

**MILITARY TRANSFORMATION**

**Realistic Deployment Timelines Needed  
 for Army Stryker Brigades**

**Why GAO Did This Study**

The Army is organizing and equipping rapidly deployable Stryker brigades as the first step in its planned 30-year transformation. Stryker brigades are to help fill a gap in capabilities between current heavy and light forces—heavy forces require too much time to deploy, and light infantry forces lack the combat power and mobility of the heavy forces. The Army has a goal to be able to deploy a Stryker brigade anywhere in the world with 4 days.

As part of a series of ongoing reviews of Army transformation, GAO assessed the Army’s progress in (1) meeting its deployment goal for Stryker brigades and (2) supporting and sustaining a deployed Stryker brigade in combat operations.

**What GAO Recommends**

GAO recommends that the Secretary of the Army work with the U.S. Transportation Command and its components to set realistic deployment timelines for the brigades that (1) reflect the use of both airlift and sealift, size of the deployed force, brigade location, and destination and (2) take into account any organizational or operational changes resulting from modifications and enhancements directed by the Office of the Secretary of Defense. In commenting on a draft of this report, the Department of Defense generally concurred with the report.

[www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-03-801](http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-03-801).

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact William M. Solis at (202) 512-8365 or solisw@gao.gov.

**What GAO Found**

The Army has made significant progress in creating forces that can be more rapidly deployed than heavy forces with its medium weight Stryker brigades, but it cannot deploy a Stryker brigade anywhere in the world within 4 days. Meeting the 4-day worldwide deployment goal of a brigade-size force would require more airlift than may be possible to allocate to these brigades; at present, it would take from 5 to 14 days, depending on brigade location and destination, and require over one-third of the Air Force’s C-17 and C-5 transport aircraft fleet to deploy one Stryker brigade by air. Because airlift alone may not be sufficient, the Army is planning to use a combination of airlift and sealift to deploy the brigades. However, if sealift were used to deploy the Stryker brigades, deployment times to many global regions would be significantly longer than the 4-day goal the Army has set for itself.

The Army’s plan for supporting and sustaining Stryker brigades in combat operations is still evolving. The Army will not be able to finish its support plan until November 2003, when the results from an operational evaluation of the first Stryker brigade will be issued. Before it can fully implement the support plan, the Army will also need to make funding and other decisions relating to implementing some of the plan’s logistical support concepts.

Deployment goals may need modification should the brigades’ design significantly change in response to direction from the Office of the Secretary of Defense to enhance the brigades’ capabilities.



Source: U.S. Army.

The Army plans to create six Stryker brigades through 2010.