

# GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-17-513](#), a report to the Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives

## Why GAO Did This Study

DOD uses armored military vehicles for combat and operational support, but it also uses armored commercial vehicles to transport military and civilian personnel in areas that pose a threat to their safety. These vehicles differ in many ways, including mission and appearance.

The House Armed Services Committee report accompanying the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 contained a provision for GAO to assess multiple aspects of DOD's procurement practices for ACPVs. This report assesses (1) DOD's guidance and procedures for acquiring ACPVs and how they compare with those at the Department of State; and (2) the extent to which selected DOD components adhere to guidance and procedures for ensuring the safety and quality of ACPVs.

To conduct this work, GAO analyzed policies, procedures, and regulations that govern aspects of acquiring, armoring, inspecting, and managing ACPVs; interviewed DOD and State Department officials; and compared armoring standards DOD components—Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Defense Intelligence Agency—use for ACPVs against minimally acceptable protection standards. GAO reviewed contract actions for selected DOD components between 2011 and 2015.

## What GAO Recommends

The Secretary of Defense should require the Army to conduct in-progress inspections and designate a central point of contact for ACPV information. DOD concurred with the recommendations.

View [GAO-17-513](#). For more information, contact Marie A. Mak at (202) 512-4841 or [makm@gao.gov](mailto:makm@gao.gov).

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## ARMORED COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

### DOD Has Procurement Guidance, but Army Could Take Actions to Enhance Inspections and Oversight

#### What GAO Found

The Department of Defense (DOD) and the defense components in GAO's review—Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Defense Intelligence Agency, the largest buyer of armored commercial passenger-carrying vehicles (ACPV) in DOD—have a plethora of guidance related to ACPV procurement. This guidance is similar to that used by the Department of State, which also procures a large number of these vehicles (see figure). DOD officials GAO spoke with cited the Federal Acquisition Regulation as the capstone guidance for procurement activities. For DOD, guidance also exists department-wide and at the individual component levels. Guidance covers numerous aspects of ACPV acquisitions, including procurement methods, protection levels, inspection and acceptance, warranties, and oversight.

Armored Commercial Passenger-Carrying Vehicle (left) Compared to Tactical Vehicle (right).



Source: Street USA (armored commercial vehicle) (left); U.S. Army (tactical vehicle) (right). | GAO-17-513

ACPV-related contract actions for the selected DOD components generally complied with guidance, policies, and procedures for ensuring the safety and quality of ACPVs and included contract language that met minimum armoring standards. However, opportunities exist for the Army to improve its processes for in-progress inspections—inspections that occur as the vehicle is being armored—as the Army instead depended primarily on the vendors' quality control processes. GAO's review of contract actions used to procure ACPVs for selected DOD components between 2011 and 2015 showed that in-progress inspections were conducted, with the exception of the Army, which conducted such inspections for only a single contract action. Without in-progress inspections, the Army is accepting risk in the safety of its vehicles. Further, with the exception of the Army, all the DOD components have a central office and mechanisms for reporting ACPV information. This decentralized approach leaves the Army with an incomplete picture of various ACPV-related matters, including procurement and inspection methods. Federal standards for internal control call for mechanisms that allow for oversight intended to help an organization, such as the Army, ensure compliance with armoring and inspection standards. Without a designated central point of contact, the Army may face challenges for reporting ACPV information to DOD officials responsible for overseeing the implementation of armoring and inspection standards department-wide.