

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-17-183](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

GAO designated DOD's supply chain management as a high-risk area in 1990 and in February 2011 reported that limitations in asset visibility make it difficult to obtain timely and accurate information on assets that are present in a theater of operations. DOD defines asset visibility as the ability to provide timely and accurate information on the location, quantity, condition, movement, and status of items in its inventory. In 2015, GAO found that DOD had demonstrated leadership commitment and made considerable progress in addressing weaknesses in its supply chain management.

This report addresses the extent to which DOD has (1) identified performance measures that allow it to monitor the progress of selected asset visibility initiatives identified in its *Strategies*; and (2) addressed the five criteria—leadership commitment, capacity, corrective action plan, monitoring, and demonstrated progress—for removing asset visibility from the High Risk List. GAO reviewed documents associated with selected initiatives, surveyed DOD officials, and observed demonstrations.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that DOD use key attributes of successful performance measures in refining measures in updates to the *Strategy* and incorporate information related to performance measures into after-action reports for the asset visibility initiatives. DOD partially concurred with both recommendations. The actions DOD proposed are positive steps, but GAO believes the recommendations should be fully implemented, as discussed in the report.

View [GAO-17-183](#). For more information, contact Zina Merritt at 202-512-5257 or merrittz@gao.gov.

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DEFENSE LOGISTICS

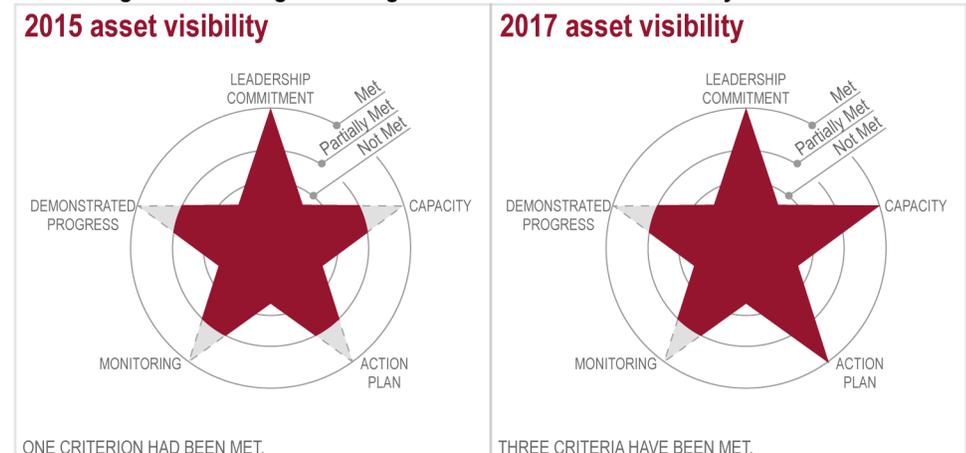
Improved Performance Measures and Information Needed for Assessing Asset Visibility Initiatives

What GAO Found

The Department of Defense (DOD) has identified performance measures for the eight selected asset visibility initiatives GAO reviewed, but these performance measures generally cannot be used to monitor progress. Specifically, GAO found that the measures for the eight initiatives reviewed did not generally include key attributes of successful performance measures. For example, for six initiatives there were no baseline and trend data associated with the measures. While DOD's 2014 and 2015 *Strategy for Improving DOD Asset Visibility (Strategies)* called for performance measures to be identified for the initiatives, the *Strategies* lacked complete direction on how to develop performance measures that would allow DOD to assess the progress of the initiatives toward their intended outcomes. GAO also found that after-action reports for the initiatives did not always include key information needed to determine the success of the initiatives in achieving the goals described in the *Strategies*. Without improved performance measures and information to support that progress has been made, DOD may not be able to monitor and show progress in improving asset visibility.

DOD has made progress and meets the criteria related to capacity and its corrective action plan but needs to take additional actions to monitor implementation and demonstrate progress to meet GAO's two remaining criteria for removal from the High Risk List, as shown in the figure. For the capacity criterion, in its draft update to the 2015 *Strategy*, DOD provides guidance on how to document cases where the funding for the initiatives is embedded within the overall program funding. Also, for the action plan criterion, DOD included matrixes in its 2015 *Strategy* to link ongoing initiatives to the *Strategy's* goals and objectives. DOD has also taken steps to monitor the status of initiatives. However, the performance measures for the selected initiatives that GAO reviewed generally cannot be used to track progress and are not consistently incorporated into reports to demonstrate results. Until these criteria are met, DOD will have limited ability to demonstrate sustained progress in improving asset visibility.

DOD's Progress in Meeting GAO's High-Risk Criteria for Asset Visibility



Source: GAO analysis. | GAO-17-183