



Highlights of [GAO-06-211](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

Department of Defense (DOD) officials currently estimate that the department will spend approximately \$34 billion through 2011 to develop the core network of the Global Information Grid (GIG), a large and complex undertaking intended to provide on-demand and real-time data and information to the warfighter. DOD views the GIG as the cornerstone of information superiority, a key enabler of network-centric warfare, and a pillar of defense transformation.

A high degree of coordination and cooperation is needed to make the GIG a reality. In prior work GAO found that enforcing investment decisions across the military services and assuring management attention and oversight of the GIG effort were key management challenges facing DOD. This report assesses (1) the management approach that DOD is using to develop the GIG and (2) whether DOD's three major decision-making processes support the development of a crosscutting, departmentwide investment, such as the GIG.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is recommending DOD adopt a management approach with more clearly defined leadership, authority to enforce investment decisions across organizational lines, and accountability for ensuring the objectives of the GIG are achieved. DOD concurred with GAO's recommendation.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-211.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Michael J. Sullivan at (202) 512-4841 or SullivanM@GAO.GOV.

DEFENSE ACQUISITIONS

DOD Management Approach and Processes Not Well-Suited to Support Development of Global Information Grid

What GAO Found

DOD's management approach for the GIG—in which no one entity is clearly in charge or accountable for results—is not optimized to enforce investment decisions across the department. The DOD Chief Information Officer has lead responsibility for the GIG development effort, but this office has less influence on investment and program decisions than the military services and defense agencies, which determine investment priorities and manage program development efforts. Consequently, the services and defense agencies have relative freedom to invest or not invest in the types of joint, net-centric systems that are consistent with GIG objectives. Without a management approach optimized to enforce departmentwide investment decisions, DOD is at risk of not knowing whether the GIG is being developed within cost and schedule, whether risks are being adequately mitigated, or whether the GIG will provide a worthwhile return on DOD's investment.

The department's three major decision-making processes are not structured to support crosscutting, departmentwide development efforts such as the GIG. In some significant respects, the department's processes for setting requirements, allocating resources, and managing acquisitions encourage investing in systems on an individual service and defense agency basis. While the department has developed a new process for determining requirements, the framework to assess capability needs is still evolving; the new process is not yet identifying shortfalls and gaps in joint military capabilities on a departmentwide basis; and requirements-setting continues to be driven by service perspectives. In addition, the resource allocation process is structured in terms of individual service programs and outdated mission areas instead of crosscutting capabilities such as net-centricity, and it is not flexible enough to quickly accommodate requirements resulting from lessons learned or from rapidly emerging technologies. Also, the process for managing acquisitions is unsuited to developing a system of interdependent systems such as the GIG, and DOD has struggled to achieve service buy-in on joint-service development programs to address interoperability problems. Finally, the lack of integration among these three processes makes it difficult to ensure that development efforts are affordable and technically feasible.