



Highlights of [GAO-06-745](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

The Army considers its modular force transformation its most extensive restructuring since World War II. Restructuring units from a division-based force to a modular brigade-based force will require an investment of over \$52 billion, including \$41 billion for equipment, from fiscal year 2005 through fiscal year 2011, according to the Army.

Because of broad congressional interest in this initiative, GAO prepared this report under the Comptroller General's authority and assessed (1) the Army's progress and plans for equipping modular combat brigades, (2) progress made and challenges to managing personnel requirements of the modular force, and (3) the extent to which the Army has developed an approach for assessing the results of its modular conversions and the need for further changes to designs or implementation plans.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that the Army develop and submit to Congress information about its modular force equipping strategy, personnel initiatives, and plans for assessing implementation progress. DOD generally agreed with three recommendations but disagreed to develop and provide to Congress risk assessments and evaluation plans. GAO added a matter for congressional consideration because it believes these actions are needed to improve accountability and transparency.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-745.

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.

FORCE STRUCTURE

Army Needs to Provide DOD and Congress More Visibility Regarding Modular Force Capabilities and Implementation Plans

What GAO Found

The Army is making progress in creating active and National Guard modular combat brigades while fully engaged in ongoing operations, but it is not meeting its equipping goals for active brigades and has not completed development of an equipping strategy for its new force rotation model. This raises uncertainty about the levels to which the modular brigades will be equipped both in the near and longer term as well as the ultimate equipping cost. The Army plans to employ a force rotation model in which units nearing deployment would receive required levels of equipment while nondeploying units would be maintained at lower readiness levels. However, because the Army has not completed key details of the equipping strategy—such as defining the specific equipping requirements for units in various phases of its force rotation model—it is unclear what level of equipment units will have, how this strategy may affect the Army's equipment funding plans, and how well units with low priority for equipment will be able to respond to unforeseen crises.

While the Army has several initiatives under way to meet its modular force personnel requirements in the active component, it faces challenges in achieving its modular restructuring without permanently increasing its active component end strength above 482,400, as specified by the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review. The Army plans to increase its active combat force but doing so without permanently increasing its overall active end strength will require the Army to eliminate or realign many positions in its noncombat force. The Army has made some progress in reducing military personnel in noncombat positions by converting some to civilian positions and pursuing other initiatives, but Army officials believe future initiatives may be difficult to achieve and could lead to difficult trade-offs. Without information on the progress of these initiatives and what risks exist if the Army's goals are not met, Congress and the Secretary of Defense lack the information they need to understand challenges and risks.

Finally, the Army does not have a comprehensive and transparent approach to measure progress against its modularity objectives, assess the need for further changes to modular designs, and monitor implementation plans. While GAO and DOD have identified the importance of establishing objectives that can be translated into measurable metrics that in turn provide accountability for results, the Army has not established outcome-related metrics linked to most of its modularity objectives. Further, although the Army is analyzing lessons learned from Iraq and training events, the Army does not have a long-term comprehensive plan for further analysis and testing of its modular combat brigade designs and fielded capabilities. Without performance metrics and a comprehensive testing plan, neither the Secretary of Defense nor Congress will have full visibility into how the modular force is currently organized, staffed, and equipped. As a result, decision makers lack sufficient information to assess the capabilities, cost, and risks of the Army's modular force implementation plans.