


GAO
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Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-03-1031](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

Congress expressed concerns about the Chemical Demilitarization Program cost and schedule, and its management structure. In 2001, the program underwent a major reorganization. Following a decade long trend of missed schedule milestones, in September 2001, the Department of Defense (DOD) revised the schedule, which extended planned milestones and increased program cost estimates beyond the 1998 estimate of \$15 billion to \$24 billion. GAO was asked to (1) examine the effect that recent organization changes have had on program performance and (2) assess the progress DOD and the Army have made in meeting the revised 2001 cost and schedule and Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) deadlines.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that DOD develop an overall strategy for the Chemical Demilitarization Program that would articulate the program's mission, identify the long-term goals and objectives, delineate the roles and responsibilities of all DOD and Army offices, and establish near-term performance measures. Also, DOD should implement a risk management approach that anticipates and influences internal and external factors that could adversely impact program performance.

DOD concurred with GAO's recommendations and said it is taking steps to implement them.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-03-1031.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Ray Decker at (202) 512-6020.

CHEMICAL WEAPONS

Sustained Leadership, Along with Key Strategic Management Tools, Is Needed to Guide DOD's Destruction Program

What GAO Found

The Chemical Demilitarization Program remains in turmoil because a number of long-standing leadership, organizational, and strategic planning issues remain unresolved. The program lacks stable leadership at the upper management levels. For example, the program has had frequent turnover in the leadership providing oversight. Further, recent reorganizations have done little to reduce the complex and fragmented organization of the program. As a result, roles and responsibilities are often unclear and program actions are not always coordinated. Finally, the absence of a comprehensive strategy leaves the program without a clear road map and methods to monitor program performance. Without these key elements, DOD and the Army have no assurance of meeting their goal to destroy the chemical stockpile in a safe and timely manner, and within cost estimates.

DOD and the Army have already missed several 2001 milestones and exceeded cost estimates; the Army has raised the program cost estimates by \$1.2 billion, with other factors still to be considered. Almost all of the incineration sites will miss the 2001 milestones because of schedule delays due to environmental, safety, community relations, and funding issues. Although neutralization sites have not missed milestones, they have had delays. DOD and the Army have not developed an approach to anticipate and influence issues that could adversely impact program schedules, cost, and safety. Unless DOD and the Army adopt a risk management approach, the program remains at great risk of missing milestones and CWC deadlines. It will also likely incur rising costs and prolong the public's exposure to the chemical stockpile.

Comparison of 1998 and 2001 Cumulative Program Cost Estimates

