

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-25-108104](#), a testimony before the Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support, Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Senate

Why GAO Did This Study

DOD's readiness rebuilding efforts are occurring in a challenging context that requires it to make difficult decisions on how to meet continuing operational demands while preparing for future challenges. DOD has taken steps to address persistent and long-standing readiness challenges, but significant work remains.

This statement provides information on readiness challenges across the air, sea, ground, and space warfighting domains.

This statement is based primarily on published GAO reports since 2020 that have examined aspects of military readiness, operations, and sustainment in the air, sea, ground, and space domains. This statement also includes information on related ongoing work. We expect to report on those results in March 2025. To perform all this work, GAO analyzed Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Space Force readiness, maintenance, personnel, and training data and interviewed cognizant officials.

What GAO Recommends

Across the reports summarized in this statement, GAO has made over 100 recommendations to help improve readiness across and in each of the domains. DOD needs to take additional actions to implement most of these recommendations, as discussed in this statement.

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MILITARY READINESS

Implementing GAO's Recommendations Can Help DOD Address Persistent Challenges across Air, Sea, Ground, and Space Domains

What GAO Found

The United States' military superiority depends on its ability to project strength across all warfighting domains. GAO's body of work has shown that U.S. military readiness has been degraded over the last 2 decades due to a variety of challenges, including maintaining existing systems while acquiring new ones that can overcome rapidly evolving threats. Implementing GAO's open recommendations will help the Department of Defense (DOD) address these challenges and enhance readiness. The figure below shows selected GAO recommendations that DOD has not yet implemented.

Selected Open GAO Recommendations to Address Persistent Military Readiness Challenges

Cross-cutting domains		Shortages of Sufficiently Trained Personnel Ensure guidelines reflect conditions on ships affecting the needed personnel and training.		Improving Safety and Prevent Accidents Analyze data to identify high-risk training activities.
		Ukraine Security Assistance Lessons Ensure organizations capture and share relevant training observations.		Readiness in the Pacific Develop a plan to meet training range requirements in the Indo-Pacific region.
		F-35 Sustainment Planning Determine the desired mix of government and contractor roles.		Preparing Air Force Units to Deploy Complete assessment of minimum U.S. base staffing needs to identify gaps.
		Amphibious Ships Update policy to not prematurely cancel maintenance when divesting ships.		Private Ship Repair and Ship Building Create a ship industrial base strategy.
Ground domain		Plans to Field New Equipment Complete planning elements before fielding new equipment.		Moving Forces and Equipment Develop mitigation plan to meet current and near-term requirements.
		Force Personnel Shortfalls Analyze number of needed personnel to maintain readiness.		Force Training Capabilities Develop plan for training opportunities and exercises.
Space domain				

Source: GAO analysis of Department of Defense information; GAO (icons). | GAO-25-108104