

Why GAO Did This Study

GAO designated DOD support infrastructure as a high-risk area to address efficiency challenges. In 2005, DOD recommended to the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission combining 26 installations into 12 joint bases to generate efficiencies and cost savings, initially estimated to be \$2.3 billion. In 2009, DOD reduced this estimate to \$273 million. GAO was mandated to assess DOD's progress in consolidating common services across joint bases. This report addresses the extent to which officials reported consolidating installation-support functions, and meeting joint basing goals to achieve greater efficiencies and cost savings. GAO conducted a survey of 11 joint bases, and reviewed applicable guidance. GAO did not survey Joint Region Marianas because it was subject to different expectations.

What GAO Recommends

Congress should consider directing DOD to evaluate joint basing goals, provide direction on requirements to meet the goals, and determine next steps for joint basing. GAO included this matter because DOD did not concur with GAO's recommendations to conduct such an evaluation and provide direction, in part because DOD stated joint bases have achieved savings. GAO also recommended DOD evaluate which installation-support functions remain suitable for consolidation, with which DOD concurred, and take policy actions to address challenges, with which DOD partially concurred, noting its existing processes to address challenges. GAO continues to believe its findings and recommendations are valid as discussed in this report.

View [GAO-14-577](#). For more information, contact Brian J. Lepore at (202) 512-4523 or lepreb@gao.gov

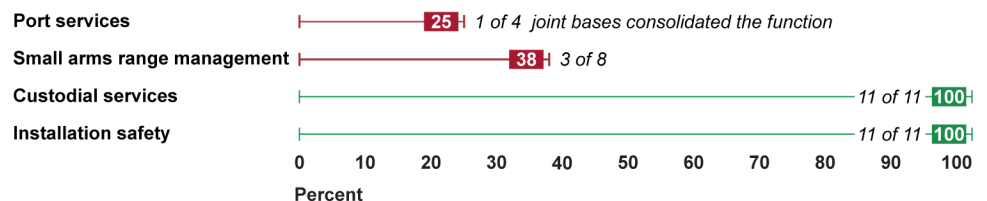
DOD JOINT BASES

Implementation Challenges Demonstrate Need to Reevaluate the Program

What GAO Found

Joint base officials reported varying progress in consolidating installation-support functions, and challenges resulting from consolidation efforts that created inefficiencies and inequities. Overall, the joint bases reported partially consolidating 80 percent of their installation-support functions, but the extent of consolidation varied across the bases and among the various functions. None of the joint bases have reported consolidating all functions. However, all 11 joint bases reported consolidating some portion of eight functions, such as custodial services and installation safety. The least consolidated functions were reported to be military service-specific or mission-specific, such as small-arms range management and port services. Also, joint base officials reported several challenges resulting from consolidation, such as multiple inspections and employees being potentially disadvantaged in competing for promotion opportunities due to military service-specific personnel policies. The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and military service officials have not evaluated which functions are still suitable for consolidation or taken policy actions to address any challenges resulting from consolidation. Without an evaluation of the suitability of installation-support functions for consolidation and without actions to address any negative consequences that emerged from consolidation, the Department of Defense (DOD) may continue to experience challenges in its efforts to consolidate these functions.

Variations in Installation-Support Functions Consolidated at 11 Joint Bases Surveyed



Source: GAO analysis of joint base survey responses and supporting documentation. | GAO-14-577

Note: Not all of the joint bases that GAO surveyed have small-arms range management or port services functions.

Joint base officials reported that consolidation of support functions has resulted in some progress toward achieving the goals of joint basing (achieving efficiencies and cost savings), by reducing redundant positions and finding contracting efficiencies. However, as GAO reported in November 2012, DOD does not have a method to collect cost savings information achieved specifically from joint basing. Thus, GAO recommended that DOD develop a plan for doing so. DOD disagreed and has not yet taken action. GAO continues to believe this recommendation has merit and should be addressed. Also, officials said they are uncertain of the extent to which the goals of joint basing are still appropriate, and to what extent they are required to take actions to pursue them. OSD has not collaborated with the military services to evaluate whether the goals of joint basing remain appropriate and has not provided direction to the joint bases on future priorities. Without a collaborative evaluation of the joint basing program by OSD and military service officials to determine if the goals remain appropriate—and without additional direction to help meet reporting requirements—it will be difficult for DOD to determine the extent to which the joint basing initiative is achieving its intended goals.