

Why GAO Did This Study

To mitigate the effects of budget uncertainty, the Army uses borrowed military personnel to perform tasks previously performed by civilians or contractors. Under Army Regulation 570-4, this use is generally restricted to a limited time and to duties deemed military essential or filling critical requirements, and can be in or outside of a soldier's military occupation. Due to the sequestration of budgetary resources in fiscal year 2013, the Army expected an increased use of these personnel, suspended some requirements in the Army regulation, and required monthly usage reports.

House Report 113-102 included a provision for GAO to review the Army's use of borrowed military personnel. This report examines the extent to which the Army, during fiscal years 2013 and 2014, (1) used borrowed military personnel, and what is known about any readiness and training impacts and (2) considered costs when making decisions for this use. GAO reviewed relevant DOD and Army documents, analyzed cost data, and interviewed cognizant officials. GAO visited selected installations and while not generalizable, information obtained from these site visits provided insight into the use of borrowed military personnel.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that the Army establish a requirement and guidance for monitoring the use of borrowed military personnel and improve oversight of cost reporting. DOD concurred with three recommendations and partially concurred with one. DOD also raised a definitional issue which GAO addresses in this report.

View [GAO-15-349](#). For more information, contact Brenda S. Farrell at (202) 512-3604 or farrellb@gao.gov.

MILITARY PERSONNEL

Army Needs a Requirement for Capturing Data and Clear Guidance on Use of Military for Civilian or Contractor Positions

What GAO Found

The Army does not know the extent to which it used borrowed military personnel during fiscal years 2013 and 2014 because (1) it is unable to distinguish borrowed military personnel from the larger category of special duty personnel in its monthly special duty reports and (2) the Army did not collect complete and accurate data on special duty use through its reporting mechanisms at that time. In addition, because of these shortcomings in its data on borrowed military personnel, the Army does not know the extent to which the use of borrowed military personnel affected readiness and training. An Army regulation requires borrowed military personnel assignments normally should be limited to 90 days, but temporary guidance provided during fiscal years 2013 and 2014 was unclear with respect to any limitation in length. The Army did not track the actual amount of time soldiers served in this temporary status, thereby limiting its ability to monitor this usage. Further, borrowed military personnel were used in various capacities outside of their Military Occupational Specialty including as lifeguards, grounds maintenance personnel, and gym attendants because the Army did not provide specific guidance on what functions it considered appropriate to fill with borrowed military personnel. The Army's monthly reporting requirement on use of borrowed personnel expired at the beginning of fiscal year 2015, so the Army does not now have a requirement to monitor this usage even though Army officials said this usage of borrowed military personnel would continue. Without a continued requirement and clear guidance for identifying and monitoring the extent to which borrowed military personnel are used, the Army risks allocating its resources inefficiently and ineffectively and may be unable to identify any potential problems with this use of personnel, including any impacts on training and readiness.

The Army did not consider full costs in fiscal years 2013 and 2014 when deciding to use borrowed military personnel and the Army did not provide the oversight that was necessary to ensure that commanders documented and reported the full costs of using borrowed military personnel in these years. This is important because the full costs of borrowed military personnel can be greater than civilian personnel performing the same function. GAO reviewed special duty data reported in February 2014, and found that none of the 13 commands and installations reviewed reported the full costs for all military, civilian, and contractor personnel. In March 2013, in addition to Department of Defense (DOD) guidance, the Secretary of the Army directed installations using borrowed military personnel to report the full costs of military personnel in accordance with DOD's cost-estimating policy. However, the Army did not provide sufficient oversight to help ensure commanders documented and reported the full costs of borrowed military personnel. Without Army oversight to help ensure the full costs for the use of borrowed military personnel are considered, documented, and reported, the Army will not have a comprehensive picture of these personnel costs, which may negatively affect its ability to make informed strategic decisions about workforce requirements.