AMPHIBIOUS COMBAT VEHICLE
Program Should Take Steps to Ensure Manufacturing Readiness

Why GAO Did This Study
In June 2018, the United States Marine Corps plans to select a contractor and begin low-rate production for the ACV, a vehicle used to transport Marines from ship to shore under hostile conditions. The ACV will replace all or part of the current Assault Amphibious Vehicle fleet.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 included a provision for GAO to annually review and report on the ACV program until 2018. This report, GAO’s last under that provision, assesses the extent to which the Marine Corps is making progress toward (1) meeting cost and schedule goals for the ACV program and (2) demonstrating manufacturing readiness.

GAO reviewed program cost estimates, updated schedules, and program assessments of test results and production readiness, as well as compared ACV acquisition efforts to DOD guidance and GAO-identified best practices. GAO also interviewed program and testing officials, and visited both ACV primary assembly locations.

What GAO Recommends
GAO recommends the Marine Corps (1) not enter the second year of low-rate production for ACV 1.1 until after the contractor has achieved an overall MRL of 8 and (2) not enter full-rate production until achieving an overall MRL of 9. DOD partially concurred with both recommendations, but noted that it is reasonable to proceed at lower MRL levels if steps are taken to mitigate risk. GAO made no changes to its recommendations in response to these comments.

View GAO-18-364. For more information, contact Jon Ludwigson at (202) 512-4841 or ludwigsonj@gao.gov.