

# GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-13-648](#), a report to congressional committees

## Why GAO Did This Study

As U.S. forces draw down from Afghanistan and home training is expanded, the competition for training ranges may also increase. Section 366 of the Bob Stump National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003 (as amended) required DOD to submit a comprehensive plan to address training constraints caused by limitations on the use of military lands, marine areas, and airspace available in the United States and overseas for training, and provide annual progress reports on these efforts through 2018. The act also requires GAO to submit annual evaluations of DOD's reports to Congress within 90 days of receiving them from DOD. In this report, GAO examined (1) whether DOD's 2013 Sustainable Ranges Report met the legislative requirements; and (2) whether DOD acted on GAO previous recommendations to improve its submissions.

GAO is not making any recommendations in this report. In commenting on this report, DOD stated that it agrees in general with the report.

View [GAO-13-648](#). For more information, contact Brian Lepore at (202) 512-4523 or [leporeb@gao.gov](mailto:leporeb@gao.gov).

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## MILITARY TRAINING

### DOD Met Annual Reporting Requirements and Continued to Improve Its Sustainable Ranges Report

## What GAO Found

The 2013 Sustainable Ranges Report of the Department of Defense (DOD) met the annual statutory reporting requirements for the department to describe its progress in implementing its sustainable ranges plan and any additional actions taken or planned for addressing training constraints caused by limitations on the use of military lands, marine areas, or airspace. DOD's 2013 report provides updates to several elements of the plan that the act required it to include in its annual progress reports, including (1) proposals to enhance training range capabilities and address any shortfalls; (2) goals and milestones for tracking progress in the implementation of its sustainment plan; and (3) projected funding requirements for each of the military services to implement their planned actions. DOD reported that there were no significant changes in range capability or encroachment since 2012. It identified emerging challenges to training range sustainability, and reported on actions being taken to mitigate them. It used goals and milestones in its progress updates, and reported its projected funding requirements for implementing planned actions. Together these elements describe DOD's progress in implementing its comprehensive plan and addressing training constraints at its ranges, thus meeting the annual reporting requirements of the act.

DOD has now implemented all prior GAO recommendations focused on meeting the requirements of the act and improving report submissions. GAO reported in 2012 that DOD had implemented all but 2 of 13 prior recommendations. DOD has subsequently addressed these 2 recommendations by developing and launching the range assessment module within the Defense Readiness Reporting System. Additionally, DOD created a range visibility tool within its range scheduler system to enable a user to query and identify the availability of training ranges across the Army, Marine Corps, and Navy to optimize utilization of training resources. Future improvements include plans to provide a link to the Air Force range scheduling system. Through the changes DOD has implemented in its annual reporting over the past several years, the department has continually improved reporting on the sustainability of its ranges.