COAST GUARD

Actions Underway to Develop Acquisition Plans that Reflect New Assets and Improve the Asset Allocation Process

What GAO Found

Since the U.S. Coast Guard developed acquisition plans for its asset recapitalization program, many of the assumptions that initially informed these documents, including its 2005 Mission Needs Statement baseline, are no longer accurate. For example, in March 2015, GAO reported that the Coast Guard received an unexpected transfer of 14 C-27J aircraft from the Air Force, representing a significant change to its aircraft fleet mix. In addition, Congress recently provided the Coast Guard with funding for a ninth National Security Cutter—one more than it had planned for in 2005. Further, the Coast Guard has reduced the operational capacities of several assets to reflect more realistic and achievable operational targets. For example, the Coast Guard reduced the operational capacity of the Fast Response Cutter from 3,000 hours per vessel per year to 2,500 hours. GAO has also consistently found that there is a significant difference between the funding the Coast Guard estimates it needs for its major acquisitions and what it has traditionally requested and received. The Coast Guard's attempts to address this difference by establishing its future fleet's mission needs within reasonable budget constraints have been unsuccessful. GAO has made several recommendations for the Coast Guard to improve its recapitalization business case, including that the Coast Guard develop a 20-year fleet modernization plan that identifies all acquisitions needed to maintain the current level of service and the fiscal resources needed to acquire them. The Coast Guard concurred with the recommendation and has actions underway, but has not completed this plan. Given that key changes have taken place since 2005, the Coast Guard should continue to take steps to address GAO's recommendations.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is not making any new recommendations in this statement.

View GAO-16-633T. For more information, contact Jennifer A. Grover at (202) 512-7141 or groverj@gao.gov.

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