

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-15-493](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) is one of the top U.S. national security threats. AQAP is based in Yemen, where political conflict, including a Houthi insurgency, has complicated stability. Since fiscal year 2006, DOD and State have allocated over \$500 million to provide training and equipment to the Yemeni security forces to assist Yemen in combating AQAP. Such assistance has been provided through three main programs: Section 1206 and Section 1207(n), which have been used to build Yemeni capacity, and FMF, which has been used to maintain equipment provided to Yemen.

A Senate report included a provision for GAO to review U.S. security assistance to Yemen. GAO examined (1) the disbursement of funds allocated to key security assistance programs for Yemen since fiscal year 2009, (2) the timeliness of Section 1206 and 1207(n) assistance, and (3) DOD plans for maintaining equipment provided to Yemen under Section 1206 and 1207(n), including the use of FMF. GAO reviewed agency documents, analyzed DOD and State data, and met with U.S. officials based in Washington, D.C., and Sanaa, Yemen.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that DOD take steps to improve the accuracy of data regarding Section 1206 congressional notification clearance. DOD concurred and noted steps it took in fiscal year 2013 to improve overall data collection, but did not discuss improving data on congressional notification clearance dates. GAO continues to maintain that DOD should take steps to improve the accuracy of its data on congressional notification clearance dates.

View [GAO-15-493](#). For more information, contact Charles Michael Johnson, Jr., at (202) 512-7331 or johnsoncm@gao.gov.

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YEMEN

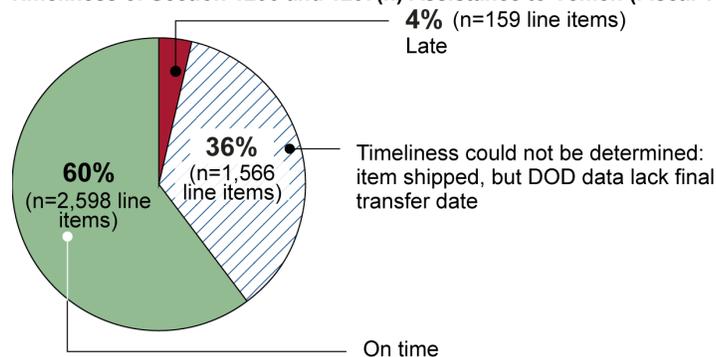
DOD Should Improve Accuracy of Its Data on Congressional Clearance of Projects as It Reevaluates Counterterrorism Assistance

What GAO Found

Since fiscal year 2009, the Department of Defense (DOD) has disbursed almost \$256 million of the \$401 million allocated to Yemen under the Section 1206 and 1207(n) security assistance programs, while the Department of State (State) has committed \$34 million of the \$95 million allocated under the Foreign Military Financing (FMF) program. In light of Yemen's currently unstable situation, security assistance programs to Yemen are temporarily suspended.

After correcting errors in DOD data, GAO determined that at least 60 percent of the Section 1206 and 1207(n) assistance from fiscal years 2009 through 2013 was timely, but delays affected 10 of 11 projects. DOD notified Congress that all training and equipment for each project would be transferred to Yemeni security forces within DOD's established deadline of 18 months. However, DOD's data contained inaccurate information regarding when the congressional notification period ended, which clears DOD to implement these projects. The inaccurate data limit DOD's and third parties' ability to readily assess the extent to which these projects met the 18-month deadline or to report to Congress on the status of assistance projects. Specifically, after correcting errors in DOD data, GAO found that at least 60 percent of the items were transferred on time, 4 percent of the items were late, and the remaining 36 percent of items were shipped but DOD's data system did not have information on when they were transferred to Yemen. The 4 percent of late items were arrayed among 10 of 11 projects.

Timeliness of Section 1206 and 1207(n) Assistance to Yemen (Fiscal Years 2009-2013)



DOD = Department of Defense

Source: GAO analysis of legislation and DOD data and documentation. | [GAO-15-493](#)

DOD plans for short-term (i.e., 2 years) maintenance needs for Section 1206 and 1207(n) projects and has resumed requesting the source and amount of long-term maintenance funds. A presidential directive and DOD guidance call for long-term maintenance planning, regardless of the partner country's ability to contribute. From fiscal years 2011 through 2014, DOD requested specific information on the amount and source of anticipated U.S. maintenance funding, if any, in the Section 1206 project proposal template. The fiscal year 2015 template did not request such information, but after reviewing a draft of GAO's report, DOD provided a copy of its fiscal year 2016 template, which requests additional information on long-term maintenance plans. DOD officials noted that several factors impede maintenance efforts and some equipment is not fully operational.