

GAO

Report to the Subcommittee on
Strategic Forces, Committee on Armed
Services, House of Representatives

September 2006

MILITARY TRANSFORMATION

Additional Actions
Needed by U.S.
Strategic Command to
Strengthen
Implementation of Its
Many Missions and
New Organization





Highlights of [GAO-06-847](#), a report to the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives

Why GAO Did This Study

In 2002, the President and Secretary of Defense called for the creation of the United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) to anticipate and counter global threats. Currently, USSTRATCOM has responsibility for seven mission areas including nuclear deterrence and integrated missile defense. GAO was asked to determine the extent to which USSTRATCOM has made progress in (1) implementing its new missions and assessing mission results and (2) defining organizational responsibilities and establishing relationships with other Department of Defense (DOD) commands and organizations. To assess progress, GAO compared USSTRATCOM's efforts with lessons learned in implementing successful organizational transformations.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that USSTRATCOM take actions to provide more guidance to its mission and service component organizations, improve communications, and evaluate mission performance. DOD agreed with some recommendations but disagreed with others, including that it develop a results-oriented management process. Therefore, GAO included a matter for congressional consideration that would require DOD to develop such a process given the importance of the role assigned to USSTRATCOM.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-847.

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.

MILITARY TRANSFORMATION

Additional Actions Needed by U.S. Strategic Command to Strengthen Implementation of Its Many Missions and New Organization

What GAO Found

Since its establishment in 2002, USSTRATCOM has made progress in implementing its new missions by taking a wide range of actions such as developing concepts of operations for its new missions, establishing processes and procedures, and identifying and obtaining personnel and resources needed to begin operations. However, further steps are needed to build on this progress in order to achieve the broad goals envisioned by the President and Secretary of Defense in creating the command. While the command's leadership recognizes the need to build on progress to date and has some additional actions underway to expand and enhance capabilities in its seven mission areas, GAO identified several areas in which more specific actions are needed to help the command achieve its vision. Specifically, the command has taken initial steps to include its new missions in its exercise program but has not yet fully developed a robust exercise program that integrates exercise support available from the U.S. Joint Forces Command, which can provide USSTRATCOM with several planning, training, and evaluation tools. In addition, most of USSTRATCOM's new mission organizations have not established clear criteria for determining when they will reach full operating capability. Furthermore, USSTRATCOM has not developed performance measures and criteria for assessing results across the command and in each of its mission areas. GAO's prior work examining organizational change and defense transformation shows that each of these tools is important for transforming organizations to increase their likelihood of success, particularly when multiple organizations are involved in mission execution. Developing plans in each of these areas should help the command demonstrate it can provide added value to the combatant commanders and give the President an expanded set of military options for responding to future threats—two key DOD goals.

USSTRATCOM has also made progress in establishing an overall organizational framework and identifying subordinate mission organizations that have responsibility for the daily management of operations. However, it has not fully clarified roles and expectations of its service component organizations and had not developed a commandwide approach for enhancing outreach to other DOD organizations. While USSTRATCOM has provided some guidance to its service component organizations, because this guidance has not been specific or well documented, the Army, Navy, and Air Force do not fully understand their expectations in providing support to the command. In addition, while USSTRATCOM conducts some outreach with other combatant commands and organizations, it lacks a commandwide approach to effectively manage outreach activities. GAO has previously found that it is essential for organizations to develop a comprehensive communication strategy that seeks to engage customers and stakeholders. Providing additional guidance and developing a communications strategy should help USSTRATCOM's service component organizations to better understand their roles and enable the command to build effective relationships with other commands.

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Abbreviations

DOD	Department of Defense
USSTRATCOM	United States Strategic Command

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United States Government Accountability Office
Washington, DC 20548

September 8, 2006

The Honorable Terry Everett
Chairman
The Honorable Silvestre Reyes
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives

In 2002, following a series of high-level Department of Defense (DOD) studies including the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review and Nuclear Posture Review, the President and Secretary of Defense called for the creation of a new unified command, the United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM),¹ to effectively and efficiently anticipate and counter the diverse and increasingly complex global threats the United States faces for the foreseeable future. USSTRATCOM was initially assigned responsibility for nuclear deterrence, space, and computer network operations. The President, in January 2003, expanded USSTRATCOM's global responsibilities and capabilities to include global strike planning and execution; integration of global ballistic missile defense; oversight of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, and global command and control; and DOD information operations. In January 2005, the Secretary of Defense also assigned the command with responsibilities for integrating and synchronizing DOD's efforts in combating weapons of mass destruction. Each of USSTRATCOM's seven missions has a significant role in implementing DOD's New Triad concept for transforming U.S. strategic

¹A previous unified command, also called U.S. Strategic Command, had been established in 1992 and had primary responsibility for strategic nuclear forces. The new USSTRATCOM was formed from combining the nuclear deterrence mission of the previous command and the space and computer network operations missions of the also disestablished U.S. Space Command.

capabilities.² DOD envisions that the combination of capabilities provided by these global missions would potentially add value for the combatant commanders in conducting operations in and across regional areas and provide the President and Secretary of Defense with an expanded range of military options for responding to future threats, including those involving weapons of mass destruction.

The set of diverse global missions assigned to USSTRATCOM span multiple levels and lines of authority, cross combatant command regional boundaries, and intersect with various national and international organizations. Under USSTRATCOM's most recent reorganization, which it began implementing in late 2004, the command has assigned day-to-day operations and management responsibility for most of its mission areas to five new subordinate organizations.³ These new organizations are geographically dispersed and most are aligned with key DOD agencies or military services to provide leadership and access to their competencies, such as the Joint Functional Component Command for Network Warfare partnering with the National Security Agency.

USSTRATCOM is attempting to transform its organization to better meet the security challenges of the new century and effectively anticipate, counter, and eliminate the emergence of unconventional threats overseas and at home. In our prior work to identify useful practices and lessons learned in implementing successful organizational mergers and transformations, we found that in successful transformations, organizations undergo a change of their cultures to become more results-oriented, client- and customer-oriented, and collaborative in nature. Such high-performing organizations create a culture that includes moving from

²DOD's New Triad concept is intended to bring together nuclear and conventional offensive strike, active and passive defense, enhanced command and control, planning, and intelligence capabilities and a revitalized defense infrastructure to provide the President and Secretary of Defense with a broad array of military options to better address the spectrum of potential opponents and contingencies that may arise in the coming decades. We issued a report on the New Triad that discusses the progress made by DOD in determining and allocating resources needed to implement the concept today and in the future. See, GAO, *Military Transformation: Actions Needed by DOD to More Clearly Identify New Triad Spending and Develop a Long-term Investment Approach*, [GAO-05-540](#) (Washington, D.C.: June 30, 2005).

³The new organizations are the Joint Functional Component Command for Space and Global Strike; Joint Functional Component Command for Integrated Missile Defense; Joint Functional Component Command for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance; Joint Functional Component Command for Network Warfare; and USSTRATCOM Center for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction.

outputs to results; stovepipes to matrixes; hierarchical to flatter and more horizontal structures; an inward to an external focus on customers and other stakeholders; reactive behavior to proactive approaches; hoarding knowledge to sharing knowledge; and protecting “turf” to forming partnerships. To successfully transform, an organization must fundamentally reexamine its processes, organizational structures, and management approaches.⁴

At your request, we reviewed the progress made by USSTRATCOM in developing and integrating its missions to provide new capabilities and expand U.S. options for responding to global threats. Specifically, we assessed the extent to which USSTRATCOM has made progress in (1) implementing its new missions and assessing mission results and (2) defining organizational responsibilities and establishing relationships with other DOD commands and organizations.

To obtain information on USSTRATCOM’s efforts to implement and assess its new missions, define its organization, and establish relationships with other organizations, we reviewed USSTRATCOM, DOD, Joint Staff, and military service guidance, concepts, directives, briefings, status reports, and other pertinent documentation. We observed a major USSTRATCOM command exercise, Global Lightning, in November 2005, at the command’s headquarters near Omaha, Nebraska; discussed the results with participating officials; and reviewed the command’s after-action report and associated documentation. We also interviewed USSTRATCOM officials at headquarters; subordinate mission organizations; Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps service components; and the Navy Fleet Forces Command. In addition, we reviewed organizational assessments prepared by think tanks, such as LMI Government Consulting and RAND Corporation, and discussed the assessments with their staffs to obtain their perspectives on

⁴We have issued several reports addressing best practices followed by federal government agencies and private-sector organizations in implementing successful mergers and transformations and building high-performance organizations. These reports include GAO, *Highlights of a GAO Forum on High-Performing Organizations: Metrics, Means, and Mechanisms for Achieving High Performance in the 21st Century Public Management Environment*, [GAO-04-343SP](#) (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 13, 2004); *Highlights of a GAO Forum: Mergers and Transformation: Lessons Learned for a Department of Homeland Security and Other Federal Agencies*, [GAO-03-293SP](#) (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 14, 2002); *21st Century Challenges: Transforming Government to Meet Current and Emerging Challenges*, [GAO-05-830T](#) (Washington, D.C.: July 13, 2005); and *Results-Oriented Cultures: Implementation Steps to Assist Mergers and Organizational Transformations*, [GAO-03-669](#) (Washington, D.C.: July 2, 2003).

USSTRATCOM's approach for organizing and managing its missions. We also obtained and analyzed information on USSTRATCOM's budget and authorized personnel data to identify trends in acquiring the resources, staff levels, and skills needed to implement the command's missions (see apps. I and II).

We assessed the reliability of the data used in our analyses, and determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for our purposes. We conducted our review from May 2005 through June 2006 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. See appendix III for a more complete description of our scope and methodology.

Results in Brief

USSTRATCOM has made progress in implementing its new missions but additional steps are needed to expand upon this progress in order to achieve the vision and goals underlying the command's establishment. To date, the command has made progress in developing concepts of operations; establishing plans, guidance, and policy for its missions; and obtaining personnel and resources needed to begin operations. For example, in implementing its intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance mission, the command has partnered with the Defense Intelligence Agency to improve its access and coordination with DOD and national intelligence agencies. In addition, to prevent and defend against intrusions into DOD's critical information network systems, the command has recently instituted new controls and trained system users to reduce system vulnerabilities. However, while the command's leadership recognizes the need to build on its progress to date and has some additional actions underway in its seven mission areas, more comprehensive plans and actions are needed in several areas to help the command achieve DOD's vision. First, while USSTRATCOM has taken initial steps to include its newer missions in its training exercises, the command has not yet fully developed a robust exercise program that integrates the exercise support available from the U.S. Joint Forces Command's Joint Warfighting Center, whose mission includes providing planning tools and independent observer teams to strengthen exercises. Our prior work has shown that robust exercise programs are important for assessing and improving mission capabilities, particularly when multiple organizations are involved in mission execution. Second, USSTRATCOM has established specific milestones for its mission areas to achieve full operating capability but neither the command nor its subordinate mission organizations have established clear criteria to use in assessing whether mission organizations have reached full operating capability. Third, the command has not developed a results-oriented management approach with strategic goals and performance measures and criteria for

continuously assessing results across the command and in each of its mission areas. Our prior work has shown that organizations undertaking complex transformations can increase their likelihood of success by adopting a results-oriented management approach to guide and measure progress. Developing plans in each of these areas should better position the command to meet two of DOD's major goals for the command—providing combatant commanders with added value in conducting operations and giving the President and the Secretary of Defense an expanded set of military options for responding to future threats.

USSTRATCOM has also made progress in establishing an overall organizational framework and identifying subordinate mission organizations that have responsibility for daily operations. However, opportunities exist to clarify and improve the command's relationships with subordinate organizations and other commands. The command's new organizational framework, while still being implemented, has led to better identification of resources, staffing, and skills for each of USSTRATCOM's diverse missions. Also, many of the actions the command has taken to implement its latest reorganization—such as establishing a matrixed, horizontal organizational structure that openly shares information—are consistent with transformation approaches that have been used by high-performing organizations. However, moving forward, two areas warrant additional attention. Specifically, while USSTRATCOM has provided some guidance to its service component organizations, this guidance has not been specific or well documented and Army, Air Force, and Navy service component officials told us that additional guidance is needed to more clearly define responsibilities and relationships. In addition, while the command conducts some outreach with other combatant commands and organizations, USSTRATCOM has not developed a commandwide strategy to effectively manage and coordinate its external outreach activities. Because USSTRATCOM supports or is supported by a large number of commands and organizations in executing its diverse missions, the command considers effective relationships and communications essential. However, providing coordinated, consistent outreach to other DOD organizations, such as combatant commands, has become more difficult since USSTRATCOM established separate subordinate organizations for several of its missions. Developing additional strategies and plans to address these two challenges should help USSTRATCOM's service component organizations better understand their roles and the command build more effective relationships with other commands.

To strengthen USSTRATCOM efforts to implement its missions and establish its most recent organizational approach, we are recommending

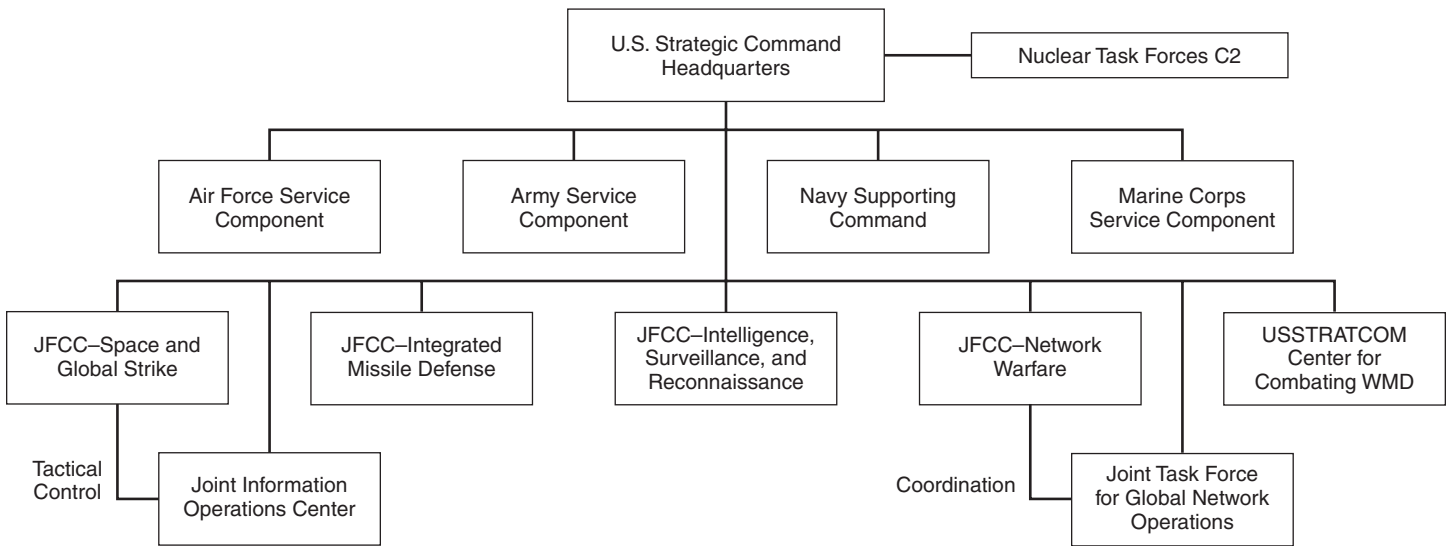
that the Secretary of Defense take seven actions; three actions that are designed to improve the command's access to the services and resources that the U.S. Joint Forces Command can provide to support USSTRATCOM's exercise program and four other actions intended to (1) clarify guidance on the criteria to be used by USSTRATCOM mission organizations in declaring full operating capability, (2) improve evaluation of the command's longer-term progress in its mission areas, (3) provide more complete guidance to its service component organizations, and (4) strengthen its external communications with other organizations and commands. DOD, in its comments on a draft of this report, generally agreed with our three recommendations regarding U.S. Joint Forces Command's support of USSTRATCOM's exercise program. DOD disagreed with our four other recommendations. In its comments, DOD stated that measures are already in place that address the issues raised by the report. We disagree that the actions taken by USSTRATCOM to date fulfill the intent of our recommendations and are complete. While USSTRATCOM has taken some positive actions on these issues, we do not believe that the command's actions go far enough in providing a clear and transparent process for evaluating the command's progress in implementing its mission areas, provide more complete guidance to its mission and service component organizations, and strengthen its external communications with other organizations and commands. For example, while USSTRATCOM organizations routinely conduct outreach activities to promote its missions and capabilities, we found that these activities are often not well coordinated and consistently conducted to achieve the most optimal benefit for the command. USSTRATCOM commander's summary reports prepared after its two most recent Global Lightning exercises in 2004 and 2005 recommended that the command develop a comprehensive outreach strategy to increase understanding among other combatant commands about USSTRATCOM's capabilities. However, command officials told us that the command does not have any current plans to develop such a strategy. Additionally, because of the importance of the command's new role in expanding the military options for addressing emerging threats, we continue to believe that creation of a longer-term, comprehensive, results-oriented management process is needed that would improve transparency and accountability of the extent to which the command is achieving the desired outcomes of its overall goals and objectives in each of its mission areas. Therefore, we are now suggesting that Congress consider requiring the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, to develop such a process and report to Congress on command's progress in achieving desired outcomes. DOD's comments are reprinted in their entirety in appendix V and our evaluation of its comments is on page 38.

Background

USSTRATCOM's global missions provide a wide range of capabilities that are intended to respond to a dramatically changing security environment brought about by emerging global, transregional, and asymmetric threats to U.S. national security. Unlike the command's nuclear deterrence and space operations missions, the command's global strike; integrated ballistic missile defense; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; information operations; global command and control; and combating weapons of mass destruction missions had not been previously assigned to a unified command. These newer missions have been performed, mostly ad hoc, by multiple DOD organizations and the military services but did not have a primary joint sponsor and central focus within DOD.

The command's most recent reorganization, begun in late 2004, shifted the day-to-day planning and execution responsibility for most of its missions from its headquarters to several new subordinate organizations. USSTRATCOM intends that its latest organizational construct will provide greater focus, continuity, and performance for its missions and better accommodate the execution of the command's global responsibilities by reducing organizational layers and enabling communication and information to flow more easily from the most senior levels of leadership to those producing the information. The command envisions that this new organizational construct will reduce the cycle time for reaching and implementing decisions for its missions, increase the effectiveness of the products and services it provides in support of the regional combatant commands, and provide improved access to all of the command's capabilities. USSTRATCOM, for example, has recently established a joint space operations center, under its Joint Functional Component Command for Space and Global Strike, to more effectively respond to requests from regional combatant commands for space capabilities. As shown in figure 1, the current USSTRATCOM organization is comprised of a command headquarters, service component or supporting commands, joint functional component commands, centers, and task forces.

Figure 1: USSTRATCOM Organization



Source: USSTRATCOM.

Notes: C2= command and control; JFCC= Joint Functional Component Command; WMD= weapons of mass destruction.

Under the new organization, USSTRATCOM’s headquarters would focus primarily on overseeing tasks for command and control; strategic-level integration; and advocacy, including developing strategy and plans, managing command and control operations and support, and advocating for mission capabilities. It also has responsibility for designating objectives; assigning missions, tasks, forces, and resources; defining policy and concepts; and providing direction to the command’s subordinate organizations. Additionally, USSTRATCOM headquarters has responsibility for planning and deploying forces for the command’s nuclear mission.

The reorganization created four new joint functional component commands for (1) space and global strike; (2) integrated missile defense; (3) intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; and (4) network warfare. These commands have day-to-day responsibilities for operational and tactical-level planning and execution and management of forces. The new organization also includes the USSTRATCOM Center for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction, Joint Information Operations Center, and Joint Task Force for Global Network Operations that work with the command, the unified commands, and mission partners to provide operational solutions to mission-related problems.

The command has also geographically aligned many of its subordinate organizations with supporting military services and Defense agencies to leverage the expertise and resources in their respective mission areas. For example, the command has partnered and co-located its Joint Functional Component Command for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance with the Defense Intelligence Agency in the Washington, D.C., area to take advantage of the agency's capabilities and improve access and coordination with DOD and national intelligence agencies. To further strengthen the partnership between the organizations, the commander of the component command is also the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency. In response to intelligence information requests from the combatant commanders, the agency would globally prioritize intelligence collection requirements and the joint functional component command would then prioritize and task the appropriate intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets to best meet those requirements. Appendix IV provides additional information about the command's key mission organizations.

Additionally, the reorganization established new command relationships with the military services to better focus service support. USSTRATCOM accesses capabilities from each of the services through its three service component commands—the Army Forces Strategic Command, Air Force Forces Strategic Command, and Marine Corps Forces Strategic Command—and the Commander, U.S. Navy Fleet Forces Command. Unlike the other services, the Navy Fleet Forces Command is a supporting command rather than a designated service component command to USSTRATCOM.⁵ However, Fleet Forces Command's overarching responsibilities in supporting USSTRATCOM are consistent with those of the other service components. Each service command acts as the primary focal point for its respective service capabilities and has responsibilities for ensuring that forces provided to USSTRATCOM are organized, trained, and equipped to support the command in carrying out its missions and

⁵The Joint Chiefs of Staff's *Unified Action Armed Forces*, Joint Publication 0-2, defines a service component command as a command consisting of the service component commander and all those service forces, such as individuals, units, detachments, organizations, and installations under the command, including the support forces that have been assigned to a combatant command. Service component commands report directly to the Commander, USSTRATCOM. A supporting commander, in the context of a support command relationship, is a commander who aids, protects, complements, or sustains another commander's force, and is responsible for providing the assistance required by the supported commander.

providing the administrative chain of command and control for its respective service forces.

Because of its expanded set of missions, USSTRATCOM's budget has grown significantly from \$276.8 million of total obligation authority in then-year dollars in fiscal year 2003 to \$500.4 million in fiscal year 2006, excluding appropriations for military personnel and USSTRATCOM service component commands and other supporting agencies.⁶ The command's annual budget is expected to increase to \$551.4 million by fiscal year 2011. Table 1 details the command's historic and projected budget by major appropriations account from fiscal years 2003 through 2011. The command's budget is comprised mostly of operation and maintenance funding, with lesser amounts of research and development and procurement funding associated with programs for intelligence, information operations, network warfare, command and control, and planning systems. Appendix I provides more details about USSTRATCOM's budget.

Table 1: USSTRATCOM Historical and Projected Budgets from Fiscal Years 2003 through 2011

Total obligation authority in millions of then-year dollars

Appropriations account	Fiscal year								
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Operation and Maintenance	\$253.2	\$353.5	\$408.6	\$417.3	\$438.6	\$442.6	\$457.9	\$467.6	\$477.6
Procurement	23.6	44.3	45.0	33.9	31.9	35.3	39.0	34.3	34.9
Research and Development	0	8.8	36.2	49.2	51.4	37.6	34.9	38.3	38.9
Total^a	\$276.8	\$406.6	\$489.9	\$500.4	\$521.9	\$515.5	\$531.8	\$540.2	\$551.4

Source: USSTRATCOM.

Notes: Data for fiscal years 2003 through 2005 are actual command expenditures, data for fiscal year 2006 are funding distributions, and data for fiscal years 2007 through 2011 are funding projections current as of the President's budget submission for fiscal year 2006. Totals do not include Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps military personnel appropriations and appropriations made to USSTRATCOM service components and supporting agencies, because these appropriations are not managed by the command in performing its operations.

^aTotals may not add due to rounding.

⁶Appropriations for military personnel and USSTRATCOM service component commands and other supporting agencies are not managed by the command in performing its operations, and are therefore not part of the command's annual budgets.

Since its establishment, USSTRATCOM's authorized number of military and civilian positions⁷ has increased by about 300. As of October 2005, the command's overall authorized personnel level was composed of 2,947 military and civilian positions, of which 91 percent were filled. Of the 2,947 positions, military positions comprise about 72 percent of the positions (2,122), with the Air Force providing the largest number of positions (1,256). Civilian positions make up the remaining 28 percent (835). The command has begun to fill positions in its new mission organizations from within its existing authorized personnel levels by transferring positions from its headquarters to the new organizations over a 3-year period beginning with fiscal year 2005. The command's authorized personnel levels are made up of a relatively few number of skills, although the mix of military skills has changed since 2002. Additional information about USSTRATCOM's authorized personnel levels is in appendix II.

USSTRATCOM Has Made Progress in Implementing New Missions, but Efforts Are Incomplete

USSTRATCOM has made progress in implementing its new missions and has taken a number of positive actions in each of its mission areas to prepare or update concepts of operations, plans, guidance, and policy; identify resources needed for mission planning and execution; and establish an organization to more effectively manage its responsibilities and provide the range of capabilities across its mission areas. Many of the command's actions are consistent with the useful practices and lessons learned with high-performing organizations undergoing successful transformations that we have identified in our past work. However, further steps are needed to build on this progress in order to achieve the broad goals envisioned by the President and Secretary of Defense in creating the command. While the command has taken initial steps to include its new missions in its exercise program, USSTRATCOM has not yet fully developed a robust exercise program that integrates exercise support available from the U.S. Joint Forces Command, which can provide planning, training, and exercise tools. In addition, while USSTRATCOM's leadership has provided general guidance to its mission organizations, it has not provided specific information or identified consistent requirements for achieving full operating capability and most of the command's new mission organizations have not established clear criteria for determining when they have reached this milestone. Also, while the

⁷USSTRATCOM's authorized personnel levels are defined as the number of authorized positions for civilian and uniformed military personnel that are funded by the services and assigned to the command.

command has adopted some key management principles, the command has not yet developed strategic goals and outcome-oriented performance measures and criteria for assessing results across the command and in each of its mission areas.

USSTRATCOM Has Made Progress in Implementing Its New Missions

Since its establishment, USSTRATCOM has made progress in implementing its new missions and has taken a wide range of positive actions to integrate these missions into its organization, such as developing various plans, concepts, and guidance; establishing procedures and processes; identifying personnel and funding resources; developing new relationships; building communication networks; and providing education, training, and exercises. For example, the command has prepared concepts of operations for its missions and organization, such as operations for network warfare and global integrated missile defense, and has recently approved a concept of operations describing the processes it will use in integrating its diverse capabilities and providing warfighting options to regional combatant commands. Additionally, USSTRATCOM has taken other actions, including (1) establishing collaboration tools and processes to improve communication for planning, execution, and evaluation among its organizations and customers; (2) creating various processes and groups within the command to advocate for the capabilities necessary to accomplish its missions, such as advocating for modification of the Trident II missile to provide an improved near-term conventional global strike capability; and (3) upgrading and expanding its facilities, such as improvements to the command's headquarters command center. The command has also taken actions to demonstrate the value added of its missions for other combatant commands and DOD organizations. For example, to implement its mission responsibilities for preventing and defending against intrusions into DOD's critical information network systems, the command's Joint Task Force for Global Network Operations has recently instituted stringent use controls and trained system users to improve security and reduce vulnerabilities for these systems.

As its missions have matured, USSTRATCOM has also undertaken several reorganizations to more effectively manage its responsibilities and provide the range of capabilities across its mission areas. Many of the actions the command has taken to implement its latest reorganization are consistent with the useful practices and lessons learned with high-performing organizations undergoing successful transformations that we have identified in our prior work, including establishing a matrixed, horizontal organizational structure that provides a greater external focus for its customers, forms partnerships with key organizations, and openly shares

information. As discussed earlier, its latest reorganization intends to leverage essential competencies of associated components and key supporting agencies and decentralize the responsibility of its headquarters for the day-to-day planning and execution of its primary mission areas to several interdependent mission organizations. While the command's mission organizations differ in the extent of their maturity, USSTRATCOM has focused considerable attention over the past year on establishing their responsibilities, command and agency relationships, and operational competencies, and assigning personnel to these new organizations. Its senior leadership has also taken an active and visible role in supporting the organizational changes underway.

USSTRATCOM's Exercise Program Has Not Fully Integrated Support Available from the U.S. Joint Forces Command

USSTRATCOM has restructured its exercise program to better incorporate its missions and has conducted a few training exercises involving all of its missions and new organizations. While the command is taking steps to address the challenges in more fully including its missions in its exercises, it has not yet fully developed a robust exercise program that integrates exercise support available from the U.S. Joint Forces Command's Joint Warfighting Center, which can provide planning, training, and exercise tools.⁸

Exercise Program Must Overcome Challenges

USSTRATCOM restructured its exercise program in 2003. It began incorporating its newer missions into its exercises beginning in November 2004 and brought together all of its missions in the same exercise in its two most recent exercises, Global Lightning in November 2005, and Global Thunder in April 2006. Global Lightning is an annual USSTRATCOM-sponsored command-post exercise, which involves the commander and his staff in testing and validating the communications within and between headquarters and simulated forces in deterring a military attack and employing forces as directed. The annual Global Thunder exercise is the command's main nuclear deterrence field training exercise, which uses actual forces in training commanders, staff, and individual units at all levels of their warfare skills. Another command-post exercise, Global Storm, is designed to cover the command's missions that

⁸The U.S. Joint Forces Command's Joint Warfighting Center assists the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, unified commanders, and chiefs of the services in their preparation for joint warfare both in the conceptualization, development, and assessment of current and future joint doctrine and in the accomplishment of joint exercises and training. It provides the core expertise to assist in the planning, execution, and assessment of joint exercises and training activities.

are most relevant in the early stages of conflict, such as information operations and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. The command plans to conduct this exercise annually depending on scheduling and resource considerations.

The command faces challenges in effectively executing its exercise program across its missions and new organizations. However, the command is taking some actions to overcome these challenges, and some of these challenges should lessen over time as the command's missions and organizations mature. First, many of the command's operational concepts, directives, and instructions used in designing and executing exercises have not yet been approved, developed, or revised to reflect its new organization. For example, at the time of the November 2005 Global Lightning exercise, some USSTRATCOM mission organizations were executing their processes and procedures without the benefit of complete and approved doctrine because several key concepts of operations for its missions, such as the concept of operations for horizontally integrating its missions, were still in draft form. According to USSTRATCOM officials, the command has to prepare plans for an exercise many months in advance even if its doctrine continues to evolve. The officials said that USSTRATCOM incorporates any changes to doctrine and guidance as it develops its exercise plan, but these changes are more difficult to make as the plan becomes more complete and the exercise nears. A USSTRATCOM official told us that doctrine and guidance should become more stable and change less frequently as the command's missions, organization, and processes mature.

Second, several of the command's new mission organizations are still being established, which has affected their ability to fully participate in the command's recent exercises and identify exercise objectives. For example, at the time of the November 2005 Global Lightning exercise, the new joint functional component commands had existed for less than 1 year, and the Center for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction had been established for only 3 months. According to the Chief of Staff for the intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance component, the component was not able to establish full connectivity during the exercise because it was still operating out of temporary facilities. Further, the new mission organizations were too immature, did not have staff in place, and lacked the established processes and procedures needed to plan their own objectives for the November 2005 exercise, according to USSTRATCOM officials. Instead, the new organizations' exercise objectives for the November 2005 Global Lightning exercise were established by the command's headquarters and linked to a broader set of critical tasks and

responsibilities. Moreover, while the command's Center for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction personnel participated extensively in the November 2005 Global Lightning exercise, no specific exercise objectives had been developed for the center's mission area. To begin addressing the challenge of increasing involvement of its new organizations in exercise development, the command has advocated the establishment of an exercise or training group within each of its mission organizations and some groups have been created, such as in the space and global strike and integrated missile defense components. Additionally, in preparation for the next Global Lightning exercise in fall 2006, the mission organizations plan to be more involved in preparing exercise objectives for their mission areas and intend to send their personnel to training workshops conducted by the U.S. Joint Forces Command's Joint Warfighting Center to learn how to develop these objectives.

Third, the command has found it difficult to design an exercise that fully covers all of its responsibilities because its missions are so diverse and their relevancy to the exercise is dependent on the type and stage of a particular crisis. USSTRATCOM's intent is to design its exercises so as to integrate the unique and interdependent capabilities of its global missions to provide a range of options throughout the various stages of a crisis and possible conflict. For example, the command has found that some of its missions, such as information operations, quickly become overlooked during its exercises as events move from crisis into actual conflict. Moreover, the command believes that its exercise program needs to place greater emphasis on the early stages of a crisis because much of USSTRATCOM's daily operations are conducted before and just after a crisis has begun. To foster greater inclusion of its missions into its exercises, the command used a series of brief, scripted training events that preceded its first Global Lightning exercise in November 2004 to provide opportunities to incorporate some of its missions, particularly intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. During the November 2005 Global Lightning exercise, the command incorporated a timeline that extended from the early to the later stages of conflict to allow designers to prepare a scenario suitable for a more complete range of the command's missions. The Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, also has directed that the annual Global Thunder exercise and other training events incorporate multiple missions to provide additional evaluation opportunities. Additionally, the command has designed its Global Storm exercises to specifically focus on those missions that are most pertinent before conflict begins.

Long-term U.S. Joint Forces
Command Support Not Fully
Identified

USSTRATCOM has not fully made use of the exercise support available from the U.S. Joint Forces Command. While USSTRATCOM has taken steps to obtain greater assistance from the Joint Forces Command's Joint Warfighting Center to help the command address its challenges in executing a robust exercise program, the command and the center have not reached agreement on the extent of support the center will provide. Our past work has shown that robust exercise programs are important for assessing and improving mission capabilities, particularly when multiple organizations are involved in mission execution.⁹ Moreover, DOD's recently issued *Strategic Plan for Transforming DOD Training*¹⁰ supports an increased training focus for many missions assigned to USSTRATCOM, including combating weapons of mass destruction, global strike, information operations, and ballistic missile defense.

U.S. Joint Forces Command has lead responsibility for joint force training, and is responsible for helping combatant commanders to identify training requirements and methods, and for assisting them with executing exercises and other training events. As part of U.S. Joint Forces Command, the Joint Warfighting Center provides support to combatant commands in identifying requirements, objectives, methods, and tools for planning, implementing, and evaluating exercises. The center trains combatant command staff to better design exercise objectives that are clearly linked to the command's essential tasks. It can also send independent observer teams to an exercise to assess the command's performance and prepare after-action reports and related assessments. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness has overall responsibility for ensuring that DOD's joint training programs and resources are sufficient to produce ready forces and overseeing the implementation of DOD's training transformation strategy.

USSTRATCOM has taken steps to obtain greater assistance from the Joint Warfighting Center in recent exercises. The command, for example, obtained limited support from the center during its April 2006 Global Thunder exercise, including teams to observe the participation and

⁹For example, GAO, *Homeland Security: Process for Reporting Lessons Learned from Seaport Exercises Needs Further Attention*, [GAO-05-170](#) (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 14, 2005) and *Combating Terrorism: Selected Challenges and Related Recommendations*, [GAO-01-822](#) (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 20, 2001).

¹⁰DOD, *Strategic Plan for Transforming DOD Training*, Office of the Secretary of Defense (Washington, D.C.: May 8, 2006).

activities of its space and global strike component. However, USSTRATCOM's requirements have not been typically identified far enough in advance for the center to assign staff and commit resources in providing the full range of requested support. For example, command officials told us that USSTRATCOM sought extensive Joint Warfighting Center support for the November 2005 Global Lightning exercise, but the center had already committed to supporting a U.S. Northern Command exercise that was scheduled over the same time period. The center was able to provide USSTRATCOM indirect support, such as providing simulated video news clippings to add context to the events in the exercise scenario, when the command linked its Global Lightning exercise to the U.S. Northern Command exercise.

USSTRATCOM's relationship with the Joint Warfighting Center is still developing. In the past, the center had a limited working relationship with USSTRATCOM and involvement in its exercises because the command's exercises had been largely focused on its nuclear deterrence mission, which limited the involvement of other DOD organizations. As a result, the center had not included the level of support for USSTRATCOM's program that it provided to other combatant commands in its past plans. However, to provide Joint Warfighting Center observers with access to more areas and aspects of its exercises, including activities involving the command's nuclear deterrence mission, USSTRATCOM is changing its security procedures to grant center observers temporary clearances during the exercises.

The Joint Warfighting Center's recent support for USSTRATCOM's exercise program has helped the command to better define its requirements for future support, but these requirements continue to evolve. USSTRATCOM officials told us that since requirements for future support from the center have traditionally been determined from prior support experience, the command's limited relationship with the center in the past and the recent restructuring of the command's exercise program have not yet provided a basis for determining the support needed from the center. The officials said that the specific requirements for the center's assistance would be easier to determine as more exercises with the center's involvement are completed. According to a USSTRATCOM official, a key exercise objective in its April 2006 Global Thunder exercise was to expose center personnel on a limited scale to the command's exercise program. At the same time, the command would gain exposure to the services provided by the center. A center official told us that this type of interaction with the center would help USSTRATCOM to better define and identify its future requirements for center support.

Over the long term, USSTRATCOM plans to seek much greater support from the center but has not yet fully defined its requirements. While the Joint Warfighting Center currently supports only one of USSTRATCOM's exercises each fiscal year, USSTRATCOM officials told us that the center has committed to supporting both of its annual Global Lightning and Global Thunder exercises for fiscal year 2007, including the use of observation teams to help the command evaluate its performance. However, as of March 2006, center officials told us it was unclear how the center would adjust its current resources to support the November 2006 Global Lightning exercise because of the timing of that exercise and its linkage to a U.S. Pacific Command exercise, for which the center is already planning to provide support. In the long term, a center official told us that while the center plans to provide greater support to USSTRATCOM, the center can better plan and make resources available if it is provided with well-defined requirements 3 to 5 years in advance as other commands do. As a result, without fully providing the U.S. Joint Forces Command with well-defined requirements to plan the necessary resources to support USSTRATCOM's program, USSTRATCOM may not be able to receive the supported needed to execute a robust exercise program to effectively implement its missions.

New USSTRATCOM Organizations Lack Adequate Direction and Criteria for Declaring Full Operating Capability

USSTRATCOM had provided overall guidance to each of its subordinate organizations for assessing two key milestones—initial operating capability and full operating capability—used to implement these organizations. However, this guidance does not fully establish clear and well-documented objectives, goals, or criteria to use in determining when these milestones have been achieved. Our prior work shows that it is important that organizations undergoing major transformations provide clear and complete guidance to subordinate organizations on the requirements and expectations for successful implementation of organizational changes. Each of the new subordinate mission organizations has already declared initial operating capability—the first milestone in implementing these organizations. However, without applying specific criteria, such as the extent to which mission organizations are staffed and trained and their mission tasks implemented, in determining when full operating capability—the second milestone—is achieved, the command may not have an accurate understanding of the extent to which its mission organizations are prepared to effectively carry out their missions.

After its most recent reorganization, USSTRATCOM issued implementation directives that provide general guidance for establishing each of the five new subordinate organizations. The directives broadly

describe the organizations' responsibilities, authorities, tasks, personnel and resources requirements, and schedules for implementation. Additionally, the command prepared an implementation plan that summarizes the implementation directives and provides additional direction for establishing the new subordinate organizations, including timelines and implementation tasks. USSTRATCOM also created a reorganization management team working group comprised of representatives from headquarters and the new organizations to assist with and coordinate the reorganization activities.

USSTRATCOM's implementation guidance¹¹ calls for each new organization to declare initial operating capability and full operating capability, which are key milestones used to indicate the organization's progress in implementing plans, procedures, and structures and achieving the readiness required to perform its missions. In addition, the guidance provides some general criteria to follow before declaring initial operating capability or full operating capability. For example, the guidance requires that prior to the initial operating capability milestone, each new organization would develop a mission statement; a detailed concept of operations for the organization to manage and execute its assigned forces and missions, including personnel requirements; and a task hand-over plan for the transfer of functions from headquarters. The guidance also requires formal updates on the new organizations' progress toward achieving the milestones during quarterly command conferences.

Table 2 shows that each of the new organizations stated that it had achieved initial operating capability in 2005. The Joint Functional Component Command for Integrated Missile Defense achieved full operating capability in February 2006 and the other four organizations plan to reach this milestone between September 2006 and January 2007.

¹¹Although the USSTRATCOM Center for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction was established in August 2005, after the initial implementation guidance was issued, the center followed the same implementation process as the other four new organizations.

Table 2: Key Dates for Establishing and Implementing New USSTRATCOM Mission Organizations

USSTRATCOM organization	Date established	Date initial operating capability achieved	Date full operating capability planned or achieved
JFCC-Integrated Missile Defense	January 2005	April 2005	February 2006
JFCC-Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance	January 2005	May 2005	September 2006
JFCC-Space and Global Strike	January 2005	November 2005	December 2006
JFCC-Network Warfare	January 2005	September 2005	January 2007
USSTRATCOM Center for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction	August 2005	December 2005	December 2006

Source: USSTRATCOM.

Notes: Dates as of June 2006. JFCC= Joint Functional Component Command.

While the implementation guidance provides general criteria for achieving initial and full operating capability, it lacks clarity and specificity for reaching these milestones. The Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, has delegated authority for establishing the new mission organizations and decisions for declaring initial and full operating capability to the senior leaders of these organizations. Headquarters representatives of the reorganization management team told us that a good deal of subjectivity is involved in deciding when each milestone has been achieved. In addition, we found that the commander or director of each new organization has interpreted the milestones differently when developing the organization's approach and assessment criteria for achieving the milestones. For example, the criteria used by each organization to determine initial operating capability last year varied greatly among the organizations:

- The commander of the intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance component declared reaching the milestone based on such factors as the component having its deputy commander in place, establishing the component's online Web portal that facilitates external communication across various classified links, and beginning its intelligence campaign planning support for three regional combatant commands.
- The commander of the integrated missile defense component declared reaching the milestone based on completing preparation of several documents, for example, ballistic missile defense emergency activation plans and a supporting plan for one of the command's contingency plans; undertaking the process of making operational several required functions, such as ballistic missile defense situational awareness and operational

oversight of the ballistic missile defense command and control system; and assuming responsibility for performing most of its directed tasks.

- The acting deputy commander of the network warfare component told us the component declared initial operating capability on the basis that its mission responsibilities were already being performed by a predecessor organization that became the new component.
- Space and global strike component officials told us that the component based its initial operating capability decision largely on the results of its performance in events before and during USSTRATCOM's November 2005 Global Lightning exercise. However, the component did not publish and make available the criteria that would be used to evaluate the component's performance during the exercise, according to the component's chief of staff.

Similarly, the objectives, goals, and criteria that would be used for determining full operating capability vary among the organizations. According to network warfare component officials, the component plans to base its full operating capability decision on 8 to 10 items that were explained during a briefing to USSTRATCOM officials in early 2005, which include the component having adequate staffing and funding; its tactics, techniques, and procedures guidance approved; and its functions, tasks, and authorities clearly defined. The chief of staff for the space and global strike component told us that the component has considerable criteria for evaluating full operating capability. For example, several concepts of operations related to the component's mission areas contain tasks that the component needs to perform. Other criteria include such goals as setting up a training program for new staff and developing a visual information panel in its command center. However, the official said that the component has not clearly assembled all of its criteria to make them readily accessible to those outside the component. The integrated missile defense component, which declared full operating capability in February 2006, used criteria that included the component's assuming responsibilities and tasks delineated in the USSTRATCOM implementation directive, completing facility construction, getting staff trained and certified, developing approved joint mission essential tasks, and initiating reporting of operational readiness. The component considered its full participation in USSTRATCOM's November 2005 Global Lightning exercise and the incorporation of the lessons learned from the exercise into its participation in a subsequent U.S. Pacific Command exercise as critical factors for declaring full operating capability.

Additionally, although the target dates for declaring full operating capability are soon approaching, some of the new organizations have not fully developed the criteria that will be used to assess their milestone decisions. Although the USSTRATCOM Center for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction plans to achieve the milestone in December 2006, center officials told us in February 2006 that the center is still deciding how to define full operating capability. Similarly, the deputy commander for the intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance component told us in April 2006 that the component, which plans to reach the milestone in September 2006, has not fully decided on the criteria it would use because the selection of criteria has not been a high priority among the component's implementation activities. However, the official told us that the component needs to have its criteria approved about 3 months before it decides to declare its milestone achieved.

USSTRATCOM Has Not Fully Implemented a Results-oriented Management Approach for Evaluating its Performance

USSTRATCOM has adopted some key management practices, but the command has not yet fully developed a results-oriented management approach for continuously assessing and benchmarking its performance in achieving desired outcomes and for identifying actions to improve performance. Our prior work and the work of others show that organizations undertaking complex transformations can increase their likelihood of success by adopting a results-oriented management framework, which includes key management practices and results-oriented management tools to guide implementation efforts and progress toward achieving desired outcomes.¹² These tools and practices include establishing long-term goals and objectives and performance measures and criteria for assessing results and value added; strong and inspirational leadership to set the direction, pace, and tone and provide a clear, consistent rationale for implementing the framework; and timelines to achieve results. While USSTRATCOM uses different techniques to review its progress in implementing its missions and responsibilities, these techniques do not provide the range of quantifiable metrics and criteria needed to fully assess the command's progress toward achieving its goals and objectives and value added.

The command's senior leadership has taken an active role in articulating and supporting the command's transformation, a factor that we have

¹²See GAO, *Defense Management: Fully Developed Management Framework Needed to Guide Air Force Future Total Force Efforts*, [GAO-06-232](#) (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 31, 2006).

identified in prior work as critical to success. The Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, has addressed a variety of audiences to discuss the need for changing the way the command is organized in order to be more effective, and has described the needs and reasons for change in command concepts of operations and guidance. USSTRATCOM has also prepared guidance that assigns responsibility and describes the processes for implementing and integrating its missions. For example, to support its most recent reorganization, the command has prepared a draft integrating guidance document intended to provide a consolidated, objective framework describing how the command is organized, as well as its responsibilities, relationships, and processes. It also has issued a more detailed horizontal command-and-control integration concept of operations to identify how it brings together all of its missions and capabilities to support national objectives. Our prior work has shown that successfully transforming organizations have leaders who define and articulate a compelling reason for change; set the direction, pace, and tone for transformation; and assign accountability for results.¹³

The command has also created a collection of first principles to better align the command with national defense priorities, focus its efforts for integrating and synchronizing its missions, and provide advocacy for its missions as they mature. Table 3 provides USSTRATCOM's nine principles, which include establishing a globally focused organization built to collaborate with all elements of national power; establishing operationally interdependent components; and embracing effects-based operations. The command also identified areas of emphasis that contain several key objectives for mission support, such as (1) for combating weapons of mass destruction, integrate and enable capabilities across the DOD enterprise; (2) in organizing for the global fight, embrace horizontal integration; and (3) for global force management, optimize the employment of low-density and high-demand intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems.

¹³ [GAO-06-232](#).

Table 3: USSTRATCOM First Principles

Principle

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1. Establish a globally focused organization built to collaborate with all elements of national power.
 2. Focus USSTRATCOM headquarters on strategic-level command and control, integration, and advocacy.
 3. Conduct decentralized operational/tactical-level planning and execution through USSTRATCOM components.
 4. Establish operationally interdependent components.
 5. Exploit mission-area-unique competencies in other organizations.
 6. Expand partnerships across departments, academia, industry, and allies.
 7. Create a USSTRATCOM web of global capabilities with multiple entry points.
 8. Leverage the full capabilities of a global command, control, communications, and computer architecture.
 9. Embrace effects-based operations.
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Source: USSTRATCOM.

However, USSTRATCOM has not yet developed clear, well-defined, outcome-based goals and measures to indicate how the command will measure success, track the progress it is making toward its goals, and give its leaders critical information on which to base decisions for improving the command's implementation efforts. While the command's first principles and areas of emphasis provide direction for better focusing its implementation efforts, these principles are process-oriented, tactical goals, rather than long-term, results-oriented strategic goals and objectives that can provide the basis for determining the command's performance and progress.

Our prior work has shown that long-term strategic goals and objectives are important for an organization to explain the results it expects, what it intends to accomplish, and how these goals would be assessed. Outcome-based performance measures should be objective and results oriented with specific target levels to meet performance goals. Measuring performance allows organizations to track progress toward goals and provides crucial information on which to base organizational and management decisions.¹⁴

The command has adopted some processes and metrics to monitor its performance and provide information on its progress in implementing its missions; however, these processes and metrics are largely subjective and

¹⁴[GAO-06-232](#).

do not provide the command with the full range of both quantitative and qualitative outcome-based performance measures it needs to fully assess progress in achieving its goals. Organizations use evaluation and corrective action plans to examine the success of a program and to improve performance by identifying appropriate strategies to meet those goals that were not met. In contrast, USSTRATCOM's current processes result in largely subjective assessments and are intended to support more limited purposes. For example, according to an official responsible for coordinating the command's readiness reporting, the command has adapted its readiness reporting process to include inputs from each of the command's mission organizations and service components. The official said that this process gives the USSTRATCOM commander access to a broad perspective on the command's overall readiness. However, the readiness reports resulting from the process discuss the commander's subjective assessment of USSTRATCOM's ability to execute its missions, based on short-term internal and external factors affecting the command's operations. Similarly, the command's annual training assessments are subjective evaluations, based on observations of prior training, exercises, real-world operations, and other factors, which are used to set priorities for future training priorities.

USSTRATCOM senior officials told us that the command has not yet established strategic goals and outcome-based performance metrics to fully assess the command's progress because the command is still sorting out the implementation of its new organizational construct. Although command officials stated they believe such metrics are needed and the command should begin to develop them, they have not yet developed a process or assigned responsibility for developing metrics. While the development of such metrics will present a significant challenge due to the complex nature of the command's missions, such an effort is needed so that the command can assess its progress and identify areas that need further improvement. For example USSTRATCOM officials believe they can and should develop metrics to assess the extent to which they are efficiently allocating intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems to optimize the use of high-demand aircraft. Without developing strategic goals and the full range of outcome-based performance measures, the command will lack a process to evaluate its performance, identify areas that may need improvement, and take corrective actions.

USSTRATCOM Lacks Specific Service Component Guidance and a Commandwide Outreach Strategy

USSTRATCOM has not clarified the roles and responsibilities of its service component organizations and lacks a commandwide outreach strategy for enhancing its relations with other DOD organizations. Since its most recent reorganization, USSTRATCOM has provided some guidance to its service component commands. However, the command's guidance is not always specific and service officials believe that additional guidance from USSTRATCOM would help to more clearly define their responsibilities, expectations, and relationships with the command, particularly with its new mission organizations. In addition, USSTRATCOM lacks a commandwide strategy to effectively manage and coordinate its external outreach activities with the large number of commands and organizations it interacts with in executing its diverse missions. Without clear service component guidance and a comprehensive communications strategy, USSTRATCOM's service components will not have complete information on the command's expectations for their support and the command may not have the most effective approach for building relationships, promoting its capabilities, and providing the most effective level of support to other combatant commands and organizations.

USSTRATCOM's Guidance to Its Service Components Is Not Specific

While USSTRATCOM has provided broad guidance to its service components, Army, Navy, and Air Force component officials told us they lack specific guidance that clarifies and provides more detailed information on their responsibilities, requirements, expectations, and relationships with the command and, particularly, its newer mission organizations. Our prior work has shown that it is important for organizations undergoing significant change to provide clear and complete guidance to their subordinate organizations. Without clearly defined, specific guidance, it can be difficult for the service components to effectively organize, plan, and identify resources to provide the expected support. Moreover, the lack of this guidance can also limit the understanding that USSTRATCOM's headquarters and its organizations have about the components' organizations, organizational relationships, and range of support they provide.

USSTRATCOM has provided guidance to its service components in its concepts of operations, orders, plans, and other documents and through meetings and other activities between command and service component staffs, such as conferences, videoconferences, and command exercises. Guidance and expectations have also been provided during routine and

crisis-oriented collaborative planning¹⁵ activities among the command's organizations and service components. However, USSTRATCOM Army component officials told us that much of the command's overall guidance, such as USSTRATCOM's standing operational order for its global strike mission and its overarching concept of operations, is too general and often does not provide enough specific information for the service components to fully understand the command's requirements and expectations.

Our review of USSTRATCOM guidance found that key guidance lists the overarching responsibilities for the command's service components, such as providing support for the command's operations and planning and advocacy activities. Some mission-specific guidance, such as the concept of operations for the space and global strike missions, provides additional responsibilities for each of the components that relate to a specific mission area or organization. In particular, this concept of operations assigns the Air Force service component responsibility for establishing an operations center for global strike planning and execution, and for performing day-to-day command and control of space forces assigned to the command. In contrast, much of the remaining guidance we reviewed provided few specific details on what is expected or required to carry out the components' responsibilities, such as the type of military personnel skills, planning systems, or secure communications lines that are needed to effectively support the command.

Additionally, several guidance documents we reviewed that contain references to the services are still in draft, such as the command's integrating guidance, or need revision as a result of the command's recent reorganization. For example, in 2004 the command drafted a concept for integrating its missions that included detailed annexes describing the how the command's service components were to monitor global events affecting U.S. interests; analyze, evaluate, and communicate information; predict likely consequences of military operations on U.S. and adversary forces; and plan and execute operations in support of each of the command's mission areas. However, according to a USSTRATCOM official the command leadership decided not to include specific expectations for its service components following the decision to reorganize the command and establish the joint functional component commands in late 2004. As a

¹⁵The use of collaborative planning intends to create an environment that allows commanders to share planning data and generate integrated lists of courses of action in greatly compressed time frames, making options and recommendations readily available to the Secretary of Defense and the President.

result, the command's most recently drafted guidance does not yet completely reflect service responsibilities and expectations and unique support that may be required to support USSTRATCOM's new organization. According to USSTRATCOM officials, the command does not plan to provide additional formal guidance to its service component organizations at this time.

The relationships between the command's service components and new subordinate mission organizations are still evolving. Army component officials told us that USSTRATCOM's new mission organizations have not yet developed a full understanding of the Army service component's responsibilities, and as a result, USSTRATCOM's expectations may not be consistent with the support that can be provided by the Army. For example, the acting chief of staff for USSTRATCOM's Army service component told us that according to the Joint Staff's *Unified Action Armed Forces* policy publication,¹⁶ which clarifies all command relationships and other authorities, the Army's service component has responsibility for providing Army personnel with training in service-related tasks. The official told us the USSTRATCOM command assumed that training in the use of joint systems, such as secure communications lines operated by the USSTRATCOM command for integrated missile defense, would be done by the service component. However, the respective USSTRATCOM command is responsible for providing any joint training to service personnel. The official said the Army could provide this training if USSTRATCOM defined this requirement in its guidance.

Army component officials also told us that the Army can better respond to USSTRATCOM requirements when expectations are more clearly described in guidance and related documents. For example, USSTRATCOM cited a requirement in its draft concept of operations for a small Army detachment to be assigned to USSTRATCOM's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance command. The Army provided this type of detachment based on that requirement. Similarly, the head of the Eighth Air Force's air operations center, which is part of the USSTRATCOM Air Force service component, told us that the component has clear guidance about its responsibilities to provide direct support to USSTRATCOM's space and global strike command, and therefore, has a clear understanding of what is required to support the component. The

¹⁶Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*, Joint Publication 0-2 (Washington, D.C.: July 10, 2001).

space and global strike command has provided information on the direct support expected from the Air Force in its concept of operations. However, the official said the requirements and expectations for supporting other USSTRATCOM mission organizations, such as the Joint Functional Component Commands for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance and Network Warfare, are not as clearly known because USSTRATCOM has not yet provided guidance on the required Air Force support for those organizations.

According to Navy Fleet Forces Command officials, USSTRATCOM has not provided clear and specific guidance on the command's responsibilities and expectations, despite its unique relationship to USSTRATCOM. Officials of the Navy Fleet Forces Command told us that the Fleet Forces Command has a unique relationship to USSTRATCOM because it is a supporting command and not a traditional service component. The officials said their command is not formally assigned to and under USSTRATCOM's operational chain of command, but rather their command provides advice to USSTRATCOM on the best use of Navy forces and capabilities in support of its missions. The officials said that clear and specific guidance is necessary to provide an understanding of their command's unique relationship to USSTRATCOM headquarters and organizations. In March 2006, USSTRATCOM, in consultation with the Fleet Forces Command, did issue a command instruction that clarifies the Fleet Forces Command's relationship with USSTRATCOM and its responsibilities, which include taking part in the command's collaborative planning processes, participating in its exercise program, and helping USSTRATCOM prepare its readiness review reports. However, while this document helps to clarify the Navy component's support responsibilities, it neither sets priorities for the Fleet Forces Command nor includes mission-specific requirements.

According to service officials, USSTRATCOM's unique organization, complex planning processes, and global focus are very different than more traditionally organized combatant commands that have clearly defined geographic areas of responsibility. In contrast to more traditional regional combatant commands, USSTRATCOM has constructed a collaborative planning process, which is globally focused, and involves a much broader range of military capabilities. As this planning process continues to evolve, the role and involvement of the service components will change. For example, the director of the Army component's planning and exercise group told us that USSTRATCOM's new mission organizations have not always provided well-documented requirements for certain Army capabilities, which has delayed the Army component's ability to provide

the needed capabilities to these organizations. The official told us that in the summer of 2005 the Army component had difficulty in both staffing its office and initially providing information operations capabilities to support command missions because USSTRATCOM had not documented the Army requirements for these capabilities. The Army official said that although the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, has been satisfied with the Army's support for this mission area, greater clarity about USSTRATCOM's expectations would have helped the Army component to better identify its authorized personnel requirements and ensure that the required Army capabilities were more quickly available.

Unlike the other service components, however, the Marine Corps Forces component is satisfied with the guidance that has been provided, according to a Marine Corps component official. The official said the component does not need additional guidance at this time because the component has a more limited role and fewer responsibilities than the other services in supporting USSTRATCOM and its organizations. The official said that the Marine Corps' component of about 20 people largely serves as a conduit to USSTRATCOM to ensure Marine Corps representation and provide inputs, when needed, on command issues.

USSTRATCOM Lacks a Coordinated, External Outreach Strategy

While USSTRATCOM routinely conducts outreach with other combatant commands and organizations, it lacks a common approach across the command because it has not developed a comprehensive, commandwide outreach strategy to effectively manage these activities. Without an outreach strategy, the command and its organizations do not have a consistent, coordinated approach to use in developing and expanding relationships, educating other organizations on the command's capabilities, and providing the most effective level of support to other commands and organizations.

In our prior work¹⁷ in identifying key practices adopted by organizations undergoing successful transformations, we found that it is essential for organizations to adopt a comprehensive communication strategy that reaches out to customers and stakeholders and seeks to genuinely engage them in the organization's transformation. In particular, successfully transformed organizations have found that by communicating information early and often, organizations are able to build trust and increase

¹⁷[GAO-03-669](#).

understanding among their stakeholders about the purpose of planned changes. Organizations use these communication strategies to provide a common framework for conducting consistent and coordinated outreach throughout their organizations by clearly presenting the organization's rationale, specific objectives, and desired outcomes of outreach efforts. These strategies also cover the range of integrated information activities to be implemented and clearly articulate how all the various components of the strategy will be coordinated and managed in order to achieve the objectives most efficiently and effectively. Additionally, outreach strategies provide measurable criteria against which to evaluate the outcomes of organizations' outreach efforts and determine whether any adjustments are necessary.

Command Considers External Outreach Essential

Because USSTRATCOM supports or is supported by a large number of commands and organizations in executing its diverse set of global missions, the command considers its external outreach efforts essential to (1) develop effective relationships and communications, (2) promote and educate others about the value of its missions and capabilities, and (3) obtain information on how the command can best support other organizations. USSTRATCOM and its organizations regularly use a wide range of methods and activities to promote its missions and capabilities to combatant commands, military services, and DOD and other government organizations. These methods and activities include conferences and symposia, exercises and training events, senior leadership visits, exchange of liaison staff, routine meetings, and voice and electronic communication. The command has also established a strategic knowledge integration Web site, which is called SKIWeb, on DOD's classified computer network to provide information about the command and the status of its activities and allow open exchange among its staff and other individuals with access to the network.

While USSTRATCOM officials told us that USSTRATCOM has developed good working relationships with other combatant commands and organizations across DOD since its establishment in 2002, they believe that the command's missions, capabilities, and authorities are not yet fully understood by others. The USSTRATCOM commander's summary report for its November 2005 Global Lightning exercise states that while the command has expended a great amount of effort in developing processes and strategies to integrate the command's missions, the organizations it supports, particularly other combatant commands, have a vague understanding of the "value added" by USSTRATCOM capabilities. The report states that USSTRATCOM's ability to provide capabilities and influence global events are not clearly understood, nor do some other

commands' headquarters completely understand how to access that capability. For example, in observing the Global Lightning exercise, U.S. Central Command and other participants told us that they were unsure of value added by USSTRATCOM in planning for global strike operations in their theater. However, USSTRATCOM officials said USSTRATCOM brings the full range of capability options into global strike planning, particularly nonkinetic capability options¹⁸ such as computer network operations; other commands are just beginning to see the potential value of these options.

Additionally, USSTRATCOM has also had to change the perceptions held by other organizations that the command is responsible only for nuclear deterrence, which was the case with the previous U.S. Strategic Command, but has other essential missions that are global in scope and span all levels of military operations. While some missions, such as nuclear deterrence and military space, are well practiced and have established histories and interactions with outside organizations, others, such as its combating weapons of mass destruction and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance missions, are less mature and still evolving. Further, many of USSTRATCOM authorities, responsibilities, and capabilities are still being refined, clarified, and demonstrated to other organizations in exercises and training events and in real-time military activities. For example, the deputy commander of USSTRATCOM's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance command told us that USSTRATCOM's evolving role in providing support for decisions on allocating intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets is not yet clear to all of the regional combatant commands. The official said that some combatant commands have concerns about how USSTRATCOM responsibilities could affect their ability to exercise operational and tactical control over any assets assigned to their commands. According to the official, these commands do not yet understand that USSTRATCOM's role is to provide overall management for these assets rather than control their operational use.

Moreover, DOD commands and organizations are still getting acquainted with USSTRATCOM's new organizational construct, particularly the new subordinate organizations that are responsible for the day-to-day

¹⁸Nonkinetic capabilities are those capabilities that produce effects without the direct use of the force or energy of moving objects, including such means as information operations, electromagnetic radiation, and directed energy.

management of several command missions. The command's new organization does not follow the headquarters-centric model, in which information flows vertically, that is used by other combatant commands. According to the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, horizontal flows of information and command and control run counter to traditional military thinking, which prefers a vertical chain of command. While the new organizational structure has the potential to greatly expand the command's opportunities to conduct external outreach, relationships and communication links are still being developed or reestablished with other organizations.

Outreach Efforts Lack Common Approach

Each of the command's organizations conduct numerous outreach activities daily, but these efforts are often not well coordinated and consistently conducted to achieve the most optimal benefit for the command. We also found that USSTRATCOM does not have an approach for comprehensively collecting information on the needs and priorities of the combatant commands and other stakeholders who use its capabilities, information which USSTRATCOM could then use to determine how it can provide the most effective level of support.

USSTRATCOM has recognized the need to develop a comprehensive outreach strategy to increase understanding among other combatant commands about the specific capabilities and contributions that the command can provide to their operations. Both of the command's summary reports for its October 2004 and November 2005 Global Lightning exercises recommended development of an outreach strategy for identifying USSTRATCOM capabilities for the benefit of combatant commands and stakeholders. The November 2005 report recommended that the strategy provide an integrated methodology for conducting effective outreach and education of the command's capabilities. The report also recommended (1) improving the command's SKIWeb Web site to allow outside users to more easily identify capabilities, (2) providing briefings and seminar support to the Defense and interagency community, and (3) developing outreach products to provide key information about the command. The report states that much of the understanding and credibility of the command can be achieved through an effective outreach plan that is focused at other commands, at the interagency level, and with the services to demonstrate and provide understanding about its global support capabilities. USSTRATCOM headquarters officials told us that the command does not have any current plans to develop an outreach strategy as recommended in each of the two exercise reports.

To provide the most effective level of support to other combatant commands, U.S. Joint Forces Command recently developed an approach that could serve as a best practice in identifying the priorities of the commands it supports for inclusion in an external outreach strategy. Under U.S. Joint Forces Command's approach, the command asks each of the other combatant commands to provide a list of its top priorities for the type and level of support needed from the command in the coming year. These lists are incorporated into the command's annual plans and are used to make adjustments in its activities and resources to best meet the needs of its customers. During the year, the command schedules periodic updates with staffs of the other commands to determine to what extent the command is addressing these priorities or whether the priorities have changed. A USSTRATCOM headquarters official responsible for coordinating the command's priorities with the U.S. Joint Forces Command told us that approach has been helpful for USSTRATCOM in communicating the command's priorities for support. The official said that USSTRATCOM added to the effectiveness of the approach by preparing a detailed matrix that identified and ranked the command's priorities and provided contact information for command staff.

Conclusions

USSTRATCOM has been assigned a new role in providing the President and the Secretary of Defense with an expanded set of military options to more effectively respond to emerging global, transregional, and asymmetric threats to U.S. national security, including those involving weapons of mass destruction. While the command has made progress in implementing its global missions, its ability to strengthen implementation efforts and ensure that its leadership has critical information on the effectiveness of its missions and organizations will continue to be limited until it identifies long-term support requirements for its exercise program; establishes clear, consistent criteria for assessing the establishment of its newest mission organizations; and fully implements a results-oriented approach for evaluating its progress. The U.S. Joint Forces Command offers a range of capabilities and resources for supporting command exercises. Until it clearly identifies the long-term support it requires from the U.S. Joint Forces Command, and the Joint Forces Command incorporates these requirements into its plans, USSTRATCOM will continue to lack a robust exercise program, which is essential for evaluating its capabilities and identifying areas in need of improvement. Additionally, absent clear, consistent guidance from the command, four new mission organizations that have not yet achieved full operating capability are establishing their own criteria for this milestone, which results in different understandings of what it means to reach this

milestone and how it would be evaluated. Without establishing clear, consistent criteria at major points in implementation, the command cannot create a foundation on which to assess and measure the success of these organizations even after full operating capability has been declared. Further, while the command has adopted some elements of a results-oriented management approach, without a process that includes criteria and benchmarks for measuring the progress toward mission goals at all levels of its organization, the command will be limited in its ability to adjust to the many uncertainties surrounding its mission areas, measure the success of its efforts, and target shortfalls and gaps and suggest corrective actions, including any needed adjustments to future goals and milestones.

Similarly, without complete and clearly articulated expectations and requirements, the service components will not have the information needed to fully determine the personnel, resources, and capabilities required to support the command and respond to its requests and tasks in a timely way. In addition, in the absence of a commandwide communications strategy to conduct consistent, coordinated outreach to other commands and organizations, USSTRATCOM cannot effectively develop and expand relationships, foster education about its capabilities, and provide the most effective level of support to other commands and organizations. Lastly, without incorporating into its external outreach strategy a systematic tool to help identify the priorities of the combatant commands and organization it supports—similar to one used by the U.S. Joint Forces Command—USSTRATCOM is limited in its ability to fully address the priorities for support of the other commands and organizations, improve feedback, and identify resources needed to respond to these priorities.

Recommendations

To better determine and obtain the assistance that can be provided by the U.S. Joint Forces Command's Joint Warfighting Center in supporting USSTRATCOM's exercise program, we recommend the Secretary of Defense direct the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, to fully identify and request in a timely manner the long-term services and resources required from the U.S. Joint Forces Command's Joint Warfighting Center to support the command's program and to reach agreement with the U.S. Joint Forces Command on the support to be provided. We further recommend that the Secretary direct the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Commander, U.S. Joint Forces Command, (1) in the near term, to make any possible adjustments among the Joint Warfighting Center's current resources to more fully support

USSTRATCOM's exercise program; and (2) in the long term, incorporate USSTRATCOM requirements for support in the center's plans to provide the full range of assistance necessary to help USSTRATCOM execute a robust exercise program.

To strengthen USSTRATCOM's efforts to implement its missions and provide greater visibility of its progress, we recommend that the Secretary of Defense direct the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, to take the following four actions:

- Provide clear and complete guidance to the Joint Functional Component Commands for Space and Global Strike, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance, and Network Warfare, and the USSTRATCOM Center for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction that clearly defines full operating capability and provides specific, common criteria for determining what is required and how it will be assessed. This guidance should be developed, in consultation with these organizations, before each organization declares full operating capability.
- Develop a comprehensive, results-oriented management process for continuously assessing and benchmarking the command's overall progress in achieving desired outcomes and for identifying corrective actions to enhance the command's efforts to implement and integrate its missions. Develop or refine performance measures that clearly demonstrate performance results and ensure that those measures cascade down through the command; assign clear leadership with accountability and authority to implement and sustain the process; and develop and ensure that goals and objectives are clear and achievable and timelines are established. Set a specific time frame for completing development of this process.
- Provide additional guidance to the command's service components that clearly defines and provides more specific information about their responsibilities, requirements, relationships, and expectations for supporting the command's headquarters and subordinate mission organizations. Set a specific time frame for approval of this guidance.
- Develop and implement a commandwide communications strategy to guide and coordinate USSTRATCOM's efforts to conduct outreach with other combatant commands and Defense and other organizations to develop effective relationships and communications, promote and educate others about the value of its mission and capabilities, and obtain information on how the command can best support other commands and organizations. This strategy should include the command's rationale,

specific objectives, desired outcomes, and strategies for conducting outreach with other commands and organizations, and criteria against which the command can evaluate the success of its efforts.

Matter for Congressional Consideration

Given the importance of the new role assigned to USSTRATCOM by the President and the Secretary of Defense to provide an expanded set of military options to more effectively respond to emerging threats to U.S. national security, Congress should consider requiring the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, to develop a longer-term, comprehensive and transparent, results-oriented management process for continuously assessing and benchmarking the command's overall progress in achieving desired outcomes and for identifying corrective actions to enhance the command's efforts to effectively carry out its missions, as outlined in our recommendation to DOD. In developing this process, the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, should

- develop and ensure that long-term goals and objectives are clear and achievable and milestones and timelines for achieving desired outcomes are established;
- develop or refine performance measures that clearly demonstrate performance results and ensure that those measures cascade down through the command; and
- assign clear leadership with accountability and authority to implement and sustain the process.

The Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, should set a specific time frame for developing and implementing this process. Additionally, the Commander should periodically report to Congress on the command's progress in achieving desired outcomes.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

DOD's Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy provided written comments on a draft of this report. DOD generally agreed with our three recommendations regarding U.S. Joint Forces Command's support of USSTRATCOM's exercise program. DOD did not agree with our other four recommendations that USSTRATCOM provide clear and complete guidance to its joint functional component commands on achieving full operating capability; develop a comprehensive results-oriented management process to assess and benchmark the command's overall progress; provide additional guidance to its service components; and develop and implement a commandwide communications strategy. In regard to these four recommendations, DOD commented that measures are already in place that address the issues raised by the report. We disagree that the actions taken by USSTRATCOM to date fulfill the intent of our recommendations and are complete. While USSTRATCOM has taken some positive actions on these issues, we do not believe that the command's actions go far enough, are specific enough, or are sufficiently transparent in improving evaluation of the command's progress in implementing its mission areas, providing more complete guidance to its mission and service component organizations, and strengthening its external communications with other organizations and commands. Therefore, we believe our recommendations are still warranted and we have added a matter for congressional consideration for Congress to direct the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, to develop and implement a longer-term results-oriented management process for assessing the command's overall progress and periodically reporting to Congress its progress in achieving desired outcomes. DOD's comments are reprinted in their entirety in appendix V and more specific information on DOD's comments on our recommendations and our assessment of these comments follows below.

DOD generally agreed with our recommendations regarding USSTRATCOM's exercise program. Specifically, DOD agreed with our recommendation that USSTRATCOM should identify and request, in a timely manner, the long-term services and resources required from the U.S. Joint Forces Command's Joint Warfighting Center to support USSTRATCOM's exercise program. In its comments, DOD said that while the center had provided limited exercise planning, execution, and assessment support to USSTRATCOM, the command and the center have steadily built a relationship over the past year to support USSTRATCOM's seven mission areas and are jointly solving problems that hindered the center's support in previous USSTRATCOM exercises. The department partially agreed with our recommendation that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Commander, U.S. Joint

Forces Command, in the near term make any possible adjustments among the Joint Warfighting Center's current resources to more fully support USSTRATCOM's program. DOD commented that the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness is currently conducting an in-depth review of the joint training programs to determine how it can provide better flexibility and synergism through joint training investments. DOD agreed with our recommendation that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Commander, U.S. Joint Forces Command, in the long term, incorporate USSTRATCOM's requirements for support into the Joint Warfighting Center's plans. DOD commented that its current review of joint training programs intends to match, to the greatest extent possible, joint training requirements and resources, including the training support provided by the U.S. Joint Forces Command. DOD also said while USSTRATCOM's requirements must compete with other training priorities for joint training funding, the center can better plan and make resources available if USSTRATCOM provides the center with well-defined requirements 3 to 5 years in advance.

DOD did not agree with our recommendation that the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, provide additional guidance to its joint functional component commands that clearly defines full operating capability and provides specific, common criteria for determining what is required and how it will be assessed. DOD commented that the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, has provided specific guidance in the form of a tailored implementation directive that assigns specific duties, responsibilities, tasks, and authorities to the components. DOD also said that the Commander is continuing to work closely with the component commanders to develop, implement, and assess the measures of progress by which full operating capability will be declared and will report to the Secretary of Defense when the milestone is achieved for each mission area. We believe that the command's tailored implementation directives do not go far enough in providing clear and specific criteria for assessing whether specific duties, responsibilities, tasks, and authorities assigned to each organization have been met. For example, during our review we found that the components had different interpretations as to what criteria might apply for declaring full operating capability. We believe that it is important for USSTRATCOM and its organizations to have a clear definition of full operating capability and the criteria, or measures of progress, in place as early as possible, by which the achievement of the milestone will be assessed for each of the new mission organizations. These criteria should be complete and readily accessible so the command and its mission organizations will have confidence in the extent that

planned capabilities will be achieved at full operating capability. After declaring full operating capability, each of the new organizations will require further actions to more completely implement and enhance their mission capabilities and responsibilities. Establishing clear, documented criteria for assessing and measuring success for declaring full operating capability can provide a baseline and a sound foundation for assessing the future progress of the organization in carrying out its mission responsibilities.

DOD also disagreed with our recommendation that USSTRATCOM develop a comprehensive results-oriented management process for continually assessing and benchmarking the command's overall progress in achieving desired outcomes and for identifying corrective actions to enhance the command's efforts to implement and integrate its missions. In its comments, DOD stated that a variety of directives, including concepts of operations, articulate the command's goals and objectives. The department also stated that the command conducts periodic exercises, external inspections, and in-progress reviews to help assess the command's effectiveness in making operational the assigned mission areas and achieving stated objectives. While these actions by USSTRATCOM may be helpful to the command's leadership, they do not represent a comprehensive and transparent plan for assessing progress in achieving desired outcomes. Moreover, DOD interpreted our recommendation as being directed at the metrics to be used by the command's organizations in declaring full operating capability for its missions, which are scheduled to occur by early 2007. However, our recommendation calls for creation of a longer-term, comprehensive, results-oriented management process that would provide the command with a framework for continuously assessing its future progress in achieving desired outcomes in each of its mission areas and the command's overall goals and objectives. Because of the importance of the command's new role in providing expanded military options for addressing emerging threats, we continue to believe that creation of a results-oriented management process that establishes long-term goals and objectives, milestones and timelines for achieving desired outcomes, performance measures that clearly demonstrate performance results, and clear leadership to implement and sustain the process is needed. Therefore, we have included a matter for congressional consideration to require the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, to develop such a process that would improve transparency and accountability of the extent to which the command is achieving desired outcomes in each of its mission areas.

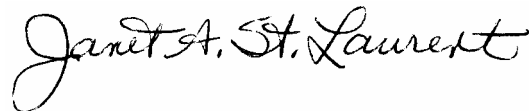
DOD also did not agree with our recommendation that the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, provide additional guidance to the command's service components that clearly defines and provides more specific information about their responsibilities, requirements, relationships, and expectations for supporting the command's headquarters and subordinate mission organizations. In its comments, DOD said that the duties and responsibilities of USSTRATCOM and its service components are documented in Joint Publication 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces*. The department also stated that day-to-day liaison activities between the command and the services are provided by on-site service component representatives. While broad guidance is provided in the Joint Staff's *Unified Action Armed Forces* publication on the relationships and authorities of the military services in supporting combatant commanders and by USSTRATCOM in various documents, we continue to believe that additional guidance from the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, to the command's service components is needed to provide clear and specific information about their responsibilities, requirements, relationships, and expectations for supporting the command's headquarters and subordinate mission organizations, particularly since the components have expressed a desire for further guidance from the command. As USSTRATCOM continues to implement its new organization and develop capabilities in each of its mission areas, this additional guidance can strengthen relationships with the services by (1) providing better information for the components in effectively organizing, planning, and identifying resources to support the command; and (2) increasing understanding among the command's headquarters and its organizations about the components' organizations, organizational relationships, and the range of support they provide.

Lastly, DOD disagreed with our recommendation that USSTRATCOM develop and implement a commandwide communications strategy to guide and coordinate the command's efforts to conduct outreach with other combatant commands and Defense and other organizations. DOD commented that USSTRATCOM provides and promotes insight to all its activities through its classified Web site; maintains a senior officer representative at each of the combatant commands and with the Joint Staff; and, as a supporting command, conducts continuous liaison activities with other combatant commands. DOD also stated that Web-based mission area training for USSTRATCOM missions is available on the U.S. Joint Forces Command's Web site. However, as discussed in our report, we found that while USSTRATCOM organizations routinely conduct outreach activities to promote its missions and capabilities, these activities are often not well coordinated and consistently conducted to

achieve the most optimal benefit for the command. Both of USSTRATCOM commander's summary reports prepared after its two most recent Global Lightning exercises in 2004 and 2005 recommended that the command develop a comprehensive outreach strategy to increase understanding among other combatant commands about the specific capabilities and contributions that the command can provide to their operations. The November 2005 Global Lightning report also recommended that the strategy provide an integrated methodology for conducting effective outreach and education of the command's capabilities. Therefore, we continue to believe that USSTRATCOM needs a commandwide communications strategy to provide a framework to effectively manage these activities and a common approach for conducting consistent and coordinated outreach across the command.

We are sending copies of this report to interested congressional committees; the Secretary of Defense; Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command; and the Commander, U. S. Joint Forces Command. We will 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>.

If you or your staff have any questions, please contact me at (202) 512-4402 or stlaurentj@gao.gov. Contact points for our Office of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this report. Staff members who made key contributions to this report are listed in appendix VI.



Janet A. St. Laurent
Director
Defense Capabilities and Management

Appendix I: GAO Analysis of Trends and Changes to the United States Strategic Command's Budget

This appendix provides information on trends and changes we identified in the United States Strategic Command's (USSTRATCOM) historic and projected budget, from fiscal years 2003 through 2011.

USSTRATCOM's Budget Has Grown Significantly Since Its Establishment

Since its establishment in fiscal year 2003, USSTRATCOM's budget has grown significantly, from \$276.8 million of total obligation authority in then-year dollars to \$500.4 million in fiscal year 2006, excluding military personnel funds. The command's budget comprises mostly operation and maintenance funding, with lesser amounts of research and development and procurement funding associated with programs for intelligence, information operations, network warfare, command and control, and planning systems. Funding projections prepared to support the fiscal year 2006 President's budget submission show that USSTRATCOM's budget is expected to decline between fiscal years 2007 and 2008, from \$521.9 million to \$515.5 million, as research and development funding is reduced. However, beginning in fiscal year 2009, the command's budget is expected to increase each year to \$551.4 million in fiscal year 2011, as operation and maintenance funding increases by \$35 million compared to the fiscal year 2008 projection. Procurement funding projections remain relatively stable through fiscal year 2011.

USSTRATCOM officials told us that the command's budget projections have changed since the President's fiscal year 2006 budget was submitted. However, these changes, prepared to support the President's fiscal year 2007 budget submission, had not been finalized at the time our work was completed in March 2006 because the Department of Defense (DOD) was still making adjustments to the command's budget projections for fiscal year 2007 and thereafter, even after the fiscal year 2007 budget was submitted. USSTRATCOM officials expect that the command's annual budgets for fiscal years 2007 through 2011 will be lower than the projections prepared for the fiscal year 2006 budget submission. At the same time, the command has been directed to allocate funding for new activities that had not been part of the fiscal year 2006 submission, including \$11 million to \$13 million per year in new total obligation authority for mission activities for combating weapons of mass destruction and about \$7 million per year for missile defense operations.

Budget Increases Reflect New Mission Responsibilities

USSTRATCOM's budget increases have included new total obligation authority to fund the command's new mission responsibilities. For example, the President's fiscal year 2004 budget submission included \$78.7 million in new funding for USSTRATCOM to support additional

planning, command and control, and information operations responsibilities that were assigned to the command following the completion of DOD's 2001 Nuclear Posture Review.¹ About \$50.9 million of this request was for improvements to USSTRATCOM's command and control systems, including \$25.9 million to upgrade the USSTRATCOM command center and about \$10.5 million for a mobile command center capability. Of the remaining \$27.8 million, about \$13.5 million was for new information operations activities and \$14.3 million was to improve the command's planning systems. In addition to the funding associated with the Nuclear Posture Review, the fiscal year 2004 budget request included about \$44.5 million for USSTRATCOM to support classified programs formerly managed by the Joint Staff and the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

The fiscal year 2005 and 2006 budget requests included USSTRATCOM funding increases associated with new missions assigned to the command in January 2003—global strike; integrated missile defense; command, control, computers, communications, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; and DOD information operations. To support these new responsibilities, the fiscal year 2005 budget request included about \$61.8 million in new total obligation authority. This amount included about \$23 million in new operation and maintenance funding, which the USSTRATCOM commander had discretion to allocate among the command's missions, according to a command official. According to the official, the fiscal year 2005 request also included about \$15.3 million in new funding to support activities at the Joint Information Operations Center, and what would later become the Joint Task Force for Global Network Operations and the Joint Functional Component Command for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance. The 2005 budget request also included additional increases to the command's planning and command and control systems. Similarly, the fiscal year 2006 budget request included about \$33.7 million in new funding, mainly to support new information operations programs.

¹DOD's December 2001 report on the results of its Nuclear Posture Review introduced the concept of a New Triad of strategic capabilities that include a mix of nuclear and nonnuclear strike forces; defenses, including missile defense; and a responsive infrastructure, which are all enhanced by an integrated and adaptive approach to intelligence, planning, and command and control. As reflected in its expanding set of mission responsibilities, USSTRATCOM has a significant role in implementing the New Triad.

USSTRATCOM Is Determining How Funding Will Be Allocated Among Its Missions

USSTRATCOM has recently developed an internal model to determine how its programs will be allocated to its various mission organizations and headquarters activities in DOD's budget and future funding plan. According to a USSTRATCOM official, the model is designed to help the command manage and prioritize its funding allocations and understand the risks associated with any changes made to its future funding plans. The command is using the model to allocate fiscal year 2006 funding to USSTRATCOM's subordinate organizations and headquarters divisions. According to information provided by command officials, the largest funding allocations for fiscal year 2006 are to support the Joint Functional Component Command for Space and Global Strike, followed by command and control activities performed at headquarters, including nuclear command and control. The smallest allocations are to support the Joint Functional Component Commands for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance and Integrated Missile Defense. According to a command official, activities performed at headquarters to support one or more mission areas accounted for about 40 percent of the command's fiscal 2006 budget.

Scope and Methodology

To perform our analysis, we identified trends and changes in USSTRATCOM's budget since its establishment in October 2002 by obtaining and analyzing the command's historic, current, and projected funding for fiscal years 2003 through 2011. We used data prepared to support the President's fiscal year 2006 budget request, which were the most current official data available when we conducted and completed our work. We also discussed with USSTRATCOM officials anticipated changes to the budget resulting from the fiscal year 2007 President's budget request, and efforts taken by the command to identify how its funding is allocated by mission responsibility and subordinate organization. We took steps to assess the reliability of the data used in this analysis, including (1) performing electronic testing of required data elements, (2) comparing the data to another independently prepared data source, and (3) interviewing agency officials knowledgeable about the data. We determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for our purposes.

Appendix II: GAO Analysis of Trends in the United States Strategic Command Military and Civilian Authorized Personnel Level

This appendix provides information on trends and changes we identified in the United States Strategic Command's (USSTRATCOM) military and civilian authorized personnel levels¹ since its establishment in October 2002. Our analysis shows that USSTRATCOM's overall authorized personnel level has remained relatively stable since 2002, and that the percentage of filled military and civilian positions has increased. The command is transferring positions to its new mission organizations from its headquarters organization, rather than increasing its overall commandwide authorized personnel level. Although the command has expanded the number of professional military skills² of its authorized personnel, the majority of its military positions encompass relatively few types of skilled positions. We also determined that while Air Force and Navy military positions continue to make up most of USSTRATCOM's authorized personnel, the proportion of civilian positions is increasing.

Overall Authorized Personnel Level Has Been Relatively Stable and Percentage of Filled Positions Has Increased

USSTRATCOM's authorized personnel level has remained relatively stable since the command's establishment in October 2002. The command's overall authorized personnel level has increased since that time by about 300 positions, through October 2005; however, the command expects to have slightly fewer positions than it started with by October 2006.

The command's authorized personnel level increased from 2,646 positions upon its establishment in October 2002 to 2,965 authorized positions by October 2004. The largest increase occurred between October 2002 and October 2003, when the command added 318 positions, including 291 positions to support four additional missions—global strike; integrated missile defense; command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; and DOD information operations. Among these 291 positions, 108 positions were transferred to USSTRATCOM from the cruise missile support activities, which were formerly part of U.S. Joint Forces Command and U.S. Pacific Command.

¹USSTRATCOM's authorized military and civilian personnel level is the number of authorized positions for service members and civilians that are funded by the services and assigned to the command.

²Military skills refer to personnel designations developed by each of the military services. In this report, "skill" refers to specific Air Force Specialty Codes, Army Areas of Concentration (officer) and Military Occupational Specialties (warrant officer and enlisted), Navy Billet Designator Codes (officer) and General Ratings (enlisted), and Marine Corps Military Occupational Specialties.

In October 2005, USSTRATCOM's authorized personnel decreased to 2,947 positions, a reduction of 18 positions from October 2004, as the command transferred positions to other combatant commands to provide expertise in integrating USSTRATCOM's global missions into their theater operations. According to a command official, there was no authorized personnel level increase associated with the combating weapons of mass destruction responsibilities assigned to the command in January 2005. A larger reduction is expected by October 2006, mainly as a result of a planned transfer of about 340 positions currently supporting intelligence activities, which would bring the command's authorized personnel to 2,605 positions, which is 41 fewer than authorized when the command was established.

USSTRATCOM's ability to fill positions has increased steadily since the new command was established in 2002, when only 1,828, or 69 percent of the command's 2,646 authorized positions, were initially filled. According to command officials, many of the service members and civilians from the former U.S. Space Command, located near Colorado Springs, Colorado, did not immediately transfer to USSTRATCOM headquarters, located near Omaha Nebraska, leaving many positions initially unfilled. However, as individuals transferred to the command, the rate of filled positions increased to 83 percent (2,467 filled positions) as of October 2003, 87 percent (2,564 filled positions) in October 2004, and 91 percent (2,670 filled positions) in October 2005.

Personnel Requirements for New Organizations Are Being Met Within Existing Authorization

To meet the staffing requirements for its five new mission organizations, USSTRATCOM is transferring positions to the new organizations from its headquarters, rather than seeking to increase its overall personnel authorization. To minimize the cost to the services of relocating people to fill the transferred positions, the command is first transferring positions that either do not need to be relocated or are not filled by service members, and then relocating and filling the remaining positions during the course of normal military personnel rotations. Under the command's plan, the first 30 percent of the transferred positions were to have been filled at each organization by September 2005, 60 percent of the positions are to be filled by September 2006, and 90 percent are to be filled by September 2007.

By February 2006 the command had approved the transfer of 793 positions to the new mission organizations. Of this number, about 444 positions (56 percent) had been filled, including about 76 percent of the 431 positions approved for the Joint Functional Component Command for

Space and Global Strike, which is co-located with USSTRATCOM headquarters and where few positions needed to be relocated.³ In contrast, fewer than one-third of the positions had been filled at three of the four remaining organizations, which are not located in the Omaha, Nebraska, area, although a command official told us that he believes that positions at these organizations will be close to 60 percent filled by September 2006, under current projections. To minimize the impact of not filling positions, officials told us that the supporting services and Defense agencies are providing the new organizations with their own filled positions, until USSTRATCOM positions are filled. Table 4 summarizes the status of filling positions at the new mission organizations as of February 2006.

Table 4: Approved and Filled Positions at USSTRATCOM’s New Mission Organizations as of February 2006

USSTRATCOM organization	Positions approved	Positions filled	Percentage of positions filled
JFCC-Space and Global Strike	431	326	76
JFCC-Network Warfare	120	38	32
JFCC-Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance	102	33	32
JFCC-Integrated Missile Defense	90	34	38
USSTRATCOM Center for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction	50	13	26

Source: USSTRATCOM.

Notes: Data do not include contractors or positions provided by supporting services and Defense agencies. JFCC= Joint Functional Component Command.

USSTRATCOM Has Expanded Its Military Skill Set, but Most Positions Remain Concentrated in Relatively Few Specialties

USSTRATCOM has expanded the number of military skills of its authorized personnel since its establishment. As of January 2003, 3 months after it was established, USSTRATCOM’s authorized personnel included those with 241 different military skills; by January 2006, the command added 51 skills and lost 44 skills, leaving 248 different military skills at the command. Skills added by the command include Navy officer positions for information technology planning and Marine Corps officer positions for space operations, while those dropped include Air Force maintenance officer positions.

³The space and global strike joint functional component command also has positions assigned to other locations, including the Cheyenne Mountain Operations Center, Colorado Springs, Colorado, and U.S. Joint Forces Command, Norfolk, Virginia.

While USSTRATCOM has changed the composition of its skill set, relatively few skills comprise the majority of the command's authorized military positions. For example, as of January 2006, 33 of the command's 248 skills (13 percent) made up 1,364 of the command's 2,094 military positions (65 percent). USSTRATCOM officials told us that several of the most prevalent skills are easily adaptable and capable of being performed in a broad range of responsibilities. For example, Air Force space and missile operations officer positions increased from 134 in 2003 to 140 in 2006, and this skill remains the largest military specialty at the command. The command also has increased the number of positions for Navy officers with warfare qualifications or air warfare qualifications skill designations, Army officers skilled in space operations, and Army officers specializing in information operations.

Air Force and Navy Positions Predominate, but Percentage of Civilian Positions Is Increasing

USSTRATCOM's authorized personnel are mainly composed of Air Force and Navy positions, although the number and percentage of civilian positions have increased since the command was established. As of October 2005, USSTRATCOM's authorized personnel included 2,112 military and 835 civilian positions. Among the 2,112 authorized military positions:

- 1,256 were Air Force positions (59 percent of the authorized military positions),
- 564 were Navy positions (27 percent),
- 227 were Army positions (11 percent), and
- 65 were Marine Corps positions (3 percent).

Since the command's establishment, the number and percentage of civilian positions relative to military positions have increased. From October 2002 to October 2005, civilian positions increased from 676 to 835, an increase of 26 to 28 percent of the command's overall authorized personnel level. The command expects to continue to increase the proportion of authorized civilian positions, particularly at USSTRATCOM headquarters, as positions are transferred to the new mission organizations and as a few hundred military positions are converted to civilian positions through October 2007. Command officials responsible for overseeing the reorganization told us that civilians have lower turnover rates than the military service members who regularly rotate through the command. The command believes that lower turnover among its civilian workforce will bring greater continuity and stability to the headquarters' chief responsibilities, including strategic-level planning and advocacy for new capabilities. Table 5 presents the projected distribution of the command's civilian and military positions in October 2007.

**Appendix II: GAO Analysis of Trends in the
United States Strategic Command Military
and Civilian Authorized Personnel Level**

Table 5: Projected Distribution of USSTRATCOM Civilian and Military Positions in October 2007

Organization	Civilian positions	Military positions	Percentage civilian positions	Percentage military positions
USSTRATCOM headquarters	616	592	51	49
JFCC-Space and Global Strike	77	354	18	82
Other ^a	54	217	20	80
Joint Information Operations Center	77	124	38	62
JFCC-Network Warfare	31	89	26	74
JFCC-Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance	19	83	19	81
Joint Task Force for Global Network Operations	69	63	52	48
JFCC-Integrated Missile Defense	25	65	28	72
USSTRATCOM Center for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction	18	32	36	64
Total	986	1,619	38	62

Source: USSTRATCOM.

Notes: Projections current as of February 2006. Data include both military and civilian positions at USSTRATCOM headquarters and at other locations. They do not include contractors at USSTRATCOM headquarters, or contractors or positions at mission organizations that are provided by supporting services and agencies. JFCC= Joint Functional Component Command.
^aIncludes authorized personnel assigned to the National Airborne Operations Center, Nebraska; Cheyenne Mountain Operations Center, Colorado; various combined task forces, Atlantic and Pacific cruise missile support activities; various liaison offices; and national laboratories.

Scope and Methodology

To determine how USSTRATCOM’s authorized personnel level has changed since its establishment in 2002, we obtained and reviewed USSTRATCOM projections and historic data that identify (1) the number of authorized civilian and military positions assigned to USSTRATCOM, (2) the number of authorized positions filled by individuals assigned to the command, and (3) the professional military skills associated with the command’s military positions. The data we obtained include USSTRATCOM positions assigned to the command’s headquarters near Omaha, Nebraska, its mission organizations, and to various other locations and assignments.⁴ We also obtained the command’s projections for authorized personnel levels for the new mission organizations, and discussed these projections with officials responsible for managing the command’s authorized personnel. In our analysis, we did not consider

⁴In addition to its headquarters and mission organizations, USSTRATCOM has authorized personnel assigned with the National Airborne Operations Center, Nebraska; Cheyenne Mountain Operations Center, Colorado; various combined task forces; Atlantic and Pacific cruise missile support activities; liaison offices; and national laboratories.

staff positions from organizations that are supporting several of USSTRATCOM's mission organizations, such as the Air Force Space Command, Eighth Air Force, Army Space and Missile Defense Command, Defense Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, and Defense Information Systems Agency. The data also do not include part-time reservists or contractors. We took steps to assess the reliability of the data used in this analysis, including (1) performing electronic testing of required data elements, (2) comparing the data to another independently prepared data source, and (3) interviewing agency officials knowledgeable about the data. We determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for our purposes.

Appendix III: Scope and Methodology

To address the extent to which the United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) has made progress in implementing its new missions and assessing mission results, we reviewed a wide range of Department of Defense (DOD) and command documentation including USSTRATCOM guidance, plans, directives, speeches and testimony statements, and reports; implementation plans and directives for creating its new mission organizations; and documentation related to DOD's implementation of its New Triad concept to transform U.S. strategic capabilities. We also spoke with various officials involved in the command's implementation efforts about their roles, related plans, and actions. When possible, we met with the command and other organizations' senior leadership to discuss and obtain their views on various command issues, including:

- Commander, U.S. Strategic Command;
- Commander, Joint Functional Component Command for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance/Director, Defense Intelligence Agency;
- Commander, Joint Functional Component Command for Network Warfare/Director, National Security Agency;
- Commander, Joint Functional Component Command for Integrated Missile Defense/Commander, Army Space and Missile Defense Command;
- Commander, Joint Task Force for Global Network Operations/Director, Defense Information Systems Agency;
- Director, USSTRATCOM Center for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction/Director, Defense Threat Reduction Agency;
- Commander, Air Force Space Command; and
- Chief of Staff, U.S. Joint Forces Command.

To determine the extent to which USSTRATCOM has a robust exercise program for demonstrating its capabilities, we reviewed the command's annual training plan, which describes the command's individual exercises, establishes an exercise schedule, and sets expectations for the participation of the command's mission organizations. For the November 2005 Global Lightning exercise, we reviewed the exercise plan, collection management plan, after-action report, and final exercise report. We also observed that exercise and discussed the exercise results with the participants. We also reviewed the collection management plan and the after-action report prepared for the April 2006 Global Thunder exercise, and after-action reports prepared for the April 2005 Global Thunder, October 2004 Global Lightning, and October 2003 Global Guardian exercises. We obtained guidance from the Joint Staff that describe the roles and responsibilities of U.S. Joint Forces Command for supporting combatant command exercises. In addition we held discussions with command officials from the exercise and training branch and with other

exercise observers to obtain their views on USSTRATCOM efforts to plan and schedule its exercises. We also met with officials from the new joint functional component commands as well as the Joint Task Force for Global Network Operations and the USSTRATCOM Center for Combating Weapons Of Mass Destruction to identify challenges to more fully including their missions in the commands exercises and assist in our understanding of the extent to which the command's mission organizations were able to participate in the command's exercises. Command officials also briefed us on the evolution of the command's exercise program since its establishment, and plans for the future. Finally, we met with officials from the U.S. Joint Forces Command's Joint Warfighting Center to determine the extent to which they have been involved in identifying requirements, objectives, methods, and tools for planning, implementing, and evaluating USSTRATCOM exercises to strengthen the design and execution of the command's exercises, such as participant training and independent observer team support and evaluation.

To determine the extent to which USSTRATCOM and its mission organizations had developed criteria for assessing their progress toward achieving full operating capability, we reviewed documents from the command and each of the new mission organizations. These documents included the command's implementation directives for each new mission organization and the overarching command reorganization implementation plan for the current reorganization. We also reviewed briefings from each of the mission organizations that gave status information on the organizations' efforts towards achieving full operating capability. We held discussions with USSTRATCOM officials who were part of the command's reorganization management team and with the senior leadership, when possible, to determine their roles and management approach in assisting the mission organizations' efforts to reach full operating capability and to obtain an understanding of what reaching full operating capability means as a milestone in developing the new USSTRATCOM organization. We met and held discussions with the senior staff of each mission organization on their criteria for measuring the organization's progress toward full operating capability.

To determine the extent to which USSTRATCOM has developed a results-oriented management approach to establish goals, continually track its progress, achieve better synergy among its missions, and gauge the results

of its efforts, we reviewed key documentation and interviewed officials to determine what steps, if any, the command has taken to develop and follow this approach. We reviewed relevant GAO reports¹ that identified and reviewed management approaches of other government and private sector organizations. We used the practices and implementation steps identified in these approaches as criteria for reviewing USSTRATCOM documents and for discussions with command officials about their approach to transforming the USSTRATCOM organization. We then compared USSTRATCOM's approach against these examples of success that we had identified in other organizations to determine the extent to which USSTRATCOM had these elements in place.

We reviewed key USSTRATCOM documents, including its first principles (i.e., its long-term goals) related to reporting on the command's performance and those from its biannual readiness reporting and its annual training assessments. We reviewed the command's implementation plan and related directives for establishing USSTRATCOM's joint functional component commands. We compared these documents to implementation plans used by other organizations, including the U.S. Atlantic Command and U.S. Northern Command, and reorganization plans, such as the *Report to Congress on the Plan for Organizing the National Nuclear Security Agency* and the *Department of Homeland Security Reorganization Plan*, to determine any differences in the elements and details for implementation that were considered in these plans and the extent to which they had developed, used, or planned to use outcome-based performance goals and measures.

To assess the extent to which USSTRATCOM has made progress defining organizational responsibilities and establishing relationships with other DOD commands and organizations, we obtained and reviewed relevant documents and spoke with various officials involved in implementing and advocating for the command's new missions about its roles and related plans and actions. To determine the extent to which the command has clarified the roles and expectations of its service component organizations, we reviewed command documentation including draft integrating guidance, concepts of operations, orders, plans, and other

¹Our prior work on organizational transformation includes GAO, *Managing for Results: Enhancing Agency Use of Performance Information for Management Decision Making*, GAO-05-927 (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 9, 2005); GAO-03-293SP; GAO-03-669; and *Homeland Security: Transformation Strategy Needed to Address Challenges Facing the Federal Protective Service*, GAO-04-537 (Washington, D.C.: July 14, 2004).

documents. We met with officials from each of the command's service component/supporting commands and discussed the extent to which they believed the command's guidance and expectations was sufficiently clear about their supporting roles. We also discussed with command officials the extent to which guidance was provided to the service components through meetings and other activities.

To determine the extent to which USSTRATCOM has developed a common approach and comprehensive strategy to enhance its outreach to numerous DOD organizations on which its success depends, we met with the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, and with officials in the command's directorate responsible for advocacy. We also met with senior leadership in all of the subordinate mission organizations to understand the extent to which a clear, coordinated, and unified outreach strategy is in place and to identify the range of methods and activities the command and its subordinate mission organizations use to engage and promote its missions and capabilities with combatant commands, military services, and DOD and other government organizations. We met with officials at the U.S. Joint Forces Command and U.S. Northern Command and discussed command relationships, the ways that USSTRATCOM officials performed outreach with these organizations, sought their viewpoint on lessons that should be learned in communicating the command's missions and responsibilities, and their perspectives on USSTRATCOM progress. During USSTRATCOM's Global Lightning exercise in November 2005, we also obtained insights from participants on the command's effectiveness at performing its outreach activities.

We also reviewed several GAO reports² that addressed key practices organizations should implement during a significant reorganization or transformation. We used the reports to identify successful communication and outreach practices employed by other U.S. and foreign government organizations. We reviewed the USSTRATCOM commander's summary report for its November 2005 Global Lightning exercise to identify any lessons learned, from participating in the exercise with two other combatant commands, on the success of the command's outreach efforts.

²See for example, [GAO-03-293SP](#), [GAO-03-669](#), and GAO, *Defense Management: Key Elements Needed to Successfully Transform DOD Business Operations*, [GAO-05-629](#) (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 28, 2005).

During our review, we obtained and analyzed USSTRATCOM budget and authorized personnel data to identify trends in acquiring the resources, personnel levels, and skills needed to implement the command's missions. We took steps to assess the reliability of the data used in these analyses, including (1) performing electronic testing of required data elements, (2) comparing the data to other independently prepared data sources, and (3) interviewing agency officials knowledgeable about the data. We determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for our purposes. For additional methodological details about how we performed our analyses, see appendixes I and II. We performed our work from May 2005 through June 2006 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

In conducting our work, we contacted officials at the command's headquarters, service, and functional components; think-tank organizations; and other relevant stakeholders. Table 6 provides information on the organizations and offices contacted during our review.

Table 6: Organizations and Offices Contacted during Our Review

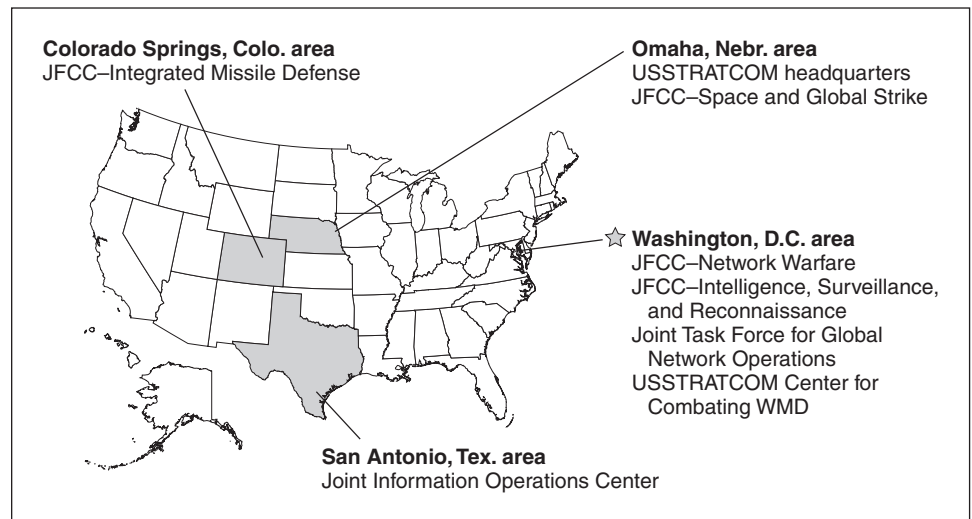
Organization/office contacted
Department of Defense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of the Secretary of Defense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Security Policy • Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint Staff Directorate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J-1 (Manpower and Personnel) • J-3 (Operations) • J-5 (Strategic Plans and Policy) • Defense Information Systems Agency • Defense Intelligence Agency • Defense Threat Reduction Agency • National Security Agency
USSTRATCOM subordinate functional organization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Information Operations Center • Joint Task Force for Global Network Operations • USSTRATCOM Center for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction • Joint Functional Component Command for Space and Global Strike • Joint Functional Component Command for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance • Joint Functional Component Command for Network Warfare • Joint Functional Component Command for Integrated Missile Defense
USSTRATCOM service component/supporting command
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of the Air Force Headquarters • U.S. Air Force Space Command • Eighth Air Force • U.S. Navy Fleet Forces Command • U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command • U.S. Marine Corps Forces Strategic Command
Combatant command
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Northern Command • U.S. Joint Forces Command <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Warfighting Center • U.S. Central Command
Other organization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LMI Government Consulting • RAND Corporation

Source: GAO.

Appendix IV: United States Strategic Command Organizations and Responsibilities

The United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) organization is comprised of a command headquarters, joint functional component commands, task forces, and centers, which are located around one of four metropolitan areas: Omaha, Nebraska; Colorado Springs, Colorado; San Antonio, Texas; and Washington, D.C.

Figure 2: Locations of USSTRATCOM's Headquarters and Subordinate Mission Organizations



Source: USSTRATCOM.

Note: JFCC= Joint Functional Component Command; WMD= weapons of mass destruction.

Each of the command's organizations is supported by a primary Defense agency or service partner organization. Table 7 shows the primary responsibilities and related information for key USSTRATCOM organizations.

**Appendix IV: United States Strategic
Command Organizations and Responsibilities**

Table 7: Key USSTRATCOM Organizations and Responsibilities

USSTRATCOM organization, location, and date established	Primary responsibilities	Primary supporting service or agency partner
USSTRATCOM headquarters Offutt Air Force Base, Nebr. October 2002	Responsible for exercising command authority over USSTRATCOM's joint functional component commands (JFCC), task forces, and centers and has strategic responsibility for integrating all of USSTRATCOM missions of space operations; information operations; integrated missile defense; global command and control; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; global strike; and strategic deterrence, and is the lead combatant command for integrating and synchronizing DOD-wide efforts in combating weapons of mass destruction.	Service component commands, JFCCs, joint task forces, and centers.
JFCC-Integrated Missile Defense Shreiver Air Force Base, Colo. January 2005	Responsible for planning, integrating, and coordinating global missile defense operations and support. The command conducts the day-to-day operations of assigned forces and coordinates activities with associated combatant commands, other USSTRATCOM JFCCs, and the Missile Defense Agency.	The Commander, JFCC-Integrated Missile Defense, is also the Commander, U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command.
JFCC-Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Bolling Air Force Base, D.C. January 2005	Responsible for coordinating global intelligence collection to address DOD worldwide operations and national intelligence requirements. It will serve as the focal point for the planning, execution, and assessment of the military's global intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance operations; a key enabler to achieving global situational awareness.	The Commander, JFCC-Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance, is also the Director, Defense Intelligence Agency.
JFCC-Space and Global Strike Offutt Air Force Base, Nebr. January 2005	Responsible for integrating all elements of military power to conduct, plan, and present global strike effects and also direct the deliberate planning and execution of assigned space operation missions. For plans not aligned with a specific mission set, the command is tasked to work in close coordination with USSTRATCOM headquarters as the lead component responsible for the integration and coordination of capabilities provided by all other JFCCs.	The Commander, JFCC-Space and Global Strike, is also the Commander, Eighth Air Force.
JFCC-Network Warfare Fort Meade, Md. January 2005	Responsible for facilitating cooperative engagement with other national entities in computer network defense and network warfare as part of the global information operations mission. This coordinated approach to information operations involves two other important supporting commands: Joint Task Force for Global Network Operations and Joint Information Operations Center.	The Commander, JFCC-Network Warfare, is also the Director, National Security Agency.
Joint Information Operations Center ^a Lackland Air Force Base, Tex. September 19991	Responsible for integrating information operations into military plans and operations across the spectrum of conflict.	The Commander, Joint Information Operations Center, is also the Commander, Air Intelligence Agency.
Joint Task Force for Global Network Operations Arlington, Va. August 2005	Responsible for supporting USSTRATCOM in defending DOD's information infrastructure. This is done by integrating the task force's capabilities into the operations of all DOD computers, networks, and systems used by DOD, combatant commands, services, and agencies.	The Commander, Joint Task Force for Global Network Operations, is also the Director, Defense Information Systems Agency.

**Appendix IV: United States Strategic
Command Organizations and Responsibilities**

USSTRATCOM organization, location, and date established	Primary responsibilities	Primary supporting service or agency partner
USSTRATCOM Center for Combating WMD Fort Belvoir, Va. August 2005	Responsible for integrating and synchronizing DOD-wide efforts in support of the combating weapons of mass destruction (WMD) mission and serves to plan, advocate, and advise the Commander, USSTRATCOM, on WMD-related matters. The center provides recommendations to dissuade, deter, and prevent the acquisition, development, or use of WMD and associated technology. Through collaboration with U.S. and allied organizations, the center leverages around-the-clock situational awareness of worldwide WMD and related activities, as well as provides day-to-day and operational crisis support via the operations center. The Defense Threat Reduction Agency provides critical reachback and resources to the center and USSTRATCOM, and other combatant commands.	Director, USSTRATCOM Center for Combating WMD, is also the Director, Defense Threat Reduction Agency.

Source: USSTRATCOM.

Note: JFCC= Joint Functional Component Command; WMD= weapons of mass destruction.

^a The Joint Information Operations Center was assigned to the new USSTRATCOM in October 2002.

Appendix V: Comments from the Department of Defense



INTERNATIONAL SECURITY
POLICY

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
2900 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-2900

August 16, 2006

Ms. Janet A. St. Laurent
Director, Defense Capabilities & Management
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Ms. St. Laurent:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the GAO draft report, GAO-06-847, "MILITARY TRANSFORMATION: Additional Actions Needed by U.S. Strategic Command to Strengthen Implementation of Its Many Missions and New Organization," dated July 18, 2006 (GAO Code 350628). The Department concurs with the first three recommendations made in the report. However, the Department does not concur with recommendations four through seven of the report. We believe measures are already in place that address the issues raised by the report. A detailed response to the report's recommendations is included.

My point of contact for the report is Commander Erik Fino at (703) 571-9627 or via email at erik.fino@osd.mil.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Green", written over a horizontal line.

Brian Green

Attachment
GAO recommendations and DoD responses



GAO DRAFT REPORT – DATED July 18, 2006
GAO CODE 350628/GAO-06-847

"MILITARY TRANSFORMATION: Additional Actions Needed by U.S. Strategic
Command to Strengthen Implementation of Its Many Missions and New
Organization"

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS
TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense direct the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command, to fully identify and request, in a timely manner, the long-term services and resources required from the U.S. Joint Forces Command's Joint Warfighting Center to support the Command's program and to reach agreement with the U.S. Joint Forces Command on the support to be provided.

DOD RESPONSE: Concur. Prior to the beginning of the FY06 U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) Global exercise series, the U.S. Joint Forces Command's Joint Warfighting Center (JWFC) provided limited exercise planning, execution and assessment support to the USSTRATCOM annual joint training program. JWFC's limited experience in nuclear operations and difficulty in obtaining requisite security clearances were often major roadblocks for USSTRATCOM to fully utilize JWFC's services. As the Command's new mission areas emerged and the Global exercise series developed, USSTRATCOM became more involved with other Commands' exercises that had an established, long-term working relationship with JWFC. USSTRATCOM's exercise planning and collaboration with these Commands highlighted the capabilities that JWFC could contribute to USSTRATCOM's joint training plan.

Over the past year, USSTRATCOM has steadily built a relationship with JWFC to obtain their support for all seven Command mission areas, including its nuclear mission. As an example, on relatively short notice and with personnel/budget constraints, JWFC provided quality observer/trainer support, World News Network, and a Maritime Common Operating Picture feed to Global Thunder 06 exercise execution, enhancing the fidelity of the exercise. JWFC is also working with USSTRATCOM to provide necessary support to Global Lightning 07 and Global Thunder 07.

USSTRATCOM and JWFC are jointly solving problems that hindered JWFC support to previous USSTRATCOM exercises. USSTRATCOM now has two JWFC support element personnel permanently assigned to its Directorate of Joint Exercises and Training to assist in identifying and obtaining JWFC support. Additionally, JWFC has a full time government civilian serving as the USSTRATCOM Desk Officer, and two contractors supporting USSTRATCOM interests at the JWFC. Likewise, USSTRATCOM is

negotiating for out-year JWFC exercise support and should have full sustainment within the next three to five years based on JWFC's current commitments. To realize near-term economies of effort, USSTRATCOM will link, where possible, its FY07-08 exercises with other Combatant Command exercises supported by JWFC.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense direct the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) and the Commander, U.S. Joint Forces Command, in the near term, to make any possible adjustments among the Joint Warfighting Center's current resources to more fully support U.S. Strategic Command's exercise program.

DOD RESPONSE: Partially concur. The Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness is currently conducting an in depth review of joint training programs with the objective of providing better flexibility and synergism in joint training investments. However, U.S. Strategic Command's joint training requirement will compete against and be prioritized with the other competing priorities for joint training funding.

RECOMMENDATION 3: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense direct the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) and the Commander, U.S. Joint Forces Command, in the long term, incorporate U.S. Strategic Command's requirements for support in the [Joint Warfighting] Center's plans to provide the full range of assistance necessary to help the U.S. Strategic Command execute a robust exercise program.

DOD RESPONSE: Concur. The Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness is currently conducting an in depth review of Joint training programs. The training support to Combatant Commands, including those provided by U.S. Joint Forces Command, is included in that review. The intent of this review is to match, to the greatest extent possible, joint training requirements and resources. As noted in the GAO report on Page 14 ". . .the center has committed to supporting both of its U.S. Strategic Command's (USSTRATCOM's) annual Global Lightning and Global Thunder exercises for FY07 [bringing the Joint Warfighting Center's support of USSTRATCOM on par with the support it provides the Regional Combatant Commands]" and that ". . .in the long-term, a center official told us that that while the center plans to provide greater support to USSTRATCOM, the center can better plan and make resources available if its provided with well-defined requirements 3 to 5 years in advance. . ." Finally as stated above, there are many demands for joint training funding, USSTRATCOM's joint training requirements must compete with the other priorities for joint training funding.

RECOMMENDATION 4: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense direct the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command to provide clear and complete guidance

2

Now on p. 18.

to the joint functional component commands for space and global strike, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, and network warfare, and the U.S. Strategic Command Center for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction that clearly defines full operating capability and provides specific, common criteria for determining what is required and how it will be assessed. This guidance should be developed in consultation with these organizations, before each organization declares full operating capability.

DOD RESPONSE: Nonconcur. Commander, U.S. Strategic Command has provided specific guidance to each of his subordinate commands in the form of a tailored Implementation Directive (ID). The ID assigns specific duties, responsibilities, tasks and authorities for the respective component. The ID also assigns target dates for achieving initial and full operating capability (IOC and FOC) status. The business model implemented by Commander, U.S. Strategic Command acknowledges the differing levels of operational maturity and assigned resources for each of the distinct mission areas. The Commander continues to work closely with component commanders to develop, implement and assess the measures of progress by which FOC will be declared. When achieved, FOC for each mission area will be reported to the Secretary of Defense.

RECOMMENDATION 5: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense direct the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command to: (1) develop a comprehensive, results-oriented management process for continually assessing and benchmarking the Command's overall progress in achieving desired outcomes and for identifying corrective actions to enhance the Command's efforts to implement and integrate its missions; (2) develop or refine performance measures that clearly demonstrate performance results and that those measures cascade down throughout the Command; (3) assign clear leadership with accountability and authority to implement and sustain the process; (4) develop and ensure that goals and objectives are clear and achievable and timelines are established; and (5) set a specific time frame for completing development of this process.

DOD RESPONSE: Nonconcur. The business model implemented by Commander, U.S. Strategic Command acknowledges the differing levels of operational maturity and assigned resources for each of the distinct mission areas. The Commander continues to work closely with component commanders to develop, implement and assess the measures of progress by which full operating capability will be declared. A variety of directives, including concepts of operations, articulate the command and component goals and objectives. Periodic exercises, external inspections and in-progress reviews are being used to help assess the command's effectiveness in operationalizing the assigned mission areas and achieving stated objectives. This process is inherent in U.S. Strategic Command's management approach and remains a sustained and ongoing activity.

RECOMMENDATION 6: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense direct the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command to: (1) provide additional guidance to the Command's service components that clearly defines and provides more specific

information about their responsibilities, requirements, relationships, and expectations for supporting the Command's headquarters and subordinate mission organizations; and (2) set a specific time frame for approval of this guidance.

DOD RESPONSE: Nonconcur. Duties and responsibilities for U.S. Strategic Command and its Service components are documented in Joint Publication 0-2, Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF). Day-to-day Combatant Commander to Service liaison is maintained via each Service component's on site representative.

RECOMMENDATION 7: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense direct the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command to develop and implement a command-wide communications strategy to: (1) guide and coordinate U.S. Strategic Command's efforts to conduct outreach with other Combatant Commands and Defense and other organizations to develop effective relationships and communications; (2) promote and educate others about the value of its mission and capabilities; and (3) obtain information on how the Command can best support other commands and organizations. This strategy should include the Command's rationale, specific objectives, desired outcomes, and strategies for conducting outreach with other commands and organizations, and criteria against which the Command can evaluate the success of its efforts.

DOD RESPONSE: Nonconcur. U.S. Strategic Command provides and promotes insight to all Strategic Command activities via the Strategic Knowledge Integration Web (SkiWeb), available to all Secret Internet Protocol Router Network (SIPRNET) subscribers. U.S. Strategic Command also maintains a senior officer representative at each Combatant Commander headquarters and with the Joint Staff. Web-based mission area training for U.S. Strategic Command's missions is available via Joint Forces Command's Joint Knowledge Development and Distribution Capability (JKDDC) website. U.S. Strategic Command is primarily a supporting commander. As such, liaison with other Combatant Commanders is conducted on a continuous basis.

Appendix VI: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contact

Janet A. St. Laurent (202) 512-4402 or stlaurentj@gao.gov

Acknowledgments

In addition to the individual named above, Gwendolyn R. Jaffe, Assistant Director; Alissa H. Czyz; David G. Hubbell; Amanda M. Leissoo; Kevin L. O'Neill; Roderick W. Rodgers; and Mark J. Wielgoszynski, Analyst-in-Charge, made key contributions to this report.

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