' mission-essential tasks; identifying joint training requirements evolving from operational and prior training experiences; analyzing joint training required at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of operations; and setting the framework for accrediting and certifying future joint training programs and facilities.

Additionally, a considerable portion of the JNTC organization has been focused on identifying, defining, and developing the facilities and technologies necessary to develop a global joint training network that can deliver live, virtual, and constructive joint training capabilities to the services, combatant commanders, and interagency and multinational partners. In keeping with training transformation's approach to introduce capabilities more rapidly, JNTC managers working with the services during 2004 provided an early demonstration of the ability to enhance four existing exercises with live, virtual, and constructive capabilities by integrating these capabilities to improve joint horizontal and vertical training. In October 2004, the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Readiness, who has been given executive oversight responsibility for the Training Transformation Program, deemed the JNTC initiative to be operationally capable—indicating that the initial infrastructure of networked sites and systems needed to enhance the joint context of training exercises was in place. During fiscal year 2005, JNTC managers plan to incorporate this demonstrated capability in 14 additional service or combatant command exercises.

Additionally, JNTC managers expect to continue their efforts to enhance DOD's capability, increasing the level of jointness in military training by involving joint commands, other services, and federal agencies involved in current military operations. Among these efforts, JNTC managers would like to complete development of a permanent network of communications, instrumentation, and supporting infrastructure to support joint military training. JNTC managers plan to create a Web-based capability to deliver joint operational planning and mission rehearsal training. They also plan

to have the capability to conduct overseas/multinational training events by fiscal year 2007. Additionally, they plan to continue developing training requirements that support joint training at all levels, and accrediting joint training programs and certifying training facilities. The certification of DOD's training facilities relies on their ability to meet joint training needs. Although DOD's JNTC initiative is designed to enhance communication and infrastructure to better simulate a joint environment, the services continue to face challenges in maintaining training facilities to meet their own service-specific training requirements. GAO has just recently completed a review looking at the current condition of DOD's military training facilities.⁸ The report concluded that current training range facilities are deteriorating and compromise the realism essential to effective training.

The Joint Knowledge Development and Distribution Capability

The JKDDC initiative is intended to enhance individual servicemember joint training. Efforts under the JKDDC initiative have been focused on organizing a management structure, initiating a process for identifying joint individual training requirements, and establishing an organizational and technical framework for developing and distributing courses to address these requirements. In late 2003, a joint management office within the Joint Staff's Office of the Director for Operational Plans and Joint Force Development was established to manage the JKDDC initiative and oversee the development of joint individual education and training. Also, in October 2003, the JKDDC Working Group was established to begin identifying and prioritizing joint individual education and training requirements. During fiscal year 2004, the JKDDC Working Group identified 38 combatant command requirements for joint individual courseware. A key milestone for the JKDDC initiative—identifying the technologies and infrastructure needed to achieve an interim course materials distribution capability—was reached in January 2005. As of January 2005, the JKDDC initiative has developed and distributed two joint individual courses to satisfy some of the combatant commanders' initial requirements. Another 17 courses are under development.

JKDDC managers plan to continue identifying and developing joint individual education requirements and associated courseware. They also plan to develop a long-term joint individual training continuum and a global distribution capability for joint education and training that include

⁸ GAO, *Military Training: Better Planning and Funding Priority Needed to Improve Conditions of Military Training Ranges*, [GAO-05-534](#) (Washington, D.C.: June 10, 2005).

multinational and international partners. A pilot global distribution capability demonstration is planned for fiscal year 2006, with a mature joint individual training continuum expected in late 2009.

The Joint Assessment and Enabling Capability

The JAEC initiative is focused on continually monitoring program results and identifying improvements in joint training. The JAEC joint management office was established during fiscal year 2004 under the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Readiness. Most of the early efforts conducted under this initiative have been focused on planning, assessing, and developing tools and techniques that can be embedded in the other training transformation initiatives in order to provide a robust joint assessment and enabling capability. This effort has resulted in the establishment of preliminary training transformation performance assessment metrics in early 2005. The first of three formal periodic program assessments will occur from April to October 2005 and refinements to the metrics will continue to be made as this process progresses. Additionally, the JAEC joint management office is developing a process that would uniformly track joint training, education, and experience, and ensure this information can be linked to readiness assessments by 2006. Within this initiative, the Joint Chiefs of Staff has the lead for evaluating enhancements to DOD's Joint Training System⁹ to make it more user friendly and adaptable to evolving operational concepts and to complete these enhancements by 2009.

Funding of Initiatives Reflects Incremental Rollout Plans

Current and future funding also reflect the incremental development approach DOD is using to implement the program. The JNTC initiative, the leading effort for transforming military training, accounts for \$1.48 billion, or 84 percent, of the total \$1.76 billion budgeted for fiscal years 2003 through 2011. Efforts related to the JKDDC and JAEC (the trailing initiatives) are collectively budgeted for \$284.9 million. For the first time, in fiscal year 2005, all three training transformation initiatives prepared program execution plans reflecting what they expected to spend during that fiscal year, as shown in table 1.

⁹ Joint Training System is a framework used by the department's joint community to identify training requirements; develop training plans; and execute, evaluate, and assess joint training.

Table 1: Planned Fiscal Year 2005 Expenditures, by Training Transformation Initiative

Dollars in millions

Initiative	Planned fiscal year 2005 expenditures
JNTC	\$188.0
JKDDC	13.1
JAEC	12.3
Total	\$213.4

Source: DOD.

Resources to manage the Training Transformation Program come from three primary sources: (1) funding provided directly to and controlled by the services for service-specific program activities related to the JNTC initiative; (2) funding provided directly to the Joint Forces Command, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and the Joint Staff for their own training transformation activities; and (3) funding provided directly to the Joint Forces Command for distribution to the services for service-specific JNTC program activities. By providing the Joint Forces Command with this funding, the Office of the Secretary of Defense has given the command the flexibility to annually fund service activities deemed critical to the Training Transformation Program, because they contribute to meeting the goals and objectives identified in the *Training Transformation Implementation Plan*.

DOD's Training Transformation Program Faces Two Significant Management Challenges at This Time

DOD's Training Transformation Program will likely face some significant management challenges throughout its implementation. Two significant challenges that have emerged early and will require continued focus are (1) establishing effective partnerships with program stakeholders, such as the services and combatant commands, through comprehensive communication and coordination; and (2) developing joint training requirements that meet combatant commands' mission needs. Both these challenges, if left unaddressed, have the potential for eroding support among program stakeholders, which in turn places the goals of the Training Transformation Program at risk.

Establishing Effective Partnerships with Stakeholders Is a Significant Management Challenge

Establishing effective partnerships through comprehensive communication and coordination is a significant management challenge and is a key to obtaining full buy-in and commitment of internal and external program stakeholders. These include DOD's combatant commanders, services, and training commands, as well as representatives from the federal departments, agencies, and organizations that comprise the national security interagency community. Commitment from the combatant commands and services is critical in achieving the training transformation goals because they play a key role in planning and funding training events. The same commitment is necessary from non-DOD stakeholders given the changing nature of our military operations, which require more intergovernmental, interagency, and multinational partners than ever before.

Attributes inherent to transformational programs—such as program complexity and the need for stakeholders to make cultural adaptations—along with DOD's limited authority to influence external stakeholders, make communication and coordination especially difficult. Recognizing the challenge these elements pose, DOD has taken some positive steps to communicate and coordinate with training transformation internal and external stakeholders. However, we found that an inconsistent understanding of the Training Transformation Program remains among some internal stakeholders. Additionally, the department's efforts to engage senior leaders in non-DOD organizations to establish joint training requirements to collectively respond to the nation's security challenges across the full spectrum of interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational operations have been limited. These operations may include, but are not limited to, global war, humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief.

Program Attributes Make Communication and Coordination Challenging

DOD officials agree that there are several attributes in managing the Training Transformation Program that make communication and coordination with stakeholders a challenge. Officials acknowledge that their use of a rapid, incremental approach to developing and implementing the program adds a degree of complexity over traditional approaches. Moreover, DOD's decentralized management of the three program initiatives and dependencies on integration of separately led combatant command and service training initiatives introduce additional complexity. Further, encouraging stakeholders to make the cultural changes inherent to the successful implementation of governmental and defense transformational programs, such as the Training Transformation Program, generally also requires focused management attention to communication and coordination. The Training Transformation Program's call for

communication and coordination beyond DOD entities may pose an additional challenge, because of DOD's lack of direct authority over non-DOD partner organizations.

The complexity of the Training Transformation Program heightens the communication and coordination challenge. The department's choice to employ a rapid, incremental development approach provides management with a process to review, assess, adjust, and redirect actions that collectively transform training, and, according to DOD officials, is a contributing factor to the complexity of the program. Some DOD officials we spoke with referred to the development approach as a "state of constant change." Furthermore, in an effort to meet the Training Transformation Program's goals, DOD has assigned separate organizations—the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Readiness, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Joint Forces Command—to oversee development of each initiative. In addition, the ability to leverage evolving and developing technologies to deliver an integrated live, virtual, and constructive joint training environment requires the successful integration of separately led combatant command and service training initiatives. For example, the Pacific Command and its Navy component, according to command officials, are developing their own discrete training capabilities that are expected to eventually link to and enhance the JNTC. Achieving JNTC goals relies upon existing training events, led and funded by combatant commands and services. The successful linkage of these efforts will depend on continued comprehensive communication and coordination.

We have previously reported that transformational programs across government require particular attention to managing cultural change.¹⁰ Within the Training Transformation Program, we believe there are two areas where communication and coordination will play an important role towards achieving cultural adaptation. First, the training developed under the program is expected to respond to combatant commanders' capabilities-based requirements, moving away from mission-based requirements that are based on specific threats. A capabilities-based approach focuses on identifying the capabilities that U.S. forces will need

¹⁰ See GAO, *Results-Oriented Cultures: Implementation Steps to Assist Mergers and Organizational Transformations*, [GAO-03-669](#) (Washington, D.C.: July 2, 2003); and *Defense Transformation: Clear Leadership, Accountability, and Management Tools Are Needed to Enhance DOD's Efforts to Transform Military Capabilities*, [GAO-05-70](#) (Washington, D.C.: Dec. 17, 2004).

DOD Proactive in Efforts to Communicate and Coordinate with Internal Stakeholders, but Inconsistent Understanding Continues

to deter and defeat any potential adversaries, being able to respond decisively anywhere and anytime to any type of challenge. Second, training developed under the program will be “joint” in nature and will reflect the growing need for different services and commands to work together to achieve common goals. DOD acknowledges, in its *Training Transformation Implementation Plan*, that it has to balance the priority to provide the services with more joint training at the individual and service levels against the services’ priorities to train to their service-specific core competencies. The program also emphasizes training across interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational operations, which creates additional cultural challenges for program stakeholders.

DOD recognizes that program complexity and adaptation to cultural change are inherent to training transformation, and DOD has taken some positive steps to communicate and coordinate with internal stakeholders, as illustrated by the following actions:

- According to DOD officials, at program inception, DOD designated a single integrating authority under the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness with oversight responsibility to coordinate strategy within and among the training transformation initiatives, as well as into other DOD transformational efforts to achieve the desired integration.
- DOD prepares and presents the Training Transformation Program strategic plan, implementation plan, and road map at regularly scheduled working-level meetings, with the intent to update stakeholders and generate discussion. In addition, the department created an interactive program Web site containing a repository of these documents, which allows stakeholders to comment on materials directly.
- Under the leadership of the Joint Staff, the Joint Lessons Learned Program expanded the existing lessons learned concept by establishing joint lessons-learned specialists’ positions at all combatant commands and services.¹¹ The physical presence of these program specialists serves to increase the understanding of the Training Transformation Program, as well as improve the collection, analysis, and feedback processes for lessons learned.
- DOD has begun an outreach campaign with the aim of better facilitating the collection of training requirements from combatant commands and services. A Joint Forces Command official, acknowledging a need for

¹¹ The U.S. Coast Guard does not have a Joint Lessons Learned Specialist but works closely with the Joint Center for Operational Analysis and Lessons Learned to further their ability to share joint lessons.

better marketing of the JNTC, has visited with some stakeholders such as the European and Pacific combatant commands. Representatives under the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, with the intent of outreach and communicating joint integration and development issues, also visited every combatant command this past year, and intend to continue this practice on a periodic basis.

Despite DOD's efforts to communicate and coordinate with training transformation internal stakeholders, during our interviews with services headquarters and command staffs we found an inconsistent understanding among some program stakeholders regarding the strategic vision and the rationale behind the implementation and development timing of different components of the program. For example, representatives from three of the command staffs we visited viewed the JNTC as Joint Forces Command's attempt to impose additional requirements on existing service and combatant command exercises rather than providing enabling capabilities to enhance existing training exercises. Also, general consensus among all stakeholders attending the Joint Integrated Process Team meeting in December of 2004 was that they did not fully understand the Training Transformation Program's accreditation and certification processes—which are designed to ensure the joint content of military training programs and the adequacy of supporting facilities—because of the complexity of the processes as well as the lack of clear definitions during its initial implementation. In addition, stakeholders from a service headquarters and a command staff that we spoke with described the JKDDC as an initiative limited to the development of joint training courses. It appears that these stakeholders did not have a full understanding of the larger strategic vision of the initiative to leverage evolving technologies that will provide or distribute education and training needed anytime and anywhere, across the full spectrum of forces. Also, some stakeholders from two service headquarters and a command staff expressed a lack of understanding of the program managers' decision to iteratively develop the JAEC, as they develop metrics and perform assessments of the JNTC and JKDDC. In particular, some of the stakeholders associated with the JNTC and JKDDC initiatives expressed discomfort about being measured against specified outcomes when they were not initially provided with standards to measure results. We found this overall lack of understanding evident mostly at the service level, among representatives of headquarters and command staffs.

Our discussion with training transformation officials indicated that they were not specifically aware of this level of inconsistent understanding of training transformation's concepts and initiatives. However, they did

DOD Is Communicating and Coordinating with External Stakeholders, but Efforts to Engage Senior Non-DOD Leaders Have Been Limited to Date

indicate that the program's complexity and development approach could easily lead to inconsistent understanding among stakeholders. We found that they had not assessed the extent to which their communication and coordination efforts have impacted stakeholders' comprehension of the overall concept and vision of the Training Transformation Program. This lack of understanding risks not obtaining stakeholders' buy-in and commitment needed to fully implement the goals of the program.

While DOD has been proactive in engaging interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational partners in identifying common areas for potential joint training opportunities, their outreach has not yet been elevated to senior-level leadership to ensure their full cooperation. Some DOD missions—strategic defense, homeland defense, and civil support—have already been identified as potential areas where DOD could consider future training opportunities with the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of State, and the Department of Energy. Within the Training Transformation Program, the Training Transformation Interagency Intergovernmental Multinational Mission Essential Tasks effort was launched to develop capabilities and tasks for conducting broader, more inclusive joint operations, such as reestablishing order and promoting stability in other nations with multinational partners. Starting in early 2005, the department began engaging members of the external stakeholder community in collaboratively identifying tasks for conducting broader, more inclusive joint operations with interagency community partners. These efforts are mostly focused on building a task force and determining what is required for communication, cooperation, coordination, collaboration, and interoperability among the interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational partners at this time.

The most recent Training Transformation Interagency Intergovernmental Multinational Mission Essential Tasks conference, in February 2005, consisted of more than 150 operators, planners, strategists, and policy developers from 40 organizations, including different non-DOD agencies and departments across the U.S. government, as well as from the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the International Committee of the Red Cross. While the effort has significant upper-level support within DOD, the level of effort to gain support and participation among the external stakeholders' senior-level management has been limited. Some DOD officials we spoke with acknowledged that, as the effort moves forward into planning and implementation, it will require increasing levels of participation from non-DOD stakeholders. They also believe that, without equally significant support from upper-level leadership among those agencies and organizations that DOD has no direct

authority over, DOD may face challenges in maintaining a collaborative environment and successfully achieving future planning and implementation outcomes for training with those partners. The extent to which the leadership at non-DOD partner organizations is committed to defense training transformation is unknown, because of DOD's limited efforts to engage these individuals to date. DOD officials acknowledge the importance of reaching out to the leadership of external organizations and recognize that their efforts in this regard have been very limited to date.

Developing Joint Training Requirements That Meet Combatant Commands' Needs Is a Significant Challenge

Joint Forces Command's new process for developing tactical-level joint training requirements—and the specific training tasks that support the requirements—does not ensure that these tasks necessarily reflect combatant command needs nor does it ensure buy-in from internal stakeholders—combatant commanders, services, and training commands. In the past, joint training tasks were primarily focused at the command level¹² and were identified through DOD's authoritative process that built requirements by translating combatant commander inputs into training requirements. Training transformation has expanded joint training requirements to include those at the tactical level in addition to joint command-level training. The current process Joint Forces Command is using to develop these joint tactical-level tasks does not build these requirements starting with the combatant commands' analysis of training needs. Rather, the requirements are based on Joint Forces Command's analysis of perceived training deficiencies. In addition, Joint Forces Command's process for identifying and validating these tasks does not ensure widespread participation among the combatant commands and service representatives. Some internal stakeholders have expressed reservations about the validity of some recently developed joint tasks, because the tasks did not evolve through the established Joint Training System process in which they originated as combatant command requirements. Thus, DOD risks developing training requirements that may not be accepted as valid or necessary to meet combatant command training needs.

¹² Command-level training includes the operational and strategic theater levels of training which are designed to provide training to unified command and joint task force headquarters staff.

Command-Level Joint Training Requirements Rely on the Joint Training System

Since fiscal year 1994, the Joint Training System has been DOD's authoritative process for collaboratively gathering each combatant command's mission analysis and translating it into command-level training requirements that the services must include in their training events. Historically, joint training requirements have only been targeted to command-level training.

The command-level joint training tasks developed by the Joint Training System are referred to as joint mission essential tasks, and are derived from a common, universal joint task list that has been used or suggested by the combatant commands and approved by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Joint Training System is further supported by the annual worldwide joint training conference, where combatant command and service representatives discuss the list of joint mission-essential tasks to which the services must train. This collaboration ensures that the services understand what they must include in their training to meet combatant command joint training requirements.

Combatant Command and Service Representatives Have Expressed Reservations about the Validity of Some Joint Tasks

The Training Transformation Program has brought an emphasis on joint training at the tactical level in addition to the command-level tasks discussed above. Training at the tactical level was typically a service responsibility prior to training transformation. Today, however, Joint Forces Command, as directed in the *Training Transformation Implementation Plan*, develops joint tasks, which include joint tasks at the tactical level in addition to command-level tasks.

Rather than identifying joint tactical tasks directly through the established Joint Training System, whose outputs are approved by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Forces Command relies on a working group process to identify and validate these tasks.¹³ The identification of these joint training tasks is based primarily on the working group's analysis of perceived training deficiencies in combatant command and service training, rather than being based on the combatant commands' analyses of training needs. Any working group participant may submit a joint task to be considered for inclusion in future joint training, but the submission

¹³ The working group is chaired by Joint Forces Command and is composed of service, combatant command, Office of the Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), Joint Staff, and Joint Forces Command representatives, each of whom are invited to attend meetings and vote on the inclusion of specific joint training tasks into training events that meet mission requirements. Service component representatives are encouraged to participate, but are not voting members.

must be sponsored by a voting member. After a task is approved by the working group, it is validated by performing the task at one or two training events and then resubmitted to the working group for approval as a new or revised task. Throughout the working group process, service and combatant command representatives who participate have the opportunity to voice concerns regarding any of the candidate joint tasks. For example, the Joint Forces Command working group approved 43 joint tasks in October 2004 that they believe the services should include in their training to meet combatant command training requirements. Of these joint tasks, 21 of them (49 percent), as identified by one service command, were new tactical-level tasks that had not been previously identified through the existing Joint Training System, and as such have not been derived from a combatant command's mission analysis.

Although combatant command representatives are invited to attend working group meetings, the working group process does not ensure the same level of widespread participation that the established Joint Training System achieves, and Joint Forces Command risks developing training requirements that lack widespread combatant command and service support. Representatives from service commands and combatant commands staff with whom we spoke expressed reservations about the validity of tasks developed in this manner, because they did not come from the Joint Training System, which systematically builds requirements based on combatant commanders' needs, nor were they vetted through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the services, and the combatant commands. Combatant commands' representatives said that they have provided little input into the original development of the tasks identified by the Joint Forces Command's working group to date. Because of the process used, they questioned how many of these joint tasks actually reflect the combatant commands' training needs.

Conclusions

The Training Transformation Program is a multifaceted effort that touches nearly everyone associated with the joint training community. With complex initiatives being developed and employed at various stages of maturity, comprehensive communication and coordination are critical to establish effective partnerships. Until DOD assesses its approach to communicating and coordinating training transformation initiatives and takes additional steps to ensure full understanding among joint training stakeholders at all levels—from combatant commands to services, and from headquarters to training commands—DOD risks not building the effective partnerships necessary to gain stakeholders' buy-in and commitment to fully implement training transformation. This lack of

understanding of the complexities and potential benefits associated with the training transformation initiatives would likely impair DOD's efforts to enhance joint training that will enable troops to better carry out combatant commanders' missions.

The department's transformation effort also encompasses the way training can be integrated with all levels of government as well as with allies and coalition partners. Enhanced coordination at interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational levels will promote increased cooperation, more rapid response, and the ability to conduct seamless operations. Although senior leadership support for this effort exists within DOD, in the absence of a targeted effort to ensure equally significant senior leadership support from non-DOD agency and organization partners, DOD is at risk of not being able to maintain a collaborative environment with its external stakeholders and to implement interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational training outcomes successfully.

The department has an established, authoritative process to develop joint training requirements in the Joint Training System, which relies on the combatant commands to align training requirements with their assigned missions. By not fully utilizing this system to develop the training requirements to support the JNTC component-based, tactical-level joint training, DOD may risk the services and combatant commands not fully accepting these training requirements as valid. If such requirements are not embraced as combatant command-generated training requirements, the services and combatant commands may not completely support the need to enhance joint training at the tactical level, thus potentially underutilizing the capability being developed by the JNTC.

Recommendations for Executive Action

To promote effective partnerships and mitigate the risk of implementing Training Transformation Program components that are not fully supported by the combatant commands, services, and other federal agencies, we are recommending that the Secretary of Defense take the following three actions:

- direct the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to assess the effectiveness of their communication and coordination efforts of the training transformation initiatives and take additional steps to enhance stakeholders' understanding of the program's goals and initiatives;

-
- direct the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to elevate outreach efforts to senior leadership within non-DOD agencies and organizations to ensure these stakeholders' full understanding, buy-in, and commitment; and
 - direct the Joint Forces Command to use the Joint Training System to establish all training requirements at the joint tactical level in order to promote widespread participation and better opportunities for stakeholders' acceptance of the requirements.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

In written comments on a draft of this report, DOD concurred with our first two recommendations and partially concurred with the third. DOD concurred with our recommendation that the Secretary of Defense direct the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to assess the effectiveness of their communication and coordination efforts of the training transformation initiatives and take additional steps to enhance stakeholders' understanding of the program's goals and initiatives. DOD stated that in addition to its continued effort to communicate and coordinate through Training Transformation Joint Integrated Process Team, the Senior Advisory Group and Executive Steering Group, it will be placing Joint Forces Command personnel within key Service and Combatant Command training organizations to improve understanding of training transformation. Additionally, DOD stated it would evaluate the effectiveness of the program's overall communication and coordination in its first and subsequent assessments of the training transformation program.

DOD also concurred with our recommendation that the Secretary of Defense direct the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to elevate outreach efforts to senior leadership within non-DOD agencies and organizations to ensure these stakeholders' full understanding, buy-in, and commitment. In its response, DOD stated that an initiative led by the Office of the Secretary of Defense (Policy) will address this recommendation by the end of fiscal year 2006.

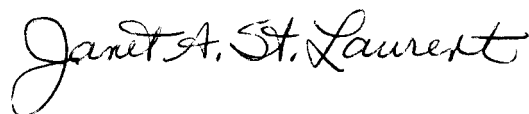
DOD partially concurred with our recommendation that the Secretary of Defense direct the Joint Forces Command to use the Joint Training System to establish all training requirements at the joint tactical level in order to promote widespread participation and better opportunities for stakeholders' acceptance of the requirements. DOD stated that the Joint Forces Command uses the Joint Training System to develop its Joint Training Plan as required by DOD directive. Nevertheless, DOD also acknowledged that GAO is correct in its assessment that some joint training requirements may not be documented in the Joint Training System or recognized by some users of the Joint Training System. In this regard, they further stated that USJFCOM has been directed to submit these

training requirements that are derived from joint tactical tasks for inclusion in the Joint Training System and that the Joint Staff consider them in future updates.

We agree with DOD's comments concerning Joint Forces Command's role and responsibilities in developing training requirements. However, we continue to believe that the services' and combatant commands' commitment and ownership of these tactical training tasks would be enhanced if they originated from the combatant commands' annual training needs analysis, which is an integral part of the Joint Training System, and not just included in the system after the fact. As stated in our report, if such requirements are not embraced as combatant command-generated training requirements, the services and combatant commands may not completely support the need to enhance joint training at the tactical level, thus potentially underutilizing the capability being developed by the joint national training capability.

We are sending copies of this report to the Secretary of Defense, Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, and the Commander, U.S. Joint Forces Command. We will also make copies available to others upon request. In addition, the report will be available at no charge on the GAO Web site at <http://www.gao.gov>.

Should you or your staff have any questions regarding this report, please contact me at (202) 512-4402. Key contributors to this report are listed in appendix III.



Janet St. Laurent, Director
Defense Capabilities and Management

Congressional Committees

The Honorable John Warner
Chairman
The Honorable Carl Levin
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate

The Honorable Duncan L. Hunter
Chairman
The Honorable Ike Skelton
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives

Appendix I: Scope and Methodology

To determine DOD's overall management approach and status in implementing the Training Transformation Program, we reviewed relevant DOD plans, policies, guidance, and other documents pertaining to training transformation. We discussed training transformation issues with a variety of officials at DOD, service headquarters offices, several combatant commands, and other stakeholders that are involved with the Training Transformation Program (see table 2). Specifically, we did the following:

- To determine the DOD's overall management approach in implementing the Training Transformation Program, we reviewed key documentation related to the management responsibilities, development approach, status of each initiative, and resource allocation among the three initiatives.
- To determine the DOD's overall status in implementing the Training Transformation Program, we conducted interviews with key officials supporting each initiative.
- To better understand the roles, responsibilities, and funding profiles within the Training Transformation Program, we reviewed and analyzed key documentation, including the Office of the Secretary of Defense's 2004 revised *Training Transformation Implementation Plan*, the 2003 *JNTC Implementation Plan*, the September 2004 DOD directive on military training, and available program execution plans prepared by the joint management offices from fiscal years 2002 through 2005.

Table 2: Organizations and Locations Included on This Assignment

Organization	Locations
Army	Headquarters, Army Collective Training Division, Washington, D.C. Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Monroe, Va.
Air Force	Headquarters, Air Force Operational Training Division, Washington, D.C. Air Combat Command, Langley Air Force Base, Va. Air Education and Training Command, Randolph Air Force Base, Tx.
Coast Guard	Headquarters, Office of Workforce Performance, Training and Development, Washington, D.C.
Marine Corps	Headquarters, Marine Corps Training and Education Command, Quantico, Va.
Navy	Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Ranges and Fleet Training Branch, Washington, D.C. Chief of Naval Operations, Director of Naval Education Training (N00T), Human Performance and Acquisition Assessment Division, Arlington, VA Fleet Forces Command, Norfolk, Va.
Special Operations	U.S. Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.
Joint Organizations	The Office of the Secretary of Defense, Force Transformation, Washington, D.C. The Office of the Secretary of Defense, Readiness and Training Policy and Programs, Washington, D.C. - Joint Assessment and Enabling Capability Joint Management Office, Alexandria, Va. - Readiness Programming and Assessment, Washington, D.C. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D.C. - Operational Plans and Joint Force Development Directorate, Washington, D.C. - Joint Knowledge Development and Distribution Capability Joint Management Office, Alexandria, Va. U.S. Central Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. U.S. Joint Forces Command, Norfolk, Va. - Joint National Training Capability Joint Management Office, Suffolk, Va. - Joint Training Directorate and Joint Warfighting Center, Suffolk, Va. U.S. Pacific Command, Hawaii - U.S. Army Pacific, Hawaii - U.S. Marine Corps Forces Pacific, Hawaii - U.S. Pacific Air Forces, Hawaii - U.S. Pacific Fleet, Hawaii - U.S. Special Operations Command Pacific, Hawaii

Source: GAO.

To identify significant management challenges that have emerged early in the program’s implementation, we again reviewed relevant DOD plans, policies, guidance, and other documents pertaining to training transformation and interviewed many of the same officials indicated in

table 2. We reviewed and analyzed some additional key documents, including DOD's 2003 *Military Transformation: A Strategic Approach*, the 2002 *Strategic Plan for Transforming DOD Training*, the 2003 *Transformation Planning Guidance*, the 2004 *Training Capabilities Analysis of Alternatives Final Report*, various Joint Integrated Process Team briefs, and prior GAO reports. To better understand some of the management challenges, we attended meetings of the JKDDC working group, the Joint Integrated Process Team, and the Training Transformation Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational Mission Essential Tasks Task Force. We also obtained and reviewed all the minutes from the working groups and task force meetings that we attended. Additionally, to assess the challenge in developing joint training requirements that met combatant commands' mission needs, we obtained a list of approved joint tasks developed by the Joint Forces Command working group and solicited feedback from combatant command and service representatives.

We performed our review from June 2004 through May 2005 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

Appendix II: Comments from the Department of Defense



PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301-4000



6 June 2005

Janet A. St. Laurent
Director, Defense Capabilities and Management
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Ms. St Laurent:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) draft report GAO-05-548, "MILITARY TRAINING: Actions Needed to Enhance DOD's Program to Transform Joint Training," dated May 4, 2005, (GAO Code 350525).

Let me first take this opportunity to applaud the collaborative approach utilized by the GAO Review Team. This approach contributed greatly to the success of this review and certainly is a testament to their professionalism.

DoD appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft report. Our review found it to be well written and we concur with Recommendations #1 and #2 and partially concur with Recommendation #3. Detailed comments on the GAO recommendations and report are enclosed.

Sincerely,

Paul W. Mayberry
Deputy Under Secretary of Defense
Readiness

Enclosure:
As Stated



GAO DRAFT REPORT – DATED May 4, 2005
GAO CODE 350525/GAO-05-548

"MILITARY TRAINING: Actions Needed to Enhance DOD's Program
to Transform Joint Training"

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS
TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense direct the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) to assess the effectiveness of their communication and coordination efforts of the training transformation initiatives and take additional steps to enhance stakeholders' understanding of the program's goals and initiatives. (Pages 24/GAO Draft Report)

DOD RESPONSE: CONCUR. The Department will continue its proactive Training Transformation (T2) communication, coordination, and outreach strategies through the T2 Joint Integrated Process Team, the Senior Advisory Group, the Executive Steering Group and Joint Staff-sponsored Combatant Command "Hub-trip" forums. Additional actions include; in FY06, many Joint National Training Capability (JNTC) events will transition from centralized USJFCOM planning and execution to decentralized planning and execution by Service and Combatant Command nominated training programs. They will be assisted by strategically placed USJFCOM "Support Elements" starting in FY05. The decentralization of JNTC planning and execution and the placing of USJFCOM personnel within key Service and Combatant Command training organizations should contribute to improved understanding of T2, to the include the accreditation and certification processes, among services headquarters, command staffs and the supported training organizations.

We will also direct the Joint Assessment and Enabling Capability (JAEC) to assess the effectiveness of our overall communication, coordination, outreach strategies on T2 stakeholders beginning with the FY05 Block Assessment and in following assessments planned at two year intervals.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense direct the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) to elevate outreach efforts to senior leadership within non-DoD agencies and organizations to ensure these stakeholders' full understanding, buy-in, and commitment. (Page 24/GAO Draft Report)

DOD RESPONSE: CONCUR. Training Transformation Interagency Intergovernmental Multinational Mission Essential Tasks initiative lead by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) and sponsored by T2 is on track to address this recommendation no later than the end of FY06.

RECOMMENDATION 3: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense direct the Joint Forces Command to use the Joint Training System to establish all training requirements at the joint tactical level in order to promote widespread participation and better opportunities for stakeholders' acceptance of the requirements. (Page 24/GAO Draft Report)

DOD RESPONSE: PARTIALLY CONCUR. USJFCOM is in fact utilizing the JTS process to develop its Joint Training Plan which is applicable to its subordinate components and commands. Additionally, DoD Directive 1322.18 provides the necessary direction on the use of the Joint Training System. Paragraph 4.4 of this document states; "The Joint Training System (JTS) shall be used to manage training throughout the Department of Defense." However, at issue in Recommendation #3 is how USJFCOM is generating training requirements within the Requirements Phase of the JTS.

The Joint Training System (JTS) provides a common approach that helps joint force commanders identify and evaluate their training needs, plan and schedule training events. The JTS process consists of four phases; the Requirements Phase, the Plans Phase, the Execution Phase and the Assessment Phase. The documents that form the written framework of the Joint Training System are: *Joint Training Policy* (CJCSI 3500.01B), *Joint Training Manual* (CJCSM 3500.03A), and the *Universal Joint Task List* (CJCSM 3500.04C).

USJFCOM develops its training requirements from four primary sources:

1. Training requirements and shortfalls identified by the combatant commanders.
2. Identification of joint warfighting shortfalls (that can be mitigated via training) through review of lessons learned reports from the Joint Center for Operational Analysis/Lessons Learned and the five Service lessons learned centers.
3. Joint warfighting shortfalls identified by Joint Agencies.
4. Joint warfighting shortfalls identified by the Services.

USJFCOM's requirements generation process weights heavily on Combatant Command inputs. They are derived directly via on site visits and training objective workshops completed by USJFCOM J7, reviews of combatant command documents such as their Integrated Priority Lists (IPLs) and Joint Training Plans, Joint Mission Essential Task Lists (JMETLs), the Defense Readiness Reporting System (DRRS), and feedback from exercises conducted by the combatant commands.

DoD Directive 1322.18 *Military Training*, Paragraph 5.9.3 directs USJFCOM to "Annually collect all Combatant Commanders' Joint Mission Essential Tasks (JMETs), including tasks for allocated and apportioned forces. Develop a master JMETL with baseline conditions and standards validated by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Direct the training of assigned forces to this master JMETL."

Finally, the 2004, DepSecDef approved, *Training Transformation Implementation Plan* tasks the Joint Force Trainer (USJFCOM J7) to "...identify JNTC [Joint National Training Capability] specific combatant commander training requirements for active and Reserve components" and to

“...routinely integrate warfighter operational and training requirements into the USJFCOM Training Plan development process.”

However, the GAO has correctly pointed out, that the potential exists, that some USJFCOM joint training requirements (derived from Joint tactical level tasks developed in a collaborative working group, and not presently documented in the *Universal Joint Task List* (CJCSM 3500.04C)) may not be recognized amongst the larger JTS user community.

In summary, USJFCOM is utilizing the JTS and there is clear direction for them to direct the training of assigned forces based upon the Combatant Commander JMETS and specific Combatant Commander training requirements. However, for those training requirements that are based upon Joint tactical tasks not documented in the Joint Training System’s *Universal Joint Task List* (CJCSM 3500.04C) we have directed USJFCOM to submit these tasks to the Joint Staff J7 (the OPR for the UJTL). The Joint Staff will include the proposed new tasks in future update cycles of the UJTL in order to vet them in their coordination process, with the objective of incorporating them within the written framework of the JTS. USJFCOM submitted the first set of tasks to the Joint Staff on 10 May 2005.

Appendix III: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contact

Janet St. Laurent, (202) 512-4402

Acknowledgments

In addition to the person named above, Laura Durland, Fred Harrison, Marie Mak, Todd Dice, Gwyneth Blevins, Jonathan Clark, and R.K. Wild also made major contributions to this report.

Related GAO Products

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Military Training: DOD Report on Training Ranges Does Not Fully Address Congressional Reporting Requirements. [GAO-04-608](#). Washington, D.C.: June 4, 2004.

Military Transformation: Clear Leadership, Accountability, and Management Tools Are Needed to Enhance DOD's Efforts to Transform Military Capabilities. [GAO-05-70](#). Washington, D.C.: December 17, 2004.

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