



Highlights of [GAO-06-852](#), a report to the Subcommittee on Readiness, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives

## Why GAO Did This Study

The Department of Defense's (DOD) Integrated Global Posture and Basing Strategy calls for a comprehensive restructuring of U.S. forces overseas. DOD's planned changes will require billions of dollars to implement at a time when DOD is supporting operations in Iraq and realigning domestic bases. As requested, GAO examined (1) the extent to which DOD has articulated a global posture strategy that has the characteristics necessary to guide its efforts and to achieve desired results and (2) the challenges that could affect DOD's implementation of its strategy and the mechanisms DOD has in place to inform Congress of its overall progress in achieving global posture goals.

## What GAO Recommends

To facilitate DOD's management of global restructuring, GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense take specific steps to improve the strategy, periodically report to Congress on cost and host-nation negotiation status, and address management and funding issues for new operating locations. In responding to a draft of this report, DOD partially agreed with GAO's recommendations. However, it did not specify any actions it plans to take in response to our recommendations. Because DOD's response was unclear, we have added a matter for congressional consideration suggesting that Congress require DOD to report annually on its strategy and implementation.

[www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-852](http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-852).

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](mailto:stlaurentj@gao.gov).

## DEFENSE MANAGEMENT

# Comprehensive Strategy and Annual Reporting Are Needed to Measure Progress and Costs of DOD's Global Posture Restructuring

## What GAO Found

DOD has articulated its global posture strategy in four principal documents, but these documents fully address only three of the six characteristics that GAO's prior work has identified as useful components of an effective strategy. Specifically, DOD's strategy documents state the purpose, scope, and methodology for changing its global posture; define the problems its strategy is directed against; and describe how the strategy is to be integrated with related strategies. However, the documents do not fully address other important characteristics such as performance metrics to measure intended improvements in operational effectiveness and service members' quality of life; sources of funding for implementing global restructuring initiatives; or methods of resolving conflicts that may arise during implementation. In the absence of a comprehensive strategy that addresses important characteristics such as performance measures, Congress will lack sufficient information to evaluate funding requests and assess whether the strategy is improving operational capabilities, quality of life, and alliances as intended.

Ongoing negotiations between the United States and host nations, evolving cost estimates, and difficulties establishing service management and funding responsibilities for new overseas sites contribute to the complexity and uncertainty of DOD's overseas restructuring effort. In addition, DOD has not established a comprehensive and routine process to keep Congress informed on its progress dealing with these issues and the overall status of implementing the strategy. First, negotiations between the United States and host nations continue to evolve, causing periodic adjustments to the pace and scope of DOD's plans and making it difficult to determine the overall status of this effort. Second, DOD's initial cost estimate of \$9 billion to \$12 billion will continue to change, reflecting uncertainties such as those related to host-nation negotiations and burden-sharing, and total costs may be understated. Third, DOD has not yet fully determined how it will allocate responsibilities for managing and funding its planned worldwide network of smaller operating sites to the services, and therefore, it is still uncertain who will manage these sites and how they will be paid for. DOD has not established a comprehensive, routine method of informing Congress of ongoing changes to the strategy and its total costs. Reliable and timely information about the full costs, activities, and outputs of federal programs is important as Congress makes decisions about allocating resources in an environment of competing demands. DOD has not established a comprehensive and periodic reporting process because DOD officials believe that current congressional briefings and reporting requirements, which largely focus on military construction requirements, provide Congress with sufficient information. However, these existing reports do not provide comprehensive information on total costs, overall progress, or changes to DOD's plan. Without a periodic reporting process focused on overall progress and costs, Congress may not be well positioned to evaluate funding requests for implementing the strategy.