



Highlights of [GAO-05-299](#), a report to congressional requesters

MILITARY PERSONNEL

Financial Costs and Loss of Critical Skills Due to DOD's Homosexual Conduct Policy Cannot Be Completely Estimated

Why GAO Did This Study

From the passage of the homosexual conduct policy statute, in fiscal year 1994, through fiscal year 2003 the military services separated about 9,500 servicemembers for homosexual conduct. This represents about 0.40 percent of the 2.37 million members separated for all reasons during this period. Questions have been raised about the costs of separating servicemembers for homosexual conduct. Also, in the post-September 11th environment, there has been concern about the separation of servicemembers with critical occupations or important foreign language skills in, for example, Arabic.

GAO was asked to determine (1) the military services' annual financial costs from fiscal year 1994 through fiscal year 2003 for certain activities associated with administering the Department of Defense's (DOD) policy on homosexual conduct—e.g., the recruitment and training of servicemembers to replace those separated under the homosexual conduct statute—and (2) the extent to which the policy has resulted in the separation of servicemembers with critical occupations and important foreign language skills.

GAO provided DOD with a draft of this report for comment, and DOD provided additional information on separations for homosexual conduct compared with other unprogrammed separations.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-05-299.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Derek Stewart at (202) 512-5559 or stewartd@gao.gov.

What GAO Found

The total costs of DOD's homosexual conduct policy cannot be estimated because DOD does not collect relevant cost data on inquiries and investigations, counseling and pastoral care, separation functions, and discharge reviews. However, DOD does collect data on recruitment and training costs for the force overall. Using these data, GAO estimated that, over the 10-year period, it could have cost DOD about \$95 million in constant fiscal year 2004 dollars to recruit replacements for servicemembers separated under the policy. Also, the Navy, Air Force, and Army estimated that the cost to train replacements for separated servicemembers by occupation was approximately \$48.8 million, \$16.6 million, and \$29.7 million, respectively.

Approximately 757 (8 percent) of the 9,488 servicemembers separated for homosexual conduct held critical occupations, identified by DOD as those occupations worthy of selective reenlistment bonuses. GAO analyzed and selected the top 10 most critical occupations for each year from fiscal year 1994 through fiscal year 2003. About 59 percent of the servicemembers with critical occupations who were separated for homosexual conduct were separated within 2.5 years of service. The typical military service contract is for 4 years of service. Also, 322 (3 percent) of separated servicemembers had some skills in an important foreign language such as Arabic, Farsi, or Korean. A total of 98 servicemembers had completed training in an important language at DOD's Defense Language Institute and received a proficiency score; 63 percent of such servicemembers had proficiency scores that were at or below the midpoint on DOD's language proficiency scales for listening, reading, or speaking. Students can graduate from the basic program with proficiencies somewhat below the midpoint of this scale.

Number of Separations of Active Duty Servicemembers for Homosexual Conduct by Fiscal Year and Military Service

Fiscal year	Army	Air Force	Marines	Navy	Total ^a
1994	136	185	36	258	615
1995	184	235	69	269	757
1996	199	284	60	315	858
1997	197	309	78	413	997
1998	310	414	76	345	1,145
1999	271	352	97	313	1,033
2000	574	177	104	358	1,213
2001	626	190	111	290	1,217
2002	432	125	105	222	884
2003	378	142	62	187	769
Total	3,307	2,413	798	2,970	9,488
Percent	35	25	8	31	99

Sources: Defense Manpower Data Center (data); GAO (analysis).

^aPercents do not equal 100 because of rounding.