

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-13-642](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

At an estimated cost of over \$7 billion, the Navy's NGJ program represents a significant investment in airborne electronic attack capabilities. Jammers, like the planned NGJ, fly on aircraft, such as Navy EA-18Gs, and transmit electronic signals that can neutralize or temporarily degrade enemy air defenses and communications, thus aiding combat aircraft and ground forces' freedom to maneuver and strike. Senate Report 112-196 mandated GAO to review the NGJ program and potential duplication. This report examines the extent to which (1) DOD assessed whether there is duplication among NGJ, existing capabilities, and other acquisition programs, and (2) NGJ is being managed as a joint solution. GAO reviewed key NGJ requirements and acquisition documents and DOD and military service documents describing airborne electronic attack capabilities.

What GAO Recommends

To help ensure that DOD's analysis of potential overlap and duplication is complete, GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense: (1) require the NGJ capability development document to discuss potential redundancies between NGJ and existing and proposed programs across all of its planned roles and (2) ensure that the Electronic Warfare Strategy Report to Congress includes information on potentially overlapping capabilities and why that overlap is warranted. DOD agreed to continue to assess duplication and redundancies but not with using the capability development document to do so. GAO believes the recommendation remains valid as discussed in the report. DOD agreed with the second recommendation.

View [GAO-13-642](#). For more information, contact Michael J. Sullivan, (202) 512-4841, sullivanm@gao.gov.

August 2013

NEXT GENERATION JAMMER

DOD Should Continue to Assess Potential Duplication and Overlap As Program Moves Forward

What GAO Found

The Department of Defense (DOD) has assessed whether the planned Next Generation Jammer (NGJ) program is duplicative using a variety of means, but none of them address all of the system's planned roles or take into account the military services' evolving airborne electronic attack investment plans. DOD analyses support its conclusion that the NGJ meets a valid need and is not duplicative of existing capabilities in its primary role—suppressing enemy air defenses from outside the range of known surface-to-air missiles. However, these analyses do not address all planned NGJ roles, such as communications jamming in irregular warfare environments, or take into account the military services' evolving airborne electronic attack investment plans. According to GAO's analysis, none of the systems that have emerged since DOD completed its NGJ analyses duplicate its planned capabilities; however there is some overlap in the roles they are intended to perform. Redundancy in some of these areas may, in fact, be desirable. However, pursuing multiple acquisition efforts to develop similar capabilities can result in the same capability gap being filled twice or more, lead to inefficient use of resources, and contribute to other warfighting needs going unfilled. Therefore, continued examination of potential overlap and duplication among these investments may be warranted.

DOD has several ongoing efforts that could provide a mechanism for updating its analysis of potential overlap and duplication to address these shortcomings as the program moves forward. However, GAO found weaknesses in two of these efforts as well.

- **Electronic Warfare Strategy Report to Congress:** DOD could address new duplication issues as they emerge and, if necessary, explain the need for overlapping capabilities in this report. However, to date, the analysis of overlap and duplication in this report has been limited and did not examine potential overlap between capabilities or explain why overlap was warranted.
- **NGJ Capability Development Document:** Redundancies are required to be considered when a capability development document—which defines the performance requirements for an acquisition program—is validated. The draft NGJ capability development document does not identify the systems the Navy considered when analyzing potential redundancies, so it is difficult to evaluate whether its analysis includes existing and proposed programs across all of the NGJ's planned roles.

The NGJ is not being managed as a joint acquisition program, which is a distinction related to funding, but it is expected to provide the Navy with airborne electronic capabilities that will support all military services in both major combat operations and irregular warfare environments. The NGJ's capabilities are not intended to meet all of the military services' airborne electronic attack needs and the services are planning to make additional investments in systems that are tailored to meet their specific warfighting roles. The military services might be able to leverage the NGJ program in support of their own acquisition priorities because it plans to use a modular open systems approach, which allows for components to be added, removed, or modified without significantly impacting the rest of the system. This approach could make it easier to integrate the NGJ or its technologies into other systems in the future.