



Highlights of [GAO-08-375](#), a report to the Senate and House Committees on Appropriations, Subcommittees on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies

Why GAO Did This Study

In January 2007 the President announced an initiative, referred to as Grow the Force, to increase the end strength in the Army by more than 74,000 by 2013 and the Marine Corps by 27,000 personnel by 2011 to enhance U.S. forces, reduce stress on deployable personnel, and provide necessary forces for success in the Global War on Terrorism. The Department of Defense (DOD) estimates that it will need more than \$17 billion for facilities to accommodate the planned personnel increases.

GAO was asked to review (1) the process the Army and Marine Corps used to develop construction projects associated with Grow the Force, (2) the extent to which the projects submitted in DOD's budget requests for fiscal years 2007 and 2008 support the initiative, and (3) whether the Army and Marine Corps plan to use temporary facilities while construction projects are completed. GAO reviewed the construction projects associated with Grow the Force in DOD's budget requests for fiscal years 2007 and 2008, reviewed stationing documents, and interviewed officials at Army and Marine Corps headquarters and six installations on the process used to develop projects.

In comments on a draft of this report, DOD disagreed with GAO's assessment that 1 Army project and 12 Marine Corps projects do not support Grow the Force but did not provide sufficient documentation that existing capacity issues would be exacerbated by additional personnel.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on [GAO-08-375](#). For more information, contact Brian J. Lepore at (202) 512-4523 or leporeb@gao.gov.

DEFENSE INFRASTRUCTURE

Army and Marine Corps Grow the Force Construction Projects Generally Support the Initiative

What GAO Found

The Army and Marine Corps followed their typical process to develop construction projects when they developed the Grow the Force projects submitted in DOD's budget requests for fiscal years 2007 and 2008; however, the process was compressed due to the short period of time between the announcement of the initiative and submission of budget requests. For example, the active duty Army took about 2 months and the Marine Corps took 6 months to develop projects submitted in DOD's budget requests for fiscal years 2007 and 2008; the typical process takes about 2 years.

Nearly all of the military construction projects submitted as Grow the Force projects in fiscal years 2007 and 2008 supported the Grow the Force initiative. GAO found that 68 of the 69 projects submitted by the Army and Army National Guard, totaling more than \$2.3 billion, and 37 of the 49 projects submitted by the Marine Corps, totaling more than \$665 million, supported Grow the Force. However, GAO found that 1 Army project and 12 Marine Corps projects did not support Grow the Force because they addressed existing deficiencies and were needed regardless of whether Grow the Force occurred or they supported another initiative. For example, the Marine Corps included a \$7 million wastewater system modification project at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, in its fiscal year 2008 budget request to address environmental issues. Officials said the project was already planned for a future budget request and would be needed regardless of whether Grow the Force had occurred. Additionally, GAO determined that 3 Marine Corps projects, totaling \$58 million, were to construct facilities for wounded Marines that supported another initiative, not Grow the Force. While most of the fiscal years 2007 and 2008 projects were linked to Grow the Force, it may be more difficult to identify some Marine Corps and Army Reserve projects as supporting the initiative in future budget requests because the Marine Corps may not link installationwide projects to Grow the Force and the Army Reserve plans to identify projects for a related force structure effort as Grow the Force projects.

GAO's analysis shows that some units will arrive at installations before facilities are constructed; however, the Army does not plan to purchase or lease temporary facilities, while the Marine Corps plans to do so to bridge the gap between when units are established and permanent facilities are constructed. The Army plans to use existing facilities, including facilities vacated by deployed units, to bridge the gap between the time when personnel arrive and the completion date of construction projects. The majority of new units will be established at Marine Corps installations before permanent facilities are complete and will require temporary facilities. The Marine Corps requested \$147 million in fiscal year 2008 for temporary facilities, including armories and trailers, to bridge the gap between the time units arrive and the completion date of construction projects. A Marine Corps official expects that additional funding for temporary facilities will be required but the extent of the funding requirements have not yet been determined.