



Highlights of [GAO-07-1007](#), a report to congressional addressees

Why GAO Did This Study

The Army expects significant personnel growth, more than 50 percent in some cases, at 18 domestic bases through 2011 because of the effect of implementing base realignment and closure (BRAC), overseas force rebasing, and force modularity actions. This growth creates the need for additional support infrastructure at these bases and in nearby communities. Military construction costs of over \$17 billion are expected for new personnel, and communities will incur infrastructure costs as well.

GAO prepared this report under the Comptroller General's authority to conduct evaluations on his own initiative. It addresses (1) the challenges and associated risks the Army faces in providing for timely infrastructure support at its gaining installations and (2) how communities are planning and funding for infrastructure to support incoming personnel and their families. GAO analyzed personnel restationing numbers, discussed planning efforts with Army and community officials, and visited nine of the larger gaining bases and nearby communities.

What GAO Recommends

To better facilitate infrastructure planning, GAO recommends that DOD determine the causes for the variances in restationing numbers and ensure that agreement is reached within the Army on these numbers. DOD partially concurred with both recommendations.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-1007.

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

DEFENSE INFRASTRUCTURE

Challenges Increase Risks for Providing Timely Infrastructure Support for Army Installations Expecting Substantial Personnel Growth

What GAO Found

The Army has developed plans to accommodate the growth of about 154,000 personnel at its domestic bases, but it faces several complex implementation challenges that risk late provision of needed infrastructure to adequately support incoming personnel. First, Army plans continue to evolve, and Army headquarters and each of the nine gaining bases we visited were relying on different numbers of personnel movements and were not fully aware of the causes for the variances. For example, Fort Benning officials expected more than 6,000 additional soldiers and military students than Army headquarters planned. Because consistency in the relocation numbers is important for properly determining not only base infrastructure support needs but those of nearby communities as well, inconsistent numbers could lead to an improperly sized facilities' infrastructure. Second, the Army faces challenges in synchronizing personnel movements with planned newly constructed on-base infrastructure improvements. Any significant delays in implementing planned actions could place the Army at risk of not meeting BRAC statutory deadlines. Third, competing priorities could lead the Army to redirect resources planned for needed infrastructure improvements and operations to such priorities as current operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, as has happened in the past. However, such redirection of resources could undermine the Army's ability to complete infrastructure improvements in time to support personnel movements and to meet planned timelines. Fourth, the Army Corps of Engineers, the primary construction agent for the Army, must manage an unprecedented volume of construction, implement a new construction strategy designed to save construction costs and time, and complete infrastructure improvements within available resources and planned timelines. The Army recognizes these challenges and is refining its implementation plans to overcome these challenges.

While communities surrounding growth bases GAO visited have generally proactively planned for anticipated growth, they have been hindered in fully identifying additional infrastructure requirements and associated costs by the evolving nature of the Army's plans and different interpretations of the plans. For example, while Army officials at Fort Benning, Georgia, project an influx of about 10,000 school-age children, DOD's November 2006 figures project only about 600. At the time of our review, these disparities remained unresolved. Communities surrounding growth bases have their own unique infrastructure improvement needs, such as schools, housing, or transportation, based on (1) the number of personnel to actually move to the nearby base, (2) the community's current capacity in its area(s) of need, and (3) the community's own capacity to finance additional infrastructure requirements and the availability of federal or state assistance to finance these needs. Some communities had already sought federal and state assistance to help finance construction efforts at the time of GAO's review even though the evolving nature of the Army's planning prevented the communities from having reasonable assurance that they knew the full scope of their infrastructure requirements.