



Highlights of [GAO-08-851](#), a report to congressional requesters

Why GAO Did This Study

The Department of Defense (DOD) established the Defense Critical Infrastructure Program (DCIP) to assure the availability of mission-critical infrastructure, including surface, sea, and air transportation assets to carry out its missions. GAO was asked to evaluate (1) the extent to which the U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) has identified, prioritized, and assessed critical transportation assets; (2) the extent to which DOD installation personnel have taken actions to help assure the availability of critical transportation assets, both within and independent of DCIP; and (3) how DOD is funding critical transportation asset assurance. GAO examined a nonprojectable sample of 22 critical transportation assets, reviewed relevant DOD guidance and documents, and interviewed cognizant officials.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends TRANSCOM (1) implement established criteria to identify critical transportation assets, and develop a timeline for doing so, (2) discontinue its use of vulnerability assessments as its primary tool for identifying its critical assets, and (3) finalize an agreement with the Joint Staff to participate as transportation experts on Joint Staff DCIP vulnerability assessments, and that the military services develop and implement service-specific DCIP guidance. DOD partially concurred with the recommendations. GAO modified one recommendation on vulnerability assessments, in response to agency comments.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on [GAO-08-851](#). For more information, contact Davi M. D'Agostino at (202) 512-5431 or dagostinod@gao.gov.

DEFENSE CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Adherence to Guidance Would Improve DOD's Approach to Identifying and Assuring the Availability of Critical Transportation Assets

What GAO Found

TRANSCOM has taken some actions to identify, prioritize, and assess its critical transportation assets but, according to officials from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Americas' Security Affairs (ASD[HD&ASA]), its methodology for doing so, until recently, has been inconsistent with the intent of DOD's various DCIP guidance and with the approach adopted by some of the other combatant commands and military services. TRANSCOM considers entire installations—military air bases, seaports, and commercial airports—as critical assets, rather than identifying assets with greater specificity, such as individual runways, navigation aids, and fuel storage facilities. This methodology diminishes the reliability of the critical transportation asset list, a condition that impedes DOD's ability to prioritize its critical assets departmentwide and effectively target spending on risk-reduction efforts. Further, TRANSCOM was using its vulnerability assessments to identify specific critical transportation assets on the installations. This practice conflicts with DOD's DCIP guidance not to use vulnerability assessments to identify critical assets. Though TRANSCOM officials stated that they now plan to discontinue this practice, they were unable to provide ASD[HD&ASA] or GAO with any documentation to confirm that this decision had occurred officially. Further, TRANSCOM's memorandum of understanding with the Joint Staff to participate as transportation subject matter experts on the Joint Staff's vulnerability assessments with a DCIP module is still in draft. In May 2008, TRANSCOM officials told GAO that they now plan to use the draft DCIP critical asset identification process to reevaluate its 300 identified critical transportation assets; however, a timeline to complete this has not yet been determined.

DOD installation personnel at the 22 sites GAO visited have taken actions to help assure the availability of critical transportation assets; however, these actions have routinely occurred independent of DCIP. Consequently, they do not consider the full spectrum of threats and hazards and they tend to focus on preventing mass personnel casualties instead of critical asset assurance. DCIP's impact at the installations where the assets are located was negligible because of the lack of service-specific guidance. This gap in guidance hinders installation personnel's ability to make informed risk management decisions based on asset criticality. Coordination efforts between installation personnel and non-DOD owners of critical transportation assets and supporting public works infrastructure were substantial, but have been focused on the protection of people and not on asset assurance.

DOD has allocated approximately \$283 million for DCIP from fiscal years 2004 to 2008, including \$8.6 million to TRANSCOM for its combatant command and defense sector responsibilities. Critical infrastructure assurance efforts also have been funded through other DOD complementary programs, such as the Antiterrorism Program, and through foreign government contributions. Although existing DCIP funding does not include funding for remediating asset vulnerabilities, remediation has been funded from these other sources.