

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-19-502T](#), a testimony before the Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives

Why GAO Did This Study

The Army is investing in near- and long-term modernization efforts to maintain its technological edge over potential adversaries. It is doing this by upgrading and updating current weapon systems, developing new capabilities, and reshaping its doctrine, force structure, training, and leader development.

This testimony is based on prior GAO work conducted 2016 through 2019 and addresses the Army's progress in: (1) establishing Army Futures Command, and (2) developing its near-term and long-term modernization strategies. It also highlights several actions recommended in prior reports related to Army modernization.

To conduct this work, GAO assessed the Army's near- and long-term modernization efforts, application of leading practices to those efforts, budget documents, and the effectiveness of the process for developing requirements for major weapon systems. This statement includes updates to this information, as of April 2019.

What GAO Recommends

Over the past 2 years, GAO has made recommendations related to this body of work. Department of Defense and Army concurred with all the recommendations and are working to implement them.

View [GAO-19-502T](#). For more information, contact Jon Ludwigson at (202) 512-4841 or ludwigsonj@gao.gov.

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ARMY MODERNIZATION

Army Should Take Steps to Reduce Risk

What GAO Found

In January 2019, GAO reported on initial steps the Army has taken to consolidate its modernization efforts under one authority—Army Futures Command. Army officials call it their most significant institutional change since 1973, when the Army was reorganized after the Vietnam War. As a precursor to this new command, the Army established eight cross-functional teams as a pilot program to increase the efficiency of requirements and technology development in six key modernization areas. These areas are described in the table below.

Description of Army's Six Prioritized Capability Needs

Army priority	Description of priority
Long-Range Precision Fires	Capabilities, including munitions that restore Army dominance in range, lethality, and target acquisition.
Next Generation Combat Vehicle	Manned and unmanned combat vehicles with modern firepower, protection, mobility, and power generation.
Future Vertical Lift	Manned and unmanned platforms capable of attack, lift, and reconnaissance missions on modern and future battlefields.
Army Network	A mobile system of hardware, software, and infrastructure that can be used to fight cohesively in any environment where the electromagnetic spectrum is denied or degraded.
Air and Missile Defense	Capabilities that ensure future combat formations are protected from modern and advanced air and missile threats.
Soldier Lethality	Capabilities, equipment, and training for all fundamentals of combat—shooting, moving, communicating, protecting, and sustaining. This includes an expansion of simulated training.

Source: GAO review of Army documentation. | GAO-19-502T

Since announcing the modernization efforts in 2017, the Army has directed more funding toward closing near-term capability gaps. For example, as part of the planning for the fiscal year 2019 budget process, the Army identified 67 high-priority programs that require a \$16 billion investment between now and fiscal year 2023. In addition to the near-term capabilities the Army is pursuing, it has identified a number of long-term needs—those focused after fiscal year 2024—and taken steps to realign research and development efforts and funding with those needs.

Over the past 2 years, GAO highlighted several steps Army should take to improve its modernization efforts, including:

- Apply leading practices to Army Futures Command's cross-functional teams, and capture their lessons learned.
- Assess the resources, particularly personnel, necessary to support its requirements development process.
- Increase the transparency of its efforts by clarifying how it evaluates whether its modernization efforts are achieving the Army's goals and clearly stating the full costs of pursuing those goals.
- Reduce risk by ensuring technologies are fully mature—such as demonstrating technologies in an operational environment before starting a formal acquisition program.

By implementing these recommendations, Army Futures Command could better ensure its ability to deliver enhanced capabilities to the warfighter and decrease the risk of cost and schedule growth.