

145936

GAO

United States
General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

National Security and
International Affairs Division

B-246524

February 24, 1992

The Honorable Les Aspin,
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As arranged with your office, we are providing you an unclassified summary of our December 1991 classified report on the strategic Short-Range Attack Missile (SRAM) II and its tactical variant, the SRAM T (see enclosure).

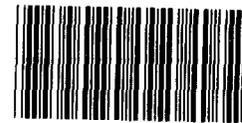
We prepared this summary to permit response in an unclassified manner to inquiries about the contents of our classified report. We are sending copies to the Secretaries of Defense, the Air Force and Energy and other interested congressional committees. We will also make the summary available to others upon request.

Please contact me at (202) 275-4268 if you or your staff have any questions concerning the summary.

Sincerely yours,

Nancy R. Kingsbury

Nancy R. Kingsbury
Director
Air Force Issues



145936

Enclosure

GAO/NSIAD-92-145R

SRAM II/T

053655 / 145936

UNCLASSIFIED SUMMARY OF
GAO's CLASSIFIED SRAM II/T REPORT

The Air Force's progress in resolving reported problems in developing the strategic Short-Range Attack Missile (SRAM) II and its tactical variant, the SRAM T, was the subject of a December 1991 classified report issued by the General Accounting Office to the Chairman, House Committee on Armed Services. We issued the report subsequent to the President's termination of the programs on September 27, 1991. At the time of our review and the President's announcement, the Air Force was in the process of negotiating a restructuring of the program because the contractor (Boeing Aerospace and Electronics) could not meet the provisions of the original contract.

The SRAM II missile was being developed to strike hardened and defended targets from outside enemy defenses to enhance bomber survivability. Our report concluded that as a result of development problems, the projected range and accuracy capabilities of the SRAM II had been degraded. Details regarding projected accuracy are classified, but we indicated that reduced range capabilities were due to the loss of rocket motor thrust, caused by problems with the rocket motor propellant, and the missile's maneuverability limitations. Numerous changes had been made in an effort to increase the range. Among those changes were a weight reduction, movement of the center of gravity, a change in the nose slope to reduce drag, and a delayed motor ignition to allow longer coasting before the second of the two-pulse rocket motor ignited.

In spite of these changes Boeing still could not meet the range requirements specified in the contract and therefore, proposed reductions to the SRAM II ranges. Additionally, the Strategic Air Command (SAC) significantly reduced its required ranges as part of a review of its overall strategic requirements. SAC's reduced range requirements for the SRAM II essentially mirrored the ranges being achieved by the SRAM A--the missile the SRAM II was intended to replace. Boeing's proposed ranges would have met SAC's revised requirements.

At the time of program termination, the SRAM II schedule had slipped about 4 years since 1985. The first assets to be delivered--that is, 50 SRAM II missiles and 5 B-1B aircraft modified to carry the SRAM II--were initially scheduled for March 1992. However, that milestone had slipped to December 1995. The estimated unit cost of SRAM II had nearly doubled, from \$0.8 million to \$1.4 million, and the quantity of missiles to be bought had decreased by about 57 percent, from 1,633 to 700 missiles.

The development of the SRAM T was contingent upon successful resolution of the SRAM II technical problems. We found that the SRAM T's estimated program cost had nearly doubled since November 1989, from about \$700 million to about \$1.4 billion. Additionally, the schedule had slipped about 3 years.

We also examined the warhead development programs for the SRAM II (W89) and SRAM T (W91) and concluded that warhead development schedules were compatible with missile development schedules, but details regarding the warhead are classified.

We also noted that, in response to a request from the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Atomic Energy, the Air Force and the Department of Energy had completed a study in June 1991 to determine the feasibility of replacing the W69 warhead on the SRAM A missile with the W89 warhead that was being developed for the SRAM II. The study concluded that, while there were technical risks in using the SRAM A missile due to its age, the W89 warhead baseline design could be incorporated on the SRAM A.