GAO

Testimony

Before the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives

MILITARY TRAINING

Continued Actions Needed to Guide DOD's Efforts to Improve Language Skills and Regional Proficiency

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GAO-10-879T

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Why GAO Did This Study

Today, and in the foreseeable future, military operations require U.S. personnel to work alongside multinational partners and among local populations. The Department of Defense (DOD) has placed a greater emphasis on transforming language and regional proficiency capabilities, which includes cultural awareness. GAO's prior work has found that integrated strategic plans with measurable goals and funding priorities linked to goals can help guide organizational transformations. Decision makers also require complete information to identify capability gaps and assess risk.

This testimony summarizes GAO's prior work and recommendations on DOD's efforts to develop language skills and regional proficiency and the steps DOD has taken to implement our prior recommendations. Specifically, it addresses the extent to which DOD has (1) developed a strategic plan to guide its language and regional proficiency transformation efforts and (2) obtained the information it needs to identify capability gaps and assess risk. GAO's statement is based on a June 2009 report and work conducted during May 2010 through June 2010 to update the status of GAO's recommendations.

What GAO Found

DOD has taken steps to transform its language and regional proficiency capabilities, but it has not yet developed a comprehensive strategic plan to guide its transformation efforts. DOD established Senior Language Authorities within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the military services, and other components, developed a governance structure to provide internal oversight over transformation efforts, updated policies, and published a Defense Language Transformation Roadmap with broad goals and objectives. Each military service has also developed or is currently developing strategies using the roadmap as guidance or as a complementary document. However, GAO reported in June 2009 that not all objectives within the 2005 roadmap were measurable and that DOD had not identified the resources required to implement roadmap tasks or linked the roadmap to funding requests. In the absence of a comprehensive plan, GAO concluded it would be difficult for DOD to guide the military services as they develop their strategies and related training programs, and ensure these efforts were consistent with DOD-wide goals. Furthermore, DOD and Congress would lack information needed to assess progress toward a successful transformation and evaluate funding requests. GAO recommended that DOD develop a strategic plan that includes measurable performance goals and objectives and investment priorities. DOD agreed with this recommendation and estimated that a strategic plan would be completed by September 2009. In June 2010, DOD officials informed GAO that the plan is undergoing final review and approval.

DOD lacks the information needed to identify gaps in language and regional proficiency and to assess related risks. GAO reported in June 2009 that DOD had developed an inventory of its language capabilities for military personnel, but it did not yet have data on regional proficiency capabilities because DOD lacked an agreed-upon way to assess and validate these skills. GAO concluded that without complete information, DOD could not determine capability gaps and assess risk effectively and recommended that DOD establish a mechanism to assess and validate regional proficiency capabilities. DOD agreed with this recommendation. As of June 2010, DOD had not established such a mechanism. GAO also reported that DOD lacked a standardized methodology to aid DOD components in identifying language and regional proficiency requirements and, as a result, estimates of requirements varied widely. GAO concluded that without such a validated methodology, DOD would not have a reliable way to identify language and regional proficiency requirements. GAO recommended that DOD develop a validated methodology for identifying these requirements for all communities and all proficiency levels. DOD agreed, stating that it had two assessments underway intended to produce a standardized methodology. In June 2010, DOD officials told GAO that, based on the assessments, they had developed a methodology, which is being reviewed by senior DOD leaders.

United States Government Accountability Office

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to be here today to discuss our work on the Department of Defense's (DOD) efforts to improve the knowledge and skills of U.S. forces to speak foreign languages and acquire greater awareness of diverse cultures in countries and regions around the world.[1] Today and in the foreseeable future, military operations—including counterinsurgency and stability operations—require U.S. military personnel to work alongside multinational partners and interact with local populations in a variety of regions and contexts. Because of lessons learned from ongoing operations, especially in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as changes in the overall security environment, DOD is placing greater emphasis on developing language and regional proficiency within its military and civilian workforce. In its 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review, DOD concluded that U.S. forces would be able to perform their missions more effectively—both in the near term and against future adversaries—if they had more and better key enabling capabilities, including language expertise. Based on their operational experience, ground commanders have also expressed the same view. In particular, the former U.S. commander in Afghanistan stressed that language training is critical to conducting counterinsurgency operations and achieving success, and stated that language training is as important as marksmanship and other key training. Among other things, he called for military personnel in ground combat units to obtain a certain level of language proficiency and to better understand the Afghan culture. In May 2010, the Secretary of Defense reinforced the need for U.S. forces and DOD civilians to be prepared for the complexities of the operational environment in Afghanistan and Pakistan. To that end, the Secretary issued guidance, which included a statement about the need for aligned training, personnel processes, and programs to provide deploying units, leaders, and staffs with required language and cultural skills.

Congress, and this subcommittee in particular, has played a key role in emphasizing the importance of building language skills and regional proficiency in DOD, and in overseeing DOD's efforts. In addition to the subcommittee's study on the challenges DOD faces in building language

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[1]DOD uses various terms such as "regional proficiency," "regional expertise," "cultural awareness," and "cultural expertise" to refer to acquiring knowledge and skills to familiarize U.S. forces with customs, traditions, and political, social, and economic conditions and other aspects of foreign countries and regions. For the purposes of this report, we are using the term "regional proficiency" to encompass all of these terms, including cultural awareness.

skills and cultural competencies in the military,[2] we have also evaluated DOD's progress in these areas. We issued two products, in November 2008 and June 2009, and in many cases reached similar conclusions and recommendations as your subcommittee.[3] In response to a mandate from the House Armed Services Committee, in the committee report accompanying the proposed Fiscal Year 2011 National Defense Authorization Act,[4] we will be continuing our work, and will be focusing more specifically on the efforts of the Army and Marine Corps to develop and implement language, regional expertise, and cultural awareness training plans for general purpose forces.

Today, you asked me to discuss our June 2009 report, and in particular, our recommendations and DOD's progress in implementing them. My testimony addresses the extent to which DOD has (1) developed a strategic plan to guide its language and regional proficiency transformation efforts and (2) obtained the information it needs to identify capability gaps and assess risks. In summary, because of the magnitude of such a large-scale organizational transformation, it is important that DOD have a comprehensive strategic plan with viable performance goals, objectives, and metrics for measuring progress. In order to identify potential gaps, assess risks, and develop viable mitigation strategies, DOD also needs complete information on its existing inventory of language and regional proficiency skills as well as validated requirements of its needs. Therefore, we recommended that DOD develop a comprehensive strategic plan for its language and regional proficiency transformation, establish a mechanism to assess the regional proficiency skills of its military and civilian personnel, and develop a methodology to identify its language and regional proficiency requirements. DOD agreed with our recommendations and has completed some actions, and has others underway. However, until it develops a strategic plan and has complete information on its inventory of language and regional proficiency skills

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[2]U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, *Building Language Skills and Cultural Competencies in the Military: DOD's Challenges in Today's Educational Environment* (November 2008).

[3]See GAO, *Defense Management: Preliminary Observations on DOD's Language and Cultural Awareness Capabilities*, GAO-09-176R (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 25, 2008), and *Military Training: DOD Needs a Strategic Plan and Better Inventory and Requirements Data to Guide Development of Language Skills and Regional Proficiency*, GAO-09-568 (Washington, D.C.: June 19, 2009).

[4]H.R. Rep. No. 111-491 at 259 (2010), which accompanied H.R. 5136.

and related requirements, it will not have a sound basis for guiding its efforts or developing strategies to address any gaps in capabilities.

This statement is based on our June 2009 report.[5] In addition, our comments are based on information we obtained in May 2010 and June 2010 to update our prior work, including DOD's progress in implementing our recommendations. In particular, we obtained updated information from DOD officials regarding their efforts to develop a strategic plan and a methodology to identify language and regional proficiency requirements, among other things. All of the work was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards, and our previously published report contains additional details on the scope and methodology for that review. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

[5]GAO-09-568.

DOD Has Taken Steps to Transform Language and Regional Proficiency Capabilities, but Still Needs a Comprehensive Strategic Plan to Guide Its Efforts

The Office of the Secretary of Defense has taken a number of steps over the past several years to transform its language and regional proficiency capabilities, including designating Senior Language Authorities within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the military services, and other DOD components; developing a governance structure; updating policies; and publishing the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap—the primary document that DOD has used to guide its efforts to date. The governance structure consists of a number of components, including the following:

- *Defense Language Steering Committee:* comprised of Senior Language Authorities from the military services and other DOD organizations and chaired by the DOD Senior Language Authority, the committee provides senior-level guidance regarding the language transformation effort and the development of DOD's language capabilities.[6]
- *Defense Language Action Panel:* comprised of less-senior representatives from the same entities represented on the Defense Language Steering Committee, the panel supports the activities, functions, and responsibilities of the Defense Language Steering Committee.
- *Defense Language Office:* provides strategic direction and programmatic oversight to the DOD components on present and future requirements related to language as well as regional and cultural proficiency, and supports the DOD Senior Language Authority in carrying out their assigned responsibilities.[7]

In addition to setting up a governance structure, DOD published the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap in 2005, and in this document established overarching goals and desired outcomes. DOD considered

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[6]The Defense Language Steering Committee includes representatives from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy; the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence; the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller); Office of the Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics; the Office of the Director, Program Analysis and Evaluation; the combatant commands; the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force; the Defense Intelligence Agency; the Defense Security Cooperation Agency; the Defense Threat Reduction Agency; the National Security Agency; and the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency.

[7]The Director of the Defense Language Office, within the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, has been designated as the DOD Senior Language Authority.

these outcomes to be the same as objectives. Table 1 below shows the roadmap's goals and selected objectives.[8]

Table 1: DOD Goals and Selected Objectives for Language and Regional Proficiency Capabilities Transformation

Goals	Objectives
Create foundational language and regional proficiency in the civilian, officer, and enlisted ranks for both Active and Reserve Components	• DOD has personnel with language skills capable of responding as needed for peacetime and wartime operations with the correct levels of proficiency. • The total force understands and values the tactical, operational, and strategic asset inherent in regional proficiency and language. • Regional area education is incorporated into Professional Military Education and Development.
Create capacity to surge language and regional proficiency resources beyond these foundational and in-house capabilities	• DOD has the ability to provide language and regional proficiency support to operational units when needed.
Establish a cadre of language specialists possessing general -professional proficiency[a] for reading, listening, and speaking	• DOD understands the numbers of personnel and levels of proficiency and performance required for tasks involving general-professional-proficiency-level and below language skills, and the DOD components have established career paths and training plans to get the right people to the correct proficiency level. • Programs are in place to train personnel to achieve a general-professional-proficiency level or higher, along with specialized professional skills, where required to support DOD specified tasks. • Programs are in place to train personnel to achieve a general-professional-proficiency level or below to support DOD language-specified tasks.
Establish a process to track the accession, separation, and promotion rates of language professionals and Foreign Area Officers[b]	• Military personnel with language skills and Foreign Area Officers are developed and managed as critical strategic assets. • All services have established professional career tracks for Foreign Area Officers and promote Foreign Area Officers competitively. • DOD oversight ensures the effective tracking and management of these strategic assets.

Source: DOD.

Notes: Data are from the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap.

[a]General-professional proficiency for reading is the ability to read with almost complete comprehension; for listening is the ability to understand a standard dialect; and for speaking is the ability to speak with sufficient vocabulary for most formal and informal conversations.

[b]According to DOD, Foreign Area Officers are commissioned officers who, in addition to their primary military specialty, also possess a combination of strategic focus, regional expertise, cultural awareness, and foreign language skill.

[8]In addition to these goals and objectives, the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap contains five separate objectives specifically for the transformation of the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center. This center provides DOD-wide foreign language education, training, evaluation, and proficiency enhancement.

For each roadmap goal, DOD identified several tasks that it planned to complete in support of the objectives, and assigned responsibility to various organizations for initiating efforts to complete the tasks. For example, to support the goal of creating foundational language and regional area expertise, one of the tasks DOD identified was to publish an annual Strategic Language List. This list reflects languages for which DOD has current and projected requirements and for which it intends to allocate resources, such as to provide training and testing, and pay incentives. The Defense Language Office has been responsible for monitoring completion of the roadmap tasks, which totaled 43 tasks. As of June 2010, DOD officials stated that they had completed all of the tasks except one related to developing policy and doctrine, which they consider to be an ongoing effort.

Using the roadmap as guidance or a complementary document, each military service has developed or is in the process of developing a service-specific strategy for language and regional-proficiency transformation. These strategies are intended, in part, to guide service training efforts. The military services provide predeployment training to general purpose forces—the amount of which depends on the unit's mission and the amount of time available for such training as articulated by the commander of the unit. The services have established centers to assist in coordinating, developing, distributing, and providing basic language and regional proficiency training and have also taken steps to incorporate language and regional proficiency into their professional military education for general purpose forces.

Our prior work has shown that for a strategic plan to be helpful, it should contain certain key elements, such as measurable performance goals and objectives and funding priorities that are linked to goals.[9] Table 2 below further discusses these elements.

[9]See, for example, GAO, *Status of Department of Defense Efforts to Develop a Management Approach to Guide Business Transformations*, GAO-09-272R (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 9, 2009)); Defense Business Transformation: A Full-time Chief Management Officer with a Term Appointment Is Needed at DOD to Maintain Continuity of Effort and Achieve Sustainable Success, GAO-08-132T (Washington, DC.: Oct. 16, 2007); Defense Business Transformation: Achieving Success Requires a Chief Management Officer to Provide Focus and Sustained Leadership, GAO-07-1072 (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 5, 2007).

Table 2: Key Strategic Planning Elements for Language and Regional Proficiency Transformation

Planning element	Description
Measurable performance goals and objectives	Establish long-term goals that identify expected results and when to expect such results.
	Set forth specific, measurable, and time-bound objectives linked to long-term goals to measure progress toward achieving these goals.
Funding priorities linked to goals	Identify funding priorities and link to goals to assist with organizational, congressional, and executive branch funding decisions.

Source: GAO.

While the roadmap did establish goals and desired outcomes, which DOD considered to be objectives, we found they had some limitations, and that other key planning elements were missing. For example:

- Some goals and objectives in DOD's roadmap were not measurable or time-bound. For example, one of DOD's objectives is for the total force to understand and value the tactical, operational, and strategic asset inherent in regional expertise and language. However, we reported that DOD does not define how it intends to measure the total force's understanding of language and regional expertise or provide a time frame for achieving the objective. In the absence of measurable objectives, DOD officials assessed progress toward goals and objectives by tracking the number of associated roadmap tasks that they consider to be fully operational, meaning DOD's Senior Language Authority had determined the intent of the task had been met. However, this approach focused solely on the achievement of specific tasks rather than the extent to which the outcome of these tasks reflected progress toward language and regional proficiency transformation goals. We also reported that DOD considered a task fully operational before the task was complete, which further complicated DOD's ability to measure progress toward goals and objectives. For example, DOD considered the roadmap task that assigned responsibility to the Secretary of the Army to create courses for emerging language needs to be fully operational because a plan to build these courses had been developed. However, at the time, the Army had not yet established the courses and DOD did not continue to formally track the Army's efforts.
- DOD had also not identified the resources required to implement the tasks in the roadmap or linked the roadmap to its funding requests. In short, the roadmap did not contain any funding information; therefore, DOD had not identified the total cost of its transformation effort. In its annual budget requests, DOD had requested funding for 22 major language and regional proficiency programs that it considered to be priorities, as reflected in what it calls the Defense Language Program

of Record. However, the two documents were not clearly linked; therefore we were unable to determine how the 22 programs related to the tasks and activities outlined in the roadmap.

At the time of our work, DOD recognized that the roadmap was not a true strategic plan, and that the department had reached a point with its transformation efforts where such a plan was needed.

In the absence of a comprehensive strategic plan that includes measurable performance goals and objectives, funding priorities linked to goals, and accountability for achieving results, we concluded it would be difficult for DOD to guide the military services as they develop and implement their strategies, and supporting programs and activities, and also to ensure these efforts were synchronized and consistent with departmentwide goals. Furthermore, for both the department and Congress, the lack of a comprehensive plan would make it difficult to develop or evaluate funding requests, respectively, and assess progress towards achieving successful transformation of language and regional proficiency capabilities. Therefore, we recommended that DOD develop a strategic plan with all the key elements I have mentioned. In its comments, DOD agreed and stated that it planned to complete a strategic plan by September 2009, which it referred to as the Defense Language and Regional Program Strategic Plan for 2010-2015. Our latest information from DOD officials, as of this month, is that the plan has been drafted and is undergoing final review and approval. They expect to publish the plan later this year and told us it will include elements such as performance goals, objectives, and funding priorities linked to goals. They stated that an implementation plan with metrics to measure progress will be published at a later date. While a specific milestone has not been established, it will be important that DOD complete this action quickly.

DOD Has Not Fully Developed the Information It Needs to Identify Gaps in Language and Regional Proficiency and Assess Risk

In addition to a comprehensive strategic plan, it is important for DOD to have complete information on the current level of language and regional proficiency within its forces as well as the requirements for these capabilities. With this knowledge, the department can identify gaps and assess risks. Risk assessment helps decision makers identify and evaluate potential risks so that alternatives can be designed and implemented to mitigate that risk. It also allows them to prioritize needs and allocate resources based on such factors as strategic, operational, and financial considerations. At the time of our June 2009 report, DOD had efforts underway to gather inventory data and define requirements, but did not

yet have complete information. Since then, DOD has made some progress in each of these areas.

Availability of Inventory Data on Language and Regional Proficiency within DOD

At the time of our June 2009 report, DOD was in the process of developing a strategic management tool called the Language Readiness Index. Once fully operational, DOD expects this tool to contain inventory and requirements data on the language and regional proficiency capabilities of military, civilian, and contractor personnel. By matching the inventory and requirements data, DOD intends to be able to determine potential gaps in capabilities and assess risk to its ability to conduct current military operations as well as potential future military operations. At the time of our prior report, DOD had obtained information on military personnel language skills through a combination of testing, referred to as the Defense Language Proficiency Test, and through service members voluntarily sharing or "self reporting" information in personnel records. This information, which includes the name of the foreign language and the skill level—as measured on a scale from 0 (no proficiency) to 5 (educated native proficiency)—with respect to speaking, listening, and reading, had been incorporated into the Language Readiness Index. However, DOD had not yet incorporated information about the language skills of DOD civilians and contract linguists in the Language Readiness Index, but planned to do so.

We also reported that DOD did not yet have a complete inventory of the regional proficiency skills of all service members or DOD civilians. Instead, DOD only identified and tracked those military members serving in specific occupations requiring a high level of regional proficiency, such as Foreign Area Officers.[10] DOD guidance provided regional proficiency skill level guidelines—measured on a scale from 0 (prenovice) to 5 (expert)—intended to provide DOD components with benchmarks for assessing regional proficiency needs, developing regional proficiency curricula, and assessing DOD-wide regional proficiency capabilities. However, these guidelines did not provide measurable definitions that would allow for testing of particular regional proficiency levels. Unlike language proficiency skill levels, which have been defined and can be measured, DOD had found it difficult to define the elements needed to

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[10]According to DOD, Foreign Area Officers are commissioned officers who, in addition to their primary military specialty, also possess a combination of strategic focus, regional expertise, cultural awareness, and foreign language skill.

assess regional proficiency levels because such a definition must take into account knowledge and experience of historical, political, cultural, sociological, economic, and geographic factors across many global regions or specific foreign countries. Thus, DOD did not have a way to test or otherwise evaluate the skills of service members or DOD civilians in accordance with the regional proficiency guidelines in order to develop an inventory of regional proficiency skills. Furthermore, DOD had not established milestones for developing the ability to evaluate regional proficiency skills.

Because DOD did not have complete information on the regional proficiency capabilities of its military and civilian workforce or a method to evaluate proficiency levels, we concluded it could not determine capability gaps and assess risk effectively. Furthermore, DOD did not have the information it needed to inform its strategic planning for language and regional proficiency transformation. Therefore, we recommended that DOD establish a mechanism to assess and validate the full range of regional proficiency capabilities of service members and DOD civilians—including the development of measurable definitions and milestones to achieve an assessment—and incorporate the information into the Language Readiness Index.

DOD agreed with this recommendation, stating that it would provide definitions and other guidance by March 2010 that would enable the services and defense agencies to measure and determine appropriate regional proficiency levels. As of June 2010, DOD officials told us they had incorporated additional information about the language skills of DOD civilians in the Language Readiness Index and are examining the legal considerations of gathering information for contract linguists. However, DOD has not yet established a mechanism to assess and validate regional proficiency skills. DOD officials stated that they had recently commissioned a study and established an internal working group to address this issue, but they noted that defining and measuring regional proficiency is a difficult undertaking that has taken longer than originally estimated. DOD anticipates completing its study on regional proficiency by September 2011.

Status of DOD's Efforts to Determine Language and Regional Proficiency Requirements

Having complete inventory data is important, but equally important is the need to match this inventory to valid requirements. In June 2009, we reported that DOD had developed a process to enable combatant commanders, the military services, and other organizations to submit their language and regional proficiency requirements. They were to identify information such as the level of the language proficiency needed, level of

the regional proficiency needed, the occupational specialty needed, the desired number, and the desired source for filling the need. Although DOD outlined this process, it did not require the organizations to use a particular methodology for identifying this information, instead leaving it to the discretion of the organizations as to how they determined their requirements. In the absence of a validated methodology, estimates of requirements differed widely, especially by the combatant commands. For example, as of February 2008, the requirements of U.S. Pacific Command outnumbered the requirements of all other combatant commands combined. This variance occurred primarily because U.S. Pacific Command had included low-level language and regional proficiency requirements associated with general purpose forces, such as language or regional proficiency skills at proficiency levels 0 or 1, while others did not.

Without a validated methodology that was consistently applied by all organizations, DOD did not have a reliable means to identify language and regional proficiency requirements. Therefore, we recommended that DOD develop a transparent, validated methodology to aid in the identification of language and regional proficiency requirements and that its scope should include all communities, such as general purpose forces, human-intelligence collectors, signal-intelligence analysis, Foreign Area Officers, and DOD civilians, and all proficiency levels from the lowest levels to the highest levels. DOD agreed with this recommendation, noting that it planned to complete two assessments by November 2009 that would identify a validated process to prioritize and refine DOD's foreign language and regional expertise requirements and produce a standardized methodology to measure risk of identified gaps and shortfalls. At that time, DOD noted that given the 90-day window it had established to conduct these assessments, the scope of the assessment would be narrower than what our recommendation called for. As of June 2010, DOD officials told us these assessments were completed and that the results were used to develop a validated methodology for determining language and regional proficiency requirements. Once approved by senior leaders—estimated to occur later this year—officials stated the methodology will be codified in DOD guidance and that the Joint Staff would provide training to the combatant commands on how to apply it. Officials stated that it would then take an additional several months for the combatant commands to determine the language and regional proficiency capability requirements. Because it is not yet approved, we have been unable to review or assess the methodology.

Concluding Observations

To respond to the evolving security environment, DOD conducts a set of complex and wide-ranging missions, such as irregular warfare, counterinsurgency, stability operations, and nonwarfighting activities. DOD has acknowledged the need to build and maintain certain fundamental capabilities, such as language and regional proficiency capabilities, which the department has deemed critical to success in these operations. Accordingly, DOD and the military services have undertaken various initiatives aimed at transforming language and regional proficiency capabilities. However, DOD has not yet produced a comprehensive strategic plan to guide and synchronize these efforts, including aligning service-level strategies with departmentwide goals, and it does not yet have complete inventory and requirements data needed to properly assess gaps and risks. As a result, DOD is not in a sound position to determine the appropriate scope and nature of its efforts to achieve desired goals, measure progress, and make informed investment decisions. As DOD completes its efforts to develop a strategic plan and capture complete language and regional proficiency and inventory and requirements data, it is essential that the department and the military services review and make necessary adjustments to their approaches and ensure that future funding requests are aligned accordingly.

Mr. Chairman this concludes my statement. I look forward to answering any questions that you or other members of the subcommittee may have at this time.

GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

For further information on this testimony, please contact Sharon Pickup at (202) 512-9619 or at pickups@gao.gov. Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this statement. Individuals making key contributions to this testimony include Patricia Lentini, Assistant Director; Edward Anderson; Gabrielle Carrington; Nicole Harms; Susan Langley; Terry Richardson; Rebecca Rygg; Matthew Ullengren; and Chris Watson.