

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-13-360](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

DOD has stated that it intends to rebalance its defense posture toward the Asia-Pacific region. Japan hosts the largest U.S. forward-operating presence in this region; the majority of the U.S. forces in Japan are located in Okinawa. The United States and Japan planned to reduce the U.S. military presence on Okinawa by relocating approximately 9,000 Marines. DOD had originally planned to move the Marines only to Guam, but revised its plans in 2012 to include other locations in the Pacific. Congressional committees have directed GAO to examine DOD's initiatives in the Pacific, focusing on planning and costs. This report discusses the extent to which DOD has (1) developed a comprehensive cost estimate for the realignment of Marines, (2) planned for and synchronized other movements to coincide with the realignment, and (3) identified plans to sustain the force until all initiatives are implemented. To address these objectives, GAO reviewed relevant policies and procedures, reviewed and analyzed cost documents related to the realignment initiatives, interviewed DOD officials, and conducted site visits at U.S. military installations in the Pacific.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that DOD develop more reliable cost estimates and an integrated master plan for the realignment of Marines, develop a mechanism to share annual updates on the status of each, and identify sustainment requirements for affected facilities until realignment initiatives are complete. DOD generally agreed with GAO's recommendations.

View [GAO-13-360](#). For more information, contact Brian Lepore at (202) 512-4523 or leporeb@gao.gov.

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DEFENSE MANAGEMENT

More Reliable Cost Estimates and Further Planning Needed to Inform the Marine Corps Realignment Initiatives in the Pacific

What GAO Found

The Department of Defense's (DOD) preliminary cost estimate for its current realignment plan is not reliable, because it is missing costs and is based on limited data. According to DOD officials, DOD has not yet been able to put together a more reliable cost estimate because it will not have specific detailed information on the plan's requirements until the completion of environmental analyses and host nation negotiations. Currently, DOD estimates that it would cost approximately \$12.1 billion to implement its realignment plan—not including the Australia segment of the realignment. Still, GAO found that DOD did not include some up-front practices that could have provided a more reliable estimate that are not dependent on the completion of the environmental analyses and host nation negotiations. Specifically, DOD omitted any costs associated with mobility support, a critical component of the implementation, from its cost estimate. Furthermore, although DOD based its cost estimate on several assumptions, there was no evidence DOD conducted analysis needed to determine the reliability of those assumptions. Without a reliable estimate, DOD will not be able to provide Congress and other stakeholders with the information Congress needs to make informed decisions regarding the realignment.

DOD has not developed an integrated master plan for its current realignment plan, and it has not developed a strategy to support the development and oversight of the Japanese construction projects associated with other realignment initiatives. DOD has taken initial steps to develop an integrated scheduling document based on currently known data, but indicated that specific requirements, schedules, and costs cannot be formalized in an integrated master plan until several studies and host nation negotiations are completed, which will take several years. Developing a master plan could enhance the management of the realignment by creating a systematic approach to planning, scheduling, and execution. In addition, DOD has not developed a strategy that identifies the resources needed to support the development of and oversight for these projects. According to best practices, a strategy identifies goals and resources and supports the implementation of a program. Without the information contained in an integrated master plan and a construction support strategy, Congress will be unable to make informed decisions about the order in which it needs to provide funding to support the realignment.

DOD has taken some steps to plan for the sustainment of U.S. forces on Okinawa and Guam, but it has yet to fully identify sustainment needs and costs for both locations during this period. At several installations on Okinawa, some of the infrastructure has severely deteriorated. DOD facilities planning guidance calls for updated facility master plans that capture requirements and propose solutions. On Guam, DOD has been maintaining an inventory of unoccupied family housing that could potentially be used for Marines relocating to Guam. However, DOD has not determined all the costs and benefits of maintaining this housing or the Marines' potential housing requirements—information needed to perform an economic analysis. Without an estimate of the sustainment requirements for Okinawa, the costs for maintaining housing, and the potential Marine requirements for housing on Guam, DOD will be unable to make informed decisions on whether continued investment in sustaining these facilities is warranted.