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August 2004

COMBATING TERRORISM

DOD Efforts to Improve Installation Preparedness Can Be Enhanced with Clarified Responsibilities and Comprehensive Planning

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GAO-04-855

August 2004

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Highlights

Highlights of GAO-04-855, a report to congressional committees.

COMBATING TERRORISM

DOD Efforts to Improve Installation Preparedness Can Be Enhanced with Clarified Responsibilities and Comprehensive Planning

Why GAO Did This Study

Terrorist incidents in the United States and abroad have underscored the Department of Defense's (DOD) need to safeguard military personnel and facilities from potential terrorist attacks involving chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons and high-yield explosive devices. In the 2003 National Defense Authorization Act, Congress directed DOD to develop a comprehensive plan to help guide departmentwide efforts in improving installation preparedness against such attacks. The act also directed GAO to assess DOD's plan. DOD submitted its report to Congress in September 2003. This review addresses two questions: (1) Does DOD's report represent a comprehensive plan that can guide installation preparedness efforts? and (2) What obstacles, if any, hinder DOD's ability to develop and effectively implement a comprehensive approach to installation preparedness?

What GAO Recommends

GAO is recommending that a single authority be designated to integrate installation preparedness efforts, and that the roles of key organizations be clearly defined. It is also recommending that the 2003 plan be updated to fully incorporate results-oriented management principles and describe what military response capabilities need to be developed. DOD agreed with all the recommendations in this report.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-04-855.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Janet St. Laurent at (202) 512-4402 or stlaurentj@gao.gov.

What GAO Found

While DOD's September 2003 report generally met the requirements of the act, it does not represent a comprehensive, results-oriented management plan that could help guide DOD's installation preparedness efforts. For example, the report described annual performance goals that were general in nature and did not have good metrics to gauge progress; it did not describe a comprehensive process and total resources needed to achieve long-term goals; and it did not define an objective and formal process for evaluating results. As a result, it is unclear how improvement goals will be achieved, what resources will be required, or when improvements are expected to be completed. In addition, it did not fully describe the national, regional, and local military response capabilities that will be developed, or how these capabilities will be integrated with local civilian capabilities. As a result, it is unclear how duplication of requirements and redundant capabilities will be avoided. DOD officials attributed the report's limitations to evolving organizational responsibilities, and a lack of resources and guidance. GAO believes that until a more results-oriented, comprehensive plan is developed that clearly articulates the military response capabilities to be developed and integrated with the civilian community, DOD's ongoing initiatives and other opportunities to improve installation preparedness may not be effectively or efficiently implemented.

Two obstacles impede DOD's ability to effectively develop a comprehensive approach to implement installation preparedness efforts. First, while a large number of organizations are engaged in efforts to improve installation preparedness, the responsibilities of two newly established organizations—the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and the U.S. Northern Command—are evolving, and the installation preparedness related responsibilities of the Assistant Secretary for Homeland Defense is not clearly defined. Second, no single entity has been given the authority and responsibility to integrate and manage departmentwide installation preparedness efforts. In discussions with officials at the department, Joint Staff, service and installation levels, there was general agreement that a lack of a single focal point having the appropriate authority and responsibility to integrate overall installation preparedness improvement efforts among the many organizations involved has adversely affected their ability to effectively plan for and manage departmentwide installation preparedness improvements. As a result, DOD has faced difficulties in developing departmentwide standards and concepts of operations and in preparing a comprehensive plan for installation preparedness. Until organization roles and responsibilities are clarified, and an integrating authority is designated, DOD will be limited in its ability to develop a comprehensive approach, promulgate departmentwide guidance, and effectively coordinate ongoing billion-dollar improvement initiatives at the installation level.

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Abbreviations

CBRNE	chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosives
DOD	Department of Defense
WMD	weapons of mass destruction

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United States Government Accountability Office
Washington, DC 20548

August 12, 2004

The Honorable John W. Warner
Chairman
The Honorable Carl Levin
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate

The Honorable Duncan L. Hunter
Chairman
The Honorable Ike Skelton
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives

Terrorist incidents within the United States and abroad have underscored the Department of Defense's (DOD) need to safeguard military personnel and infrastructure from potential terrorist attacks involving weapons of mass destruction (WMD).[1] While many of the department's past efforts have focused on enhancing protection and response capabilities against high-yield explosives, the new security environment underscores the need for the department to expand its safeguards to include chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear incidents. To address these potential threats, the department has begun to direct billions of dollars toward departmentwide initiatives designed to safeguard personnel and facilities. At the same time, the military services are continuing to pursue initiatives at specific installations to lessen their vulnerabilities to terrorist activities.

In recent years, both legislative actions and our prior work have focused on DOD's need to develop an effective program to improve its installation preparedness against terrorists' incidents. In response to a committee mandate[2] to review DOD's plans for improving installation preparedness

[1] DOD defines weapons of mass destruction as weapons that are capable of a high order of destruction and are used to destroy large numbers of people. WMD can consist of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons and high-yield explosives (CBRNE).

[2] S. Rep. No. 107-62, at 352 (2001).

for WMD, we concluded in an April 2002 report that while the department had made some progress, it did not have a comprehensive plan or overall framework to guide its installation preparedness improvement efforts.[3] We also discussed with the department during the course of that work the importance of clearly articulating the national, regional, and local response capabilities that would be developed and integrated with the civilian community so that unnecessary redundant capabilities could be avoided.

Following our initial assessment and report, in September 2002, the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued a memorandum that called for the development of a departmentwide integrated CBRNE approach to installation preparedness, with complete integration of policies, technologies, equipment, and operational concepts. The memorandum noted that the department would begin providing all installation personnel, including military and civilian personnel, contractors, and others who live or work on base, with protection against the wider range of threats.

Also following our initial report, Congress, in section 1402 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003 (see app. I),[4] directed the Secretary of Defense to develop a comprehensive plan, with annual updates in 2004, 2005, and 2006, for improving the preparedness of military installations worldwide for terrorist incidents, including attacks involving weapons of mass destruction. The legislation also directed us to review DOD's plan and provide our assessment to the Senate and House Armed Services Committees. In September 2003, the department complied with the section 1402 mandate by submitting its plan, entitled "Report to Congress on Preparedness of Military Installations for Preventing and Responding to Terrorist Incidents."

This report summarizes our assessment of DOD's September 2003 report to Congress. Specifically, it addresses two questions: (1) Does the department's report represent a comprehensive plan that can guide installation preparedness efforts? and (2) What obstacles, if any, hinder

[3] U.S. General Accounting Office, *Combating Terrorism: Preparedness of Military Installations for Incidents Involving Weapons of Mass Destruction*, GAO-02-644R (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 26, 2002).

[4] Pub. L. 107-314, §1402 (2002).

the department's ability to develop and effectively implement a comprehensive approach to installation preparedness?

In conducting our assessment, we examined DOD's 2003 report to determine if it addressed the elements required by the act, and evaluated the quality of the information by comparing it to management principles embodied by the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993,[5] such as the desired characteristics for long-term goals and strategies to accomplish those goals, and performance criteria for measuring progress. We also discussed the content of the report with department officials who prepared it to better understand how it was developed. To identify obstacles, if any, that may prevent DOD from developing a comprehensive approach to improve installation preparedness, we discussed with department, service, and installation officials the roles and responsibilities of organizations and offices involved in the department's installation preparedness efforts, as well as the challenges they faced in planning and implementing preparedness efforts. As part of our evaluation, we discussed and observed installation preparedness capabilities at 13 military installations. Although the information obtained at these locations cannot be generalized to describe DOD's worldwide installation preparedness improvement efforts, it provided us with insights on preparedness challenges at the installation level. We assessed the reliability of the data used in this report and determined that it was sufficiently reliable for our purposes.

We conducted our review between April 2003 and May 2004 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Further information on our scope and methodology appears in appendix II.

Results in Brief

While DOD's September 2003 report generally met the requirements of section 1402 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003 by discussing all of the legislatively required elements, the report does not represent a comprehensive, results-oriented management plan to help guide installation preparedness improvement efforts. For example, the report described annual performance goals that were general in nature and did not have adequate metrics to gauge progress, it did not describe a

[5] Congress enacted the Government Performance and Results Act to provide for, among other things, the establishment of strategic planning and performance measurement in the federal government. Pub. L. 103-62 (2003).

comprehensive process and total resources needed to achieve long-term goals, and it did not define an objective and formal process for evaluating results. As a result, it is unclear how long-term goals will be measured, what resources will be needed to achieve the desired goals, when the goals are expected to be achieved, and how the results of improvement efforts will be evaluated. In addition, the report did not fully describe the national, regional, and local military response capabilities that will be developed, or how those capabilities will be integrated with local civilian capabilities. As a result, it is unclear how duplication of requirements and unnecessarily redundant capabilities will be avoided. Department officials acknowledged that the report does not reflect the results-oriented management elements we describe nor are military response capabilities clearly articulated in the report, because, in their opinion, DOD organizations' roles and responsibilities were still evolving in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, and because they had limited resources and guidance to prepare the report. Officials also stated that responsibility for preparing the legislatively required annual updates to the plan has not been assigned, and that the department has not yet submitted the 2004 update, which was required to be sent with materials supporting the fiscal year 2005 budget request in March 2004. Until a comprehensive plan is prepared that more fully incorporates results-oriented management principles and better defines the desired military response capabilities, the department's installation preparedness improvement initiatives may not be implemented in the most effective and efficient manner, the department may be limited in its ability to determine if improvement efforts are achieving the desired outcome, and opportunities to improve installation preparedness may not be fully realized.

Two obstacles impede DOD's ability to effectively develop a comprehensive approach to implement installation preparedness efforts. First, a large number of organizations are engaged in efforts to improve the preparedness of military installations, but the installation preparedness-related responsibilities of two recently established organizations—the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and the U.S. Northern Command—are still evolving. On May 7, 2004, the U.S. Northern Command was assigned specific antiterrorism and force protection responsibilities for domestic installations, which was a significant step toward clarifying its installation preparedness role, but those of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense are still undefined. Secondly, no single entity has been assigned the authority or responsibility to integrate and manage departmentwide installation preparedness efforts. As a result, DOD has not developed departmentwide installation preparedness policies, including integrated concepts of

operations and standards, as required by the Assistant Secretary in his September 5, 2002, memorandum; the comprehensive plan called for by the act was prepared by an organization that had no formal authority to integrate departmentwide efforts and resolve disagreements between the parties involved; and DOD has not taken any specific steps to evaluate the overall progress in implementing this plan. Until these obstacles are removed, the department will be limited in its ability to develop a comprehensive approach, promulgate departmentwide installation preparedness guidance, and effectively coordinate ongoing improvement initiatives.

We are recommending the department take steps to fully incorporate results-oriented management principles in the next update to the plan, clarify the installation preparedness related responsibilities of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense, and designate a single integrating authority with the responsibility to coordinate and integrate worldwide installation preparedness improvement efforts. In comments on a draft of this report, the department agreed with our recommendations, and stated it will take specific actions to implement them.

Background

The department's policies, programs, and organizational responsibilities related to installation preparedness for attacks involving weapons of mass destruction have been evolving over the last few years as the department adapted to meet new challenges arising from terrorist attacks. Especially since the 1996 attack on Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia, the general focus of the department's installation preparedness activities emphasized antiterrorism, or defensive measures such as gates, fencing, perimeter lighting, and security patrols used to reduce the vulnerability of individuals and property. After the attack on the USS Cole in October 2000, antiterrorism measures received even greater emphasis, resulting in additional standards and measures to better protect military forces. The September 11, 2001, attacks in the United States heightened the emphasis and focus on installation preparedness against a wider spectrum of threats.

DOD's Antiterrorism/Force Protection Policy and Guidance

In August 2003, DOD updated its directive signed by the Deputy Secretary of Defense that provides DOD's antiterrorism policy and assigns responsibilities to defense organizations implementing antiterrorism initiatives.[6] This directive places responsibility for developing

[6] DOD Directive 2000.12: DOD Antiterrorism (AT) Program, August 18, 2003.

antiterrorism policy and guidance with the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict. In this capacity, the Assistant Secretary of Defense issued an instruction that established 31 antiterrorism standards that DOD organizations, including the services, are required to implement.[7] These standards address antiterrorism planning, training requirements, physical security measures, and related issues. The Assistant Secretary also issued a handbook containing additional detailed guidance on antiterrorism policies and practices, including guidance on assessing these practices, which was updated in February 2004.[8] Representatives of the Joint Chiefs of Staff manage antiterrorism funding, conduct inspections, and work with the Assistant Secretary to develop DOD antiterrorism policies. Additionally, each of the military services has issued regulations, orders, or instructions to implement the DOD guidance and establish its own specific policies and standards. Overseas, the geographic combatant commanders have ultimate antiterrorism and force protection authority and responsibility within their areas of responsibility.[9]

DOD Installation Preparedness Guidance and Improvement Initiatives

In a September 5, 2002, memorandum, DOD clarified its policy to protect military installations from CBRNE attacks, respond to these attacks with trained and equipped emergency responders, and ensure that installations are able to continue critical operations during an attack and resume essential operations afterwards.[10] The policy also required DOD to approach preparedness from a departmentwide perspective, with complete integration of policies, technologies, equipment, and operational concepts. The memorandum noted that the department would begin providing all installation personnel, including military and civilian personnel, contractors, and others who live or work on base, with protection against the wider range of threats.

DOD's September 2003 report to Congress was the first to offer a definition of installation preparedness. It was defined as a collective,

[7] DOD Instruction 2000.16: DOD Antiterrorism Standards, June 14, 2001.

[8] DOD Handbook O-2000.12-H: DOD Antiterrorism Handbook, February 9, 2004.

[9] DOD Instruction 2000.16, DOD Antiterrorism Standards § E3.1.1.11 (June 14, 2001).

[10] Deputy Secretary of Defense, "Preparedness of U.S. Military Installations and Facilities Worldwide Against Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High-Yield Explosive (CBRNE) Attack," Memorandum, Sept. 5, 2002.

proactive effort to prevent, detect, respond, and protect department bases, personnel, their families, and infrastructure critical to mission accomplishment against terrorists' use of weapons of mass destruction. This definition combines the fundamental elements of antiterrorism—defensive measures to prevent and detect attacks—with elements related to responding to and mitigating the effects of an attack.

DOD has recently committed significant resources and undertaken a number of initiatives to improve installation preparedness to protect personnel and facilities. For example, in September 2002, the department began a $61 million project called the Joint Services Installation Pilot Project, to provide equipment and training to enhance chemical and biological detection and emergency response capabilities on nine diverse DOD installations. In October 2003, it started the Guardian project to improve the detection and protection against chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats at 200 domestic and overseas installations at an estimated cost of $1.6 billion over the next 5 years. The project is designed to tailor requirements according to installation needs, and will include the design and installation of detection systems. Figure 1 illustrates a decontamination operation during a recent installation training exercise responding to a chemical/biological incident.

Figure 1: Decontamination Operation during Installation Exercise

Source: Navy Region Southwest.

In a number of reports that we have issued during the past few years, we have underscored the need for DOD to institute sound management principles to guide its installation preparedness efforts. Such management principles are embodied in the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 and consist of a number of critical elements considered essential in developing an effective strategy, guiding resource allocations, and monitoring results. In this previous work, we concluded that without sound management principles, DOD faces, among other things, the potential for inappropriate or redundant allocation of resources and limited or lost preparedness and response capabilities. In addition, Congress and DOD managers may not be able to determine if desired program outcomes are being achieved.

DOD's Report Does Not Represent a Comprehensive, Results-Oriented Plan to Improve Installation Preparedness

While the department's report generally met the requirements of section 1402 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003 by discussing all of the legislatively required elements, the report does not represent a comprehensive, results-oriented management plan to help guide installation preparedness improvement efforts. The legislation required the department to address nine elements—seven associated with management principles and two associated with military response capabilities. The department's report described each of these nine elements, but the management elements were not addressed in a results-oriented manner, and the military capability elements were not discussed in a manner that provides a clear description of the response capabilities needed, or how they will be integrated with civilian capabilities. As a result, installation preparedness improvement goals, objectives, resource requirements, and methods to evaluate the outcome of new initiatives remain unclear, as well as how the department intends to develop national, regional and local military response capabilities that are coordinated with civilian response capabilities.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003 required DOD to develop a comprehensive plan for improving the preparedness of military installations for terrorist incidents. Specifically, it required the department to address five elements of a preparedness strategy, and four elements of a performance plan. We analyzed these nine requirements and found that seven of them were collectively related to management principles, and two of them were discussion points related to the development of military response capabilities. Table 1 lists these nine elements.

Table 1: GAO Analysis of Legislative Requirements

Seven management-related elements
1. Identification of long-term goals and objectives for improving the preparedness of military installations for preventing and responding to terrorist attacks.
2. Description of the process, together with a discussion of the resources, necessary to achieve those goals and objectives.
3. A reasonable schedule, with milestones, for achieving the goals and objectives of the strategy.
4. Identification of factors beyond the control of the Secretary that could impede the achievement of these goals and objectives.
5. Identification of budget and other resource requirements necessary to achieve those goals and objectives.
6. Performance criteria for measuring progress in achieving those goals and objectives.
7. A description of the process for evaluating results in achieving those goals and objectives.
Two military response capability discussion elements
8. A discussion of the extent to which local, regional, or national military response capabilities are to be developed, integrated, and used.
9. A discussion of how the Secretary will coordinate the capabilities referred to in #8 above with local, regional, or national civilian and other military capabilities.

Source: GAO analysis of section 1402 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003.

DOD's September report to Congress discussed each of the nine required elements and was therefore technically in compliance with the requirements of the act. However, the report did not address the seven management-related elements in a manner that fully incorporates results-oriented management principles so that the report could serve as a useful tool in guiding installation improvement efforts. The following is our assessment of the adequacy of the information provided in the department's report when compared to results-oriented management principles:

- **Long-Term Goals**—Long-term goals should explain what results are expected, should be results-oriented, and should be expressed in a way that allows them to be assessed in terms of achievement. They should also describe how managers are to be held accountable for achieving such goals. Although the department's report identifies four long-term goals, which it calls "preparedness strategy elements"—prevention, detection, protection, and emergency response—it does not clearly express these goals in a way that would allow the department to measure progress toward achieving them. For example, the prevention strategy element was described as "The Department's

antiterrorism (AT) strategy is to maximize efforts to prevent, deter, and detect terrorist attacks against DOD personnel, their families, facilities, installations, and infrastructure critical to mission accomplishment as well as the preparation needed to defend against and respond to the consequences of terrorist incidents." This description does not provide the information necessary to explain what results are to be expected nor is it described in a way that allows progress to be assessed. Furthermore, the report did not identify the organizations accountable for achieving the goals.

- **Process to Achieve Goals**—The act required that the plan describe the process, together with a discussion of the resources, necessary to achieve those goals and objectives. In describing how the installation preparedness improvement strategy would be achieved, the department's report provided some general narrative such as "DOD…policies support this…strategy by ensuring a comprehensive and integrated approach that continuously identifies and overcomes vulnerabilities, thereby reducing risk to our personnel and resources; enhancing the planning, training and equipping of the force; and providing prudent guidance and direction…" The department's report also describes ongoing improvement initiatives such as the Joint Service Installation Pilot Project and the Guardian Program.[11] Because of the general nature of the discussion in the report, it was not clear the extent to which the goals would be met with the cited initiatives, or, as discussed below, the full extent to which resources would be required to achieve each goal.

- **Schedule with milestones**—The act required the plan to include a reasonable schedule, with milestones, for achieving the installation preparedness long-term goals. Such a schedule should include details on incremental performance goals that are tangible, measurable, and objective; usually expressed within certain timeframes such as "by the end of 200X, at least 95 percent of commanders will have completed required annual terrorism risk assessments." The department's report contained 25 performance goals identified in the report as strategic objectives. These objectives were general in nature, and most contained a specific year in which the goal was to be either started or achieved. However, as discussed in the performance criteria section below, they all lacked specific targets that could be used to measure progress. For example, one strategic objective listed in the plan states

[11] Referred to in the report as the "Chemical, Biological Installation/Force Protection Program."

"beginning in fiscal year 2003, improve robotic vehicles for [antiterrorism] operations as well as for emergency responders."

- **External factors that could impede achievement of the long-term goals**—External impediments should be identified, and the actions needed to mitigate these impediments should be addressed. Although the department's report identifies a number of external impediments (e.g., the feasibility, availability, and affordability of technological solutions and the degree to which state and local responders are trained and equipped), it does not clearly describe how these factors may affect the department's ability to achieve its goals, or ways of reducing the potential impact of these impediments.

- **Identification of budget and other resources**—Good management principles call for the identification of resources, including funding, personnel, and equipment, needed to accomplish the expected level of performance. Although the department's report identifies funding resources needed for antiterrorism and consequence management[12]—for example, $8.5 billion in fiscal year 2004—the report indicates that this amount is part of a larger funding requirement, but it does not provide further details. In addition, the report does not include any information on additional personnel or equipment that would be needed.

- **Performance criteria**—Performance criteria or measures are indicators used to measure progress in achieving goals and objectives. They should be objective and outcome-oriented with specific target levels to meet performance goals. The department's report identifies 25 performance indicators (one for each performance goal), which it calls measures of effectiveness. However, many of them are not outcome-oriented and all of them lack specific targets or baselines that could be used to measure progress. For example, as discussed previously, although the report notes that robotic vehicles will be improved, it does not provide a quantifiable target, nor does it present a baseline to assess progress. In another example, a strategic objective listed in the plan is "develop standardized installation CBRNE scenario exercises for training and equipment requirements." The related measure of effectiveness described in the report is "standardized

[12] Consequence management is defined in DOD Directive 2000.12 as those measures taken to protect public health and safety, restore essential government services, and provide emergency relief to governments, business, and individuals affected by the consequences of a CBRNE situation.

exercise scenarios will improve efficiencies and consistency in equipment and training, leading to improved interoperability." This measure of effectiveness is highlighting the potential benefit of achieving the objective; it does not provide specific criteria for how it will be measured, or any baseline data that can be used to measure progress in achieving the stated goal.

- **Process for evaluating results**—Program evaluations are defined as objective and formal assessments of the results, impact, or effects of a program or policy. Such information can be used to assess the extent to which performance goals were met and identify appropriate strategies to meet those goals that were not met. The department's report indicates that it will provide general oversight, semiannual review of action plans, and annual reviews of antiterrorism plans. However, the report does not define how it will evaluate the impact of current initiatives or describe how such evaluations could be used to improve the department's overall efforts to improve installation preparedness.

In addition to the seven management-related elements, the legislation required DOD to discuss two elements related to military response capabilities. In the first element, the department was required to discuss the extent to which local, regional, or national military response capabilities were to be developed, integrated, and used. In our view, it is important that DOD articulate the extent to which it will develop such capabilities because national and regional capabilities can supplement or enhance those available at individual installations and redundant capabilities could be avoided. In the report, however, DOD discussed non-military capabilities, such as the Federal Response Plan, which provides a government-integrated response to disasters through the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The report also discussed the department's Joint Task Force for Civil Support, which serves as a military headquarters unit responsible for coordinating department activities supporting civil authorities, but does not have specific operational response capabilities of its own.

In the second discussion element, DOD was directed to discuss how it would coordinate its proposed military response capabilities with civilian capabilities. Such a discussion would provide information on how overlap and duplication of efforts between military and civilian organizations at all levels could be reduced. However, DOD's report discussed the need to use memorandums of agreement between, for example, military installations and civilian local-community first responders to fill in the gaps in

emergency response capabilities on and off base. However, because it did not address how military regional and national response capabilities were to be developed, integrated, and used, the report did not describe how those capabilities would be coordinated with those of the civilian sector. Furthermore, while the report discussed a national-level response exercise, called "Top Officials,"[13] involving cooperation and coordination between the federal response community (such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency) and local and regional civilian response organizations, the report did not describe how military response capabilities would be integrated into such exercises, nor how lessons learned from national exercises would be shared with military organizations.

In discussions with us, officials from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense, who were responsible for preparing the report, agreed that the report does not fully reflect the results-oriented management elements that we have described above. In addition, they agreed that the report does not clearly articulate the military response capabilities to be developed at the national, regional and local levels. They told us that, in their opinion, the department organizations' roles and responsibilities were still evolving in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 (discussed in more detail later in this report), and they prepared the report with limited staff and limited guidance. As a result, they approached the preparation of the report by generally summarizing the key efforts underway in the department to improve installation preparedness, and by drawing on key elements of the existing antiterrorism program.

Based on the concerns of Congress regarding the need for DOD to effectively plan for installation preparedness improvements against terrorist incidents, and our past work concluding that DOD did not have a comprehensive plan or overall framework to guide its installation preparedness improvement efforts, we believe that without clearly articulated results-oriented management elements, the report—and the comprehensive plan it is supposed to reflect—cannot serve as a useful tool

[13] Congress mandated the Department of State and Department of Justice to conduct a series of challenging, role-playing exercises involving the senior federal, state, and local officials who would direct crisis management and consequence management response to an actual WMD attack. The result was Top Officials (TOPOFF), a national-level domestic and international exercise series designed to produce a more effective, coordinated, global response to WMD terrorism.

to guide and manage installation improvement efforts and provide a mechanism to adequately assess progress. For example, DOD's report is unclear in its discussion of how long-term goals will be measured, what resources will be needed to achieve the desired goals, when the goals are expected to be achieved, and how the results of ongoing improvement efforts will be evaluated. In addition, without a clear description of how national, regional, and local military response capabilities will be developed and integrated with civilian capabilities, it is unclear how duplication of requirements and redundant capabilities will be avoided. Therefore, without a comprehensive plan that more fully incorporates results-oriented management principles and better defines the desired military response capabilities, the department's installation preparedness improvement initiatives may not be implemented in the most effective and efficient manner, the department may be limited in its ability to determine if improvement efforts are achieving the desired outcome, and opportunities to improve installation preparedness may not be fully realized.

Furthermore, the act requires that DOD submit annual updates to the plan in fiscal years 2004, 2005, and 2006 that include a discussion of any revision to the plan, and an assessment of the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the strategy set forth in the plan. DOD, however, has not assigned responsibility for preparing the required updates to any organization and has not taken any specific steps to evaluate the overall progress in implementing this plan. In fact, the first annual update, which was due March 2004 with the materials that the Secretary of Defense submits to Congress in support of the budget submission, has not yet been submitted. According to the officials we spoke with, until specific responsibility for updating the plan is assigned, it is unclear who will prepare the updates or when they will be prepared.

Two Obstacles Hinder DOD's Ability to Improve Installation Preparedness

Two obstacles have impeded DOD's ability to effectively develop a comprehensive approach to implement installation preparedness efforts. First, although numerous organizations currently engaged in installation preparedness improvement efforts have clear roles and responsibilities, two key organizations—the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and the U.S. Northern Command—have only been recently established, and their installation preparedness responsibilities are still evolving. On May 7, 2004, the Northern Command was assigned specific antiterrorism and force protection responsibilities for domestic installations, which was a significant step toward clarifying its installation preparedness role, but those of Homeland Defense are still undefined.

Second, no organization has been given the authority and responsibility to integrate and coordinate installation preparedness policies and improvement efforts and monitor progress in achieving the plan's objectives. Until these issues are resolved, DOD will be unable to pursue installation preparedness improvements in a comprehensive and integrated manner, and the significant resources being applied to accomplish improvement goals may not be spent in the most efficient and effective manner.

Numerous Organizations Involved in Installation Preparedness and Two Have Evolving Roles and Responsibilities

Many organizations at various levels within DOD are engaged in activities to improve installation preparedness. The military services and their installation commanders play a key role in safeguarding their individual bases, while combatant commanders are responsible for protecting forces within their geographic areas of responsibility. In addition, there are several department and Joint-Staff-level organizations that have key roles and responsibilities for installation preparedness policies and procedures. The roles of most of these organizations are clearly defined but those of two recently established department organizations—the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and U. S. Northern Command—are still evolving. Table 2 lists the key organizations involved in installation preparedness at the department and Joint Staff levels, and briefly describes their roles and responsibilities.

Table 2: Key DOD and Joint Staff Organizations Involved in Installation Preparedness

Organization	Installation preparedness related responsibilities
Under Secretary of Defense for Policy	
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict	Develops worldwide antiterrorism policy and guidance for the DOD components. Such guidance currently includes DOD Directive 2000.12, "DOD Antiterrorism Program"; DOD Instruction 2000.16, "DOD Antiterrorism Standards"; and DOD O-2000.12-H, "DOD Antiterrorism Handbook."

Organization	Installation preparedness related responsibilities
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense	Provides overall supervision of homeland defense activities of the department under the authority, direction, and control of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. As such, will oversee homeland defense activities, develop policies, conduct analyses, provide advice, and make recommendations on homeland defense, support to civil authorities, emergency preparedness and domestic crisis management matters with the department. DOD defines homeland defense as the military protection of United States territory, domestic population, and critical defense infrastructure against external threats and aggression.
Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics	
Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear and Chemical and Biological Defense Programs	Oversees the Chemical Biological Defense Program, including programs such as Project Guardian, run by the Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical- Biological Defense.
Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Installations and Environment	Prepares and defends the Military Construction Bill, which funds installation construction projects that include antiterrorism measures; monitors and reports on installations' readiness; and is responsible for the development of DOD's minimum antiterrorism standards for buildings.
Defense Threat Reduction Agency[a]	The Director of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency reports directly to the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics. Safeguards America's interests from weapons of mass destruction by controlling and reducing the threat and providing tools and services for the warfighter. Provides direction and oversight of the Joint Services Installation Pilot Project to upgrade nine military installations to be model sites for biological and chemical safety. Manages the Unconventional Nuclear Weapons Defense program, in conjunction with the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics.

Organization	Installation preparedness related responsibilities
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff	
Joint Requirements Office for Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defense	Develops departmentwide concepts of operations and comprehensive CBRNE standards for the preparedness of military installations, as directed by the Joint Staff. Serves as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's focal point for all chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear defense issues in passive defense, force protection, consequence management, and homeland security, including installation protection responsibilities.
Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical-Biological Defense	Implements the Guardian Program to improve CBRN capabilities on 200 installations under the purview of the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear and Chemical and Biological Defense programs. Developed equipment standards for selecting equipment for its installations, and will update that equipment list on an annual basis throughout different phases of the Guardian program.
Combatant Commands	
Geographic Combatant Commanders	Responsible for implementing antiterrorism policies and programs for the protection of all department elements and personnel in their area of responsibility.
U. S. Northern Command	Responsible for conducting operations to deter, prevent, and defeat threats and aggression aimed at the continental United States and other nearby areas within its area of responsibility. Effective not later than October 1, 2004, will exercise tactical control for department force protection and assume overall department antiterrorism program and force protection responsibility in the continental United States.
Military Services	
Military departments	Each of the military services has issued regulations, orders, or instructions to implement the DOD guidance and establish its own specific policies and standards. The services assign responsibility for protecting installations from terrorist attacks to installation commanders.

Organization	Installation preparedness related responsibilities
Installation commanders	Responsible for protecting installations from terrorist attacks, including identifying and prioritizing requirements using annual assessments of threat, vulnerability, and the criticality of assets.

Source: GAO analysis.

[a]Combat Support Agency.

Three organizations have responsibilities for recent departmentwide improvement initiatives. First, the Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical-Biological Defense, under the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, is in charge of implementing the Guardian program to safeguard 200 military installations within the next 5 years, at an estimated cost of $1.6 billion. Oversight of this project is assigned to the Office of the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear and Chemical and Biological Defense Programs. Second, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, a combat support agency that reports to the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, is responsible for managing the Joint Services Installation Pilot Project—an initiative to enhance chemical/biological detection and emergency response capabilities at nine installations. Figure 2 shows a first responder in protective gear assisting a person exposed to a chemical/biological agent during a Pilot Project exercise. Third, the Joint Requirements Office for Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defense, under the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, is responsible for developing CBRNE concepts of operations and standards for installation preparedness.

Figure 2: Emergency Personnel Assist Individual in Chemical/Biological Exercise

Source: Navy Region Southwest.

Two recently established organizations have key roles in homeland defense, but their roles and responsibilities for improving the preparedness of military installations for preventing and responding to terrorist attacks are still evolving. The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense, which was established as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003,[14] has responsibility for the overall supervision of homeland defense (including land, maritime, and aerospace) activities. More specifically, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense is to lead and focus the department's activities in homeland defense and homeland security; ensure internal coordination of DOD policy direction; provide guidance to the U.S. Northern Command for its homeland defense mission and its military activities in support of homeland security, support to civil authorities; and coordinate with the Department of Homeland Security and other government agencies. However, as of May 2004, DOD had not yet published or promulgated a charter for this organization that would clearly define its roles and responsibilities for installation preparedness. Although this organization prepared DOD's September 2003 report to Congress, it does not have the authority or responsibility to integrate and coordinate the various aspects of installation preparedness, which are currently scattered throughout the department.

Similarly, an April 2002 revision to DOD's Unified Command Plan,[15] approved by the President, created the new U.S. Northern Command, a geographic combatant command with the responsibility to militarily defend the continental United States and other nearby areas. More specifically, the command is responsible for conducting operations to deter, prevent, and defeat threats and aggression aimed at the United States and its territories and interests within its area of responsibility; moreover, as directed by the President or Secretary of Defense, it provides military assistance to civil authorities, including consequence management operations in response to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high-yield explosive events.

Until recently, Northern Command's specific role in supporting the department's efforts to improve installation preparedness was not clearly

[14] Pub. L. 107-314, § 902 (2002).

[15] Unified command plans provide guidance to combatant commanders and establish their missions, responsibilities, force structure, geographic area of responsibility, and other attributes.

defined. On May 7, 2004, however, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff assigned U.S. Northern Command the responsibilities for force protection and the department's antiterrorism program in the continental United States, effective no later than October 1, 2004.[16] This step significantly clarified the command's role, but the specific details of how those responsibilities will be carried out are still being developed. In addition, because the Northern Command's area of responsibility covers domestic installations, its efforts to support installation preparedness may be much more complex than in overseas locations, due to the additional responsibilities to provide military assistance to civil authorities, including consequence management operations.

The Department Lacks a Focal Point for Installation Preparedness Efforts

DOD has not designated a single focal point with the authority and responsibility to integrate and coordinate all aspects of installation preparedness, thereby hindering its ability to develop a comprehensive approach to installation preparedness. This has been evident in a number of areas, for example:

- Although the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense does not have overall authority to integrate installation preparedness activities for the department, its staff was tasked with preparing DOD's report on installation preparedness. Homeland Defense officials told us that developing the report and obtaining agreement on its content from the many organizations involved in preparedness activities was hampered because they did not have overall authority and responsibility for planning the department's approach to installation preparedness. For example, they said they had limited ability to resolve disagreements among various organizations over many issues, such as the definition of installation preparedness or the specific language used in the report, and thus faced delays in moving the report forward.

- DOD has not assigned responsibility to any organization for updating the 2003 report or monitoring progress in achieving its goals. Although the 2003 report discussed some oversight and coordination mechanisms, these were primarily related to the department's existing antiterrorism program. Because of the lack of an assignment, the 2004

[16] In a message from the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, dated May 7, 2004, with subject: Executive Order for standup of U.S. Northern Command's antiterrorism and force protection responsibilities for the continental United States.

update was not submitted to Congress, and the department has not taken any specific steps to evaluate the overall progress in implementing this plan.

- Responsibilities for developing DOD policy, standards and other guidance related to installation preparedness are fragmented. On one hand, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict is responsible for preparing worldwide antiterrorism policies,[17] standards,[18] implementation guidance,[19] and an antiterrorism strategic plan.[20] The mission of the DOD antiterrorism program, according to officials drafting the new antiterrorism strategic plan, is to provide worldwide protection of DOD personnel and their families; selected DOD contractors; and installations, infrastructure, and key assets/information essential to mission accomplishment from acts of terrorism, including CBRNE hazards. Over the past 10 months, this office has updated the antiterrorism policy and implementation guidance, drafted the antiterrorism strategic plan, and is currently revising the antiterrorism standards. The Assistant Secretary was also tasked by the Deputy Secretary of Defense in his September 5, 2002, memo to ensure that CBRNE standards were developed in coordination with the Joint Staff; the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics; and the Chemical and Biological Defense Program, with a target issue date of May 2003. However, as of May 2004, the Joint Requirements Office, tasked by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff with preparing these standards, together with the concepts of operations, had not been able to obtain final approval for either of these documents. Furthermore, according to agency officials, future updates to the CBRNE emergency response guidelines will be prepared under the direction of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense.[21]

- Military installations are facing challenges in prioritizing requirements for funding and personnel resources because DOD has been unable to develop departmentwide CBRNE concepts of operations and

[17] DOD Directive 2000.12: DOD Antiterrorism (AT) Program, August 18, 2003.

[18] DOD Instruction 2000.16, "DOD Antiterrorism Standards," June 14, 2001.

[19] DOD Handbook 0-2000.12-H: DOD Antiterrorism Handbook, February 9, 2004.

[20] DOD O-20012-P Department of Defense Antiterrorism Strategic Plan, June 15, 2004.

[21] DOD Instruction 2000.18, "DOD Installation Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and High-Yield Explosive Emergency Response Guidelines," December 4, 2002.

standards, which provide the basis for calculating requirements. Until they receive this guidance, the military services and installations will not be able to develop rational funding and personnel requirements; in addition, they may encounter difficulties in operating and maintaining new detection and protection equipment that they receive as a result of departmentwide initiatives such as the Joint Services Installation Pilot Project or the Guardian program. For example, at three installations participating in the Joint Services Installation Pilot Project, officials noted the need for additional resources to support the new equipment, which created unfunded requirements in fiscal year 2004 ranging from $2.1 to $6.5 million at each installation.

In our discussions with officials at the department, Joint Staff, service, and installation levels, there was general agreement that the lack of a single focal point with the appropriate authority and responsibility to integrate departmentwide installation preparedness improvement efforts among the many organizations involved has adversely affected their ability to effectively plan for and manage these efforts. More specifically, the officials said that this lack of a focal point has hindered their ability to develop needed overarching guidance, such as the comprehensive plan, concepts of operations, and CBRNE standards.

The evolving roles of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and the Northern Command as the Combatant Command responsible for domestic military installations and facilities, combined with the lack of an integrating authority to oversee the efforts of various department organizations and improvement efforts, has limited the department's ability to develop a comprehensive improvement plan, integrated concepts of operations, and specific installation preparedness standards. The recent decision to assign antiterrorism and force protection responsibilities for domestic installations to Northern Command has been a significant step in clarifying its overall responsibilities, but the role of Homeland Defense remains unclear because its charter has not been approved. Until Homeland Defense roles and responsibilities are clarified as to how it will support the department's plan to improve installation preparedness, and an integrating authority is established, the department may continue to struggle with these issues, and the improvement efforts at all levels within the department may not be fully coordinated or efficiently executed.

Conclusions

Improving the preparedness of military installations worldwide for attacks using weapons of mass destruction is a challenging and complex task that will require a significant allocation of resources; involve numerous organizations within the department; and necessitate the coordination with other federal agencies and civilian organizations within the United States, and host nation organizations in overseas locations. Although the department has taken several steps and committed significant resources to immediately begin installation preparedness improvements, it lacks a comprehensive approach required by Congress that incorporates results-oriented management principles to guide improvement initiatives in the most efficient and effective manner. Congress has also required the department to prepare annual updates to the plan, which presents an opportunity to address the plan's weaknesses, but several obstacles exist that have stymied the department's ability to develop a comprehensive, results-oriented plan. The major obstacle we identified is the lack of a single organization or entity with the responsibility and authority to oversee and integrate the installation preparedness improvement efforts of various DOD organizations. This is a complex issue, because it involves those installations located within the continental United States, and those located in foreign countries. Other obstacles we noted include evolving or unclear responsibilities of key organizations, and an unassigned responsibility to update the plan. Without a revised plan that fully incorporates results-oriented management principles and clearly articulates the military response capabilities to be developed and integrated with the civilian community, the significant resources being applied to improve preparedness may not be spent in the most efficient and effective manner, and more importantly, opportunities to improve preparedness and protect military personnel, facilities, and capabilities from attacks using weapons of mass destruction may be lost.

Recommendations for Executive Action

To develop a more useful plan to guide installation preparedness improvement efforts, and to address barriers that inhibit DOD's ability to develop a comprehensive approach to improve installation preparedness, we recommend that the Secretary of Defense take the following five actions:

- Designate a single integrating authority with the responsibility to coordinate and integrate worldwide installation preparedness improvement efforts at the department, service and installation levels.
- Assign that organization with responsibility for preparing the 2004, 2005, and 2006 updates to the plan, which are required by section 1402 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003.

- Clarify the installation preparedness responsibilities of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense.
- Require the next update to the plan to fully incorporate results-oriented management principles in the legislatively required elements. Specifically, the plan should contain:
  - Long-term goals that explain what results are expected, are results-oriented, and are expressed in a way that allows them to be assessed in terms of achievement.
  - Strategies that articulate the processes necessary to achieve the organization's goals and describe how managers are to be held accountable for achieving such goals.
  - Annual performance goals that include a schedule with milestones to measure progress toward the long-term goals, and are tangible and measurable.
  - A description of external impediments to achieving the goals and the actions needed to mitigate these impediments;
  - Identification of resources, including funding, personnel, and equipment, needed to accomplish the expected level of performance.
  - Performance criteria or indicators used to measure progress in achieving goals and objectives; these criteria should be objective and outcome-oriented with specific target levels to meet performance goals.
  - Evaluation plans that are objective and formal assessments of the results, impact, or effects of installation preparedness improvement efforts.
- Require the next update to the plan to clearly describe the military response capabilities that will be developed at the national, regional, and local levels; and how those capabilities will be developed in conjunction with civilian capabilities.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

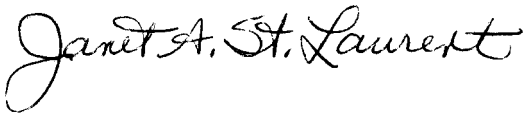
In comments on a draft of this report provided by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense, the department agreed with our recommendations recognizing the need for centralized management and operational oversight of a comprehensive preparedness program. The Assistant Secretary's comments also stated that oversight and policy development for worldwide installation preparedness will be assigned to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense, and the charter directive for that organization will promulgate responsibility and required authority for worldwide installation preparedness. The Assistant Secretary will also be responsible for preparing the 2004, 2005, and 2006 updates to the comprehensive plan required by section 1402 of the National Defense Authorization Act for

Fiscal Year 2003. DOD agreed that these future updates would fully incorporate results-oriented management principles in the legislatively required elements, clearly describe the military response capabilities that will be developed at the national, regional, and local levels, and address how those capabilities will be developed in conjunction with civilian capabilities. In regard to the military response capabilities, DOD stated it was of paramount importance that the department work with other local, state, and federal entities to ensure redundant capabilities are avoided.

We believe the actions DOD has outlined, when implemented, will be responsive to our recommendations, and they represent positive steps toward integrating installation preparedness improvement efforts and establishing a more results-oriented management framework to guide these efforts. The future updates to the comprehensive plan will also serve as a mechanism to provide Congress, DOD managers, and other organizations with an annual assessment of the progress achieved in improving installation preparedness.

DOD's comments are included in their entirety in appendix III.

We are sending copies of this report to the appropriate congressional committees; the Secretary of Defense; the Secretary of the Army; the Secretary of the Navy, the Secretary of the Air Force; the Commandant of the Marine Corps; and the Director, Office of the Management and Budget. We will also make copies available to others upon request. In addition, the report will be available at no charge on the GAO Web site at http://www.gao.gov. Should you or your staff have any questions regarding this report, please contact me at (202) 512-4402, or my Assistant Director, Robert L. Repasky, at (202) 512-9868. Key contributors to this report are listed in appendix IV.



Janet St. Laurent, Director
Defense Capabilities and Management

Appendix I: Section 1402 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003

SEC. 1402. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR IMPROVING THE PREPAREDNESS OF MILITARY INSTALLATIONS FOR TERRORIST INCIDENTS

(a) **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**—The Secretary of Defense shall develop a comprehensive plan for improving the preparedness of military installations for preventing and responding to terrorist attacks, including attacks involving the use or threat of use of weapons of mass destruction.

(b) **PREPAREDNESS STRATEGY**—The plan under subsection (a) shall include a preparedness strategy that includes each of the following:

(1) Identification of long-term goals and objectives for improving the preparedness of military installations for preventing and responding to terrorist attacks.

(2) Identification of budget and other resource requirements necessary to achieve those goals and objectives.

(3) Identification of factors beyond the control of the Secretary that could impede the achievement of these goals and objectives.

(4) A discussion of the extent to which local, regional, or national military response capabilities are to be developed, integrated, and used.

(5) A discussion of how the Secretary will coordinate the capabilities referred to in paragraph (4) with local, regional, or national civilian and other military capabilities.

(c) **PERFORMANCE PLAN**.—The plan under subsection (a) shall include a performance plan that includes each of the following:

(1) A reasonable schedule, with milestones, for achieving the goals and objectives of the strategy under subsection (b).

(2) Performance criteria for measuring progress in achieving those goals and objectives.

(3) A description of the process, together with a discussion of the resources, necessary to achieve those goals and objectives

(4) A description of the process for evaluating results in achieving those goals and objectives.

(d) **SUBMITTAL TO CONGRESS**.—The Secretary shall submit the comprehensive plan developed under subsection (a) to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(e) **COMPTROLLER GENERAL REVIEW AND REPORT**.—Not later than 60 days after the date on which the Secretary submits the comprehensive plan under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall review the plan and submit to the committees referred to in subsection (d) the Comptroller General's assessment of the plan.

(f) **ANNUAL REPORT**.—(1) In each of 2004, 2005, and 2006, the Secretary of Defense shall include a report on the comprehensive plan developed under subsection (a) with the materials that the Secretary submits to Congress in support of the budget submitted by the President that year pursuant to section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code.

(2) Each such report shall include-

(A) a discussion of any revision that the Secretary has made in the comprehensive plan developed under subsection (a) since the last report under this subsection or, in the case of the first such report, since the plan was submitted under subsection (d); and

(B) an assessment of the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the strategy set forth in the plan.

(3) If the Secretary includes in the report for 2004 or 2005 under this subsection a declaration that the goals and objectives of the preparedness strategy set forth in the comprehensive plan have been achieved, no further report is required under this subsection.

Appendix II: Scope and Methodology

To determine if the Department of Defense's (DOD) September 2003 report to Congress represents a comprehensive plan that can guide installation preparedness efforts, we based our analysis on our past work that addressed the need for DOD to develop comprehensive strategies and implementation plans with results-oriented elements that focused on program outcomes or results, rather than program activities and processes. We discussed the concerns of Congress with committee staffs who were involved in developing section 1402 of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2003 to better understand the requirements of the Act. We also discussed the report content with department officials who prepared it to ensure we had an agreed upon interpretation of the elements presented in the report. We then compared the nine elements discussed in the report with those specifically required by the legislation. We also compared the report's seven management-related elements with those developed from sound management principles as embodied in the Government Results and Performance Act (GPRA) of 1993 and further refined in GPRA user guides and prior GAO reports. To assess the two discussion elements related to military response capabilities required by the legislation, we reviewed information presented in the report to determine if it presented a clear discussion of the national, regional, local response capabilities, and how they would be developed in conjunction with civilian capabilities. We also discussed the content of the report in these two areas with officials at the department, Service, and installation levels to obtain their views on the report content and the usefulness of that information.

To identify obstacles that may hinder the department's ability to develop and implement an integrated and comprehensive installation preparedness approach, we interviewed officials from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the military services who are responsible for policies, programs, and key initiatives related to various aspects of installation preparedness against chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high-yield explosive incidents. We also gathered and reviewed relevant policy guidance, instructions, and implementation documents for current improvement initiatives, including the Joint Services Installation Pilot Project and project Guardian, and discussed these initiatives with department and service headquarters and installation officials.

We discussed and observed installation preparedness capabilities at 13 military installations. We selected east and west coast military installations, representing each of the military services, including locations in close proximity to large civilian communities, some that were more

isolated, and some that were participating in the Joint Services Installation Pilot Project. Specific discussions with military installation officials included installation preparedness criteria, roles and responsibilities, major efforts to improve installation preparedness as well as the financial impact to the installations with regard to current improvement initiatives, efforts to ensure effective coordination among and between military and civilian organizations, particularly first responders and those involved in consequence management, and what they believe should be included in the comprehensive plan to make it a useful management tool. In addition, we observed installation preparedness exercises in the Norfolk and San Diego areas. Although the information obtained at these locations cannot be generalized to describe DOD's worldwide installation preparedness improvement efforts, it provided us with insights on preparedness challenges at the installation level. Table 3 lists the military organizations and installations we visited or contacted to obtain our data.

Table 3: Headquarters Organizations and Military Installations Visited or Contacted for this Assignment

Department headquarters organizations, Washington metropolitan area
• Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense
• Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict
• Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical, Biological, and Defense Programs
• Defense Threat Reduction Agency
• National Guard Bureau, Homeland Defense
Joint Chiefs of Staff headquarters organizations, Washington metropolitan area
• Joint Chiefs of Staff, Director of Operations J-3
• Joint Program Executive Office, Chemical Biological Program
• Joint Requirements Office
Military service headquarters organizations, Washington metropolitan area
• Army Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations & Plans (G-3) and Army Installation Management Agency
• Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Logistics (N4)) and Chief of Navy Installations
• Commandant of the Marine Corps
• Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Installations & Logistics
Military Installations
• Army—Fort Lewis, Wash.
• Marine Corps—Camp Lejeune, N.C.
• Army—Fort Eustis, Newport News, Va.
• Navy Region Mid-Atlantic
• Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek, Va.

• Naval Station Norfolk, Va.
• Oceana Master Jet Base, Va.
• Navy Region Northwest, Wash.
• Sub Base Bangor, Wash.
• Naval Station Everett, Everett, Wash.
• Navy Region Southwest, San Diego, Calif.
• Navy Base Point Loma, San Diego, Calif.
• Navy Station San Diego, Calif.
• Navy Base, Coronado, Calif.
• Langley Air Force Base, Va.
• McChord Air Force Base, Wash.

Source: GAO analysis.

To estimate fiscal year 2004 unfunded requirements for installation preparedness at three installations, we requested and obtained budget estimates from installation officials. We also obtained fiscal year 2005 unfunded requirements as prioritized by the services and analyzed them to determine that installation preparedness activities were included in their estimates. Based on our discussions with department officials and the budget documentation provided, we determined that the data we used were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report.

We conducted our review from April 2003 through May 2004 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

Appendix III: Comments from the Department of Defense

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
2600 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-2600

HOMELAND
DEFENSE

27 JUL 2004

Ms. Janet St. Laurent
Director, Defense Capabilities and Management
U.S. General Accounting Office
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Ms. St. Laurent:

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the draft report, "Combating Terrorism: DoD Efforts to Improve Installation Preparedness Can Be Enhanced with Clarified Responsibilities and Comprehensive Planning." We concur with the recommendations made by the GAO recognizing the need for centralized management and operational oversight of a comprehensive preparedness program.

The attacks of September 11, 2001 reinforced the need to review and strengthen installation preparedness response capabilities worldwide. The Office of the Secretary of Defense had reviewed the conclusions of related GAO reports, and had already begun, prior to this report, significant actions to establish centralized policy control and operational oversight of DoD's preparedness programs.

In line with the recommendations of your report, oversight and policy development for worldwide installation preparedness will be assigned to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense. Tactical control of Antiterrorism/Force Protection has already been assigned to US Northern Command. We believe these steps will significantly address the recommendations in your report.

Let me take this opportunity to thank you and your staff for producing a reasoned and accurate report.

Sincerely,

Paul McHale

GAO DRAFT REPORT – DATED JUNE 18, 2004
GAO CODE 350465/GAO-04-855

"COMBATING TERRORISM: DoD Efforts to Improve Installation Preparedness Can Be Enhanced with Clarified Responsibilities and Comprehensive Planning"

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS TO THE RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION 1: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense designate a single integrating authority with the responsibility to coordinate and integrate worldwide installation preparedness improvement efforts at the Department, service and installation levels. The Secretary of Defense should assign that organization with responsibility for preparing the 2004, 2005, and 2006 updates to the plan, which are required by Section 1402 of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2003. (p. 26/GAO Draft Report)

DOD RESPONSE: The Department concurs and will designate a single integrating authority to coordinate worldwide installation preparedness at the Assistant Secretary level. The charter directive for the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense will promulgate responsibility and required authority for worldwide installation preparedness. Accordingly, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense will be responsible for updating the comprehensive plan for improving the preparedness of military installations for terrorist incidents as required by Section 1402 of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2003.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense clarify the installation preparedness responsibilities of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense. (p. 27/GAO Draft Report)

DOD RESPONSE: The Department concurs, and as noted above, will designate the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense as the single integrating authority for coordination of worldwide installation preparedness.

RECOMMENDATION 3: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense require the next update to the plan to fully incorporate results-oriented management principles in the legislatively required elements. Specifically, the plan should include contain:

- Long-term goals that explain what results are expected, are results-oriented, and are expressed in a way that allows them to be assessed in terms of achievement;
- Strategies that articulate the processes necessary to achieve the organization's goals and describe how managers are to be held accountable for achieving such goals;

- Annual performance goals that include a schedule with milestones to measure progress toward the long-term goals, and are tangible and measurable;
- A description of external impediments to achieving the goals and the actions needed to mitigate these impediments;
- Identification of resources, including funding, personnel, and equipment, needed to accomplish the expected level of performance;
- Performance criteria or indicators used to measure progress in achieving goals and objectives, these criteria should be objective and outcome-oriented with specific target levels to meet performance goals; and
- Evaluation plans that are objective and formal assessments of the results, impact, or effects of installation preparedness improvement efforts.
(p. 27/GAO Draft Report)

DOD RESPONSE: The Department concurs and will ensure updates to the comprehensive plan for improving the preparedness of military installations for terrorist incidents addresses the legislatively required elements outlined in the recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION 4: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense require the next update to the plan to clearly describe the military response capabilities that will be developed at the national, regional, and local levels; and how those capabilities will be developed in conjunction with civilian capabilities. (p. 27/GAO Draft Report)

DOD RESPONSE: The Department concurs and will ensure updates to the comprehensive plan for improving the preparedness of military installations for terrorist incidents addresses the legislatively required elements outlined in the recommendation. It is of paramount importance that DoD work with other local, state, and federal entities to ensure redundant capabilities are avoided. The designation of a single integrating authority for installation preparedness will better enable DoD to plan for the coordination of capabilities with local, state, and federal partners.

Appendix IV: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contact

Robert L. Repasky (202) 512-9868

Acknowledgments

In addition to those named above, Hugh Brady, Nancy Benco, Pat Seaton, Elisabeth Ryan, and Corinna Wengryn made key contributions to this report.

Related GAO Products

Results-Oriented Government: GPRA Has Established a Solid Foundation for Achieving Greater Results. GAO-04-38. Washington, D.C.: March 10, 2004.

Combating Terrorism: Actions Needed to Guide Services' Antiterrorism Efforts at Installations. GAO-03-14. Washington, D.C.: November 1, 2002.

Combating Terrorism: Preliminary Observations on Weaknesses in Force Protection for DOD Deployments Through Domestic Seaports. GAO-02-955TNI. Washington, D.C.: July 23, 2002.

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Combating Terrorism: Considerations for Investing Resources in Chemical and Biological Preparedness. GAO-01-162T. Washington, D.C.: October 17, 2001.

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