



Highlights of [GAO-06-487T](#), a testimony before the Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives

Why GAO Did This Study

The Department of Defense’s (DOD) F-22A and Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) programs aim to replace many of the Department’s aging tactical fighter aircraft—many of which have been in DOD’s inventory for more than 20 years. Together, the F-22A and JSF programs represent a significant investment for DOD—currently estimated at almost \$320 billion.

GAO has reported on the poor outcomes in DOD’s acquisitions of tactical aircraft and other major weapon systems. Cost and schedule overruns have diminished DOD’s buying power and delayed the delivery of needed capabilities to the warfighter. Last year, GAO testified that weaknesses in the F-22A and JSF programs raised questions as to whether DOD’s overarching tactical aircraft recapitalization goals were achievable.

At the request of this Subcommittee, GAO is providing updated testimony on (1) the extent to which the current F-22A and JSF business cases are executable, (2) the current status of DOD’s tactical aircraft recapitalization efforts, and (3) potential options for recapitalizing the air forces as DOD moves forward with its tactical aircraft recapitalization efforts.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-487T.

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

TACTICAL AIRCRAFT

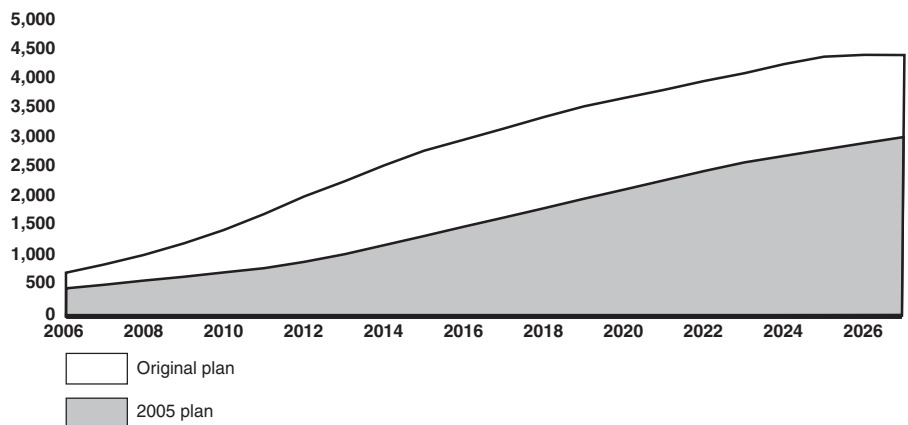
Recapitalization Goals Are Not Supported by Knowledge-Based F-22A and JSF Business Cases

What GAO Found

The future of DOD’s tactical aircraft recapitalization depends largely on the outcomes of the F-22A and JSF programs—which represent about \$245 billion in investments to be made in the future. Both programs continue to be burdened with risk. The F-22A business case is unexecutable in part because of a 198 aircraft gap between the Air Force requirement and what DOD estimates it can afford. The JSF program, which has 90 percent of its investments still in the future, plans to concurrently test and produce aircraft thus weakening DOD’s business case and jeopardizing its recapitalization efforts. It plans to begin producing aircraft in 2007 with less than 1 percent of the flight test program completed.

DOD’s current plan to buy about 3,100 new major tactical systems to replace its legacy aircraft represents a 33-percent reduction in quantities from original plans. With reduced buys and delays in delivery of the new systems, costs to keep legacy aircraft operational and relevant have increased. While the Secretary of Defense maintains that continued U.S. air dominance depends on a recapitalized force, DOD has not presented an investment strategy for tactical aircraft systems that measures needs, capability gaps, alternatives, and affordability. Without such a strategy, DOD cannot reasonably ensure it will recapitalize the force and deliver needed capabilities to the warfighter within cost and schedule targets. As DOD moves forward with its efforts to recapitalize its tactical aircraft, it needs to rethink the current business cases for the F-22A and JSF programs. This means matching needs and resources before more F-22A aircraft are procured and ensuring the JSF program demonstrates acceptable aircraft performance before it enters initial production.

Comparison of Original and Current Procurement Quantities for F/A-18EF, F-22A and JSF
Cumulative aircraft orders



Source: GAO analysis of DOD data.