The Army developed a plan, approved by DOD's Director, Operational Test and Evaluation, that met the requirements of the fiscal year 2001 National Defense Authorization Act. As required, the plan proposed comparing the operational effectiveness and cost of the Stryker and a troop-carrying medium armored vehicle selected by the Army—the M-113A3 armored personnel carrier. Regarding the operational effectiveness, the plan's scope included the use of various data, such as that obtained during operational vignettes, for which all participants and observers received training regarding the vehicles, and from technical testing. The plan focused on the armored vehicles' effectiveness; suitability in support of infantry units, such as maintenance; and survivability during operations. Regarding the cost comparison, the plan proposed that a comprehensive cost analysis be conducted between the two vehicles.

GAO determined, based on its observation and analysis of evaluation plans and results, that the Army's conduct of the plan provided sufficient data to determine the two vehicles' relative effectiveness. To obtain the data concerning the vehicles' operational effectiveness, survivability, and suitability, the Army conducted and evaluated operational training events and multiple technical tests. According to the Army Test and Evaluation Command, both the Stryker and the M-113A3 enabled the infantry to complete missions. However, the Command concluded that the Stryker provided more advantages in force protection, support for dismounted assault, and close fight and mobility and was more survivable against ballistic and nonballistic threats. The Army also conducted a comprehensive cost analysis. GAO determined that the costs used in the analysis were reasonable and provided sufficient data to determine the vehicles' relative cost—with the Stryker being more expensive to acquire than the M-113A3 but less so to operate and maintain. The Secretary of Defense, as required, certified to Congress that the Stryker Brigade Combat Team did not diminish Army combat power.

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What GAO Found

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To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact William M. Solis at (202) 512-8365 or solisw@gao.gov.

Army’s Stryker and M-113A3 Armored Vehicles Used in Comparative Evaluation

Source: GAO.