



Highlights of [GAO-09-585](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

The concurrent implementation of several major Department of Defense (DOD) force structure and infrastructure initiatives has stressed the ability of traditional military construction to provide enough permanent living and working space for servicemembers and other DOD personnel. As a result, the services are using some movable—or relocatable—facilities as barracks, administrative offices, medical facilities, dining halls, and equipment maintenance facilities to meet short-term needs.

In Senate Report 110-77, the Senate Committee on Armed Services directed GAO to review the subject. This report assesses the extent to which (1) the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) is providing oversight of the services' use of relocatable facilities to meet physical infrastructure needs, and (2) DOD has a strategy for managing such facilities. GAO assessed data reported to OSD on relocatable use and cost as well as visited seven defense installations selected from those identified as having a sizeable number of relocatable facilities.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is making recommendations to improve OSD's oversight and management of the services' use of relocatable facilities by clarifying its definition of these facilities, developing a mechanism for collecting data on them, and developing a strategy for using, disposing of, and redistributing them. DOD generally agreed with GAO's recommendations.

View [GAO-09-585](#) or key components. For more information, contact Brian J. Lepore at (202) 512-4523 or leporeb@gao.gov.

DEFENSE INFRASTRUCTURE

DOD Needs to Improve Oversight of Relocatable Facilities and Develop a Strategy for Managing Their Use across the Military Services

What GAO Found

Although DOD considers the use of relocatable facilities a temporary measure to meet short-term physical infrastructure needs, the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) is not providing effective oversight of the number or cost of its relocatable facilities. OSD officials told GAO in March 2008 that they did not have information about how many relocatable facilities were being used, how many defense installations had them, or how much it has cost to acquire them. Subsequently, the military services reported to OSD that they have acquired over 4,000 relocatable facilities at an estimated cost of about \$1.5 billion over a 5-year period. However, GAO's assessment of these data showed that the data were inaccurate and incomplete. At six of the seven installations visited, GAO found discrepancies between the number of relocatable facilities located on those installations and the numbers that the services had reported to OSD. For instance, at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, installation officials told GAO the installation had about 170 relocatable facilities, which is about 80 more than the Marine Corps headquarters reported to OSD. Such discrepancies occurred in part because OSD has not provided the services with a clear definition of relocatable facilities. In addition, OSD lacks a mechanism for collecting and maintaining reliable data on these facilities. A clear, ongoing requirement for OSD to collect and maintain consistent data on relocatable facilities would better enable it to manage the use of these facilities to provide working and living space for military personnel.

OSD has not developed a comprehensive strategy for managing relocatable facilities departmentwide. Although the military services plan to replace many of their relocatable facilities with permanent construction, some officials GAO spoke with expressed skepticism that the planned replacement funds will become available. In addition, GAO found that these facilities at many installations have been in use longer than the 3 years DOD's guidance states it normally expects. Furthermore, some Army officials told GAO that due to several force structure and infrastructure initiatives, it expects that the influx of more military personnel at some installations could exacerbate the shortage of facilities, which could mean more relocatable facilities might be needed. Meanwhile, some DOD installations may be planning to acquire new relocatable facilities at market cost at the same time that other installations are disposing of them. Although the Army is moving in the direction of centralizing its management of relocatable facilities, none of the other military service headquarters told GAO they have initiated similar efforts. Because OSD does not have a comprehensive DOD-wide strategy for managing the use of relocatable facilities—including the transfer of relocatables from one location to another—the services could unnecessarily spend DOD funds by simultaneously acquiring new facilities at some locations while auctioning off or incurring costs to store or demolish similar facilities at other locations.