

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-17-415](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

For two decades, DOD has planned to realign its presence in the Asia-Pacific region. The Marine Corps has plans to consolidate bases in Okinawa, relocating 4,100 Marines to Guam, 2,700 to Hawaii, 800 to the continental United States, and a rotational presence of 1,300 to Australia.

The Joint Explanatory Statement accompanying the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, included a provision that GAO study the realignment initiatives in the Asia-Pacific region. This report assesses the extent to which DOD has (1) coordinated its efforts and resolved selected identified capability deficiencies related to the relocation of Marines, (2) developed infrastructure plans and schedules and completed risk planning for its infrastructure that will support the relocation, and (3) developed reliable cost estimates for infrastructure for the relocation of Marines to Guam and Hawaii and the rotational presence in Australia. GAO reviewed relevant policies and plans; analyzed cost documents; interviewed DOD officials; and visited U.S. military installations in the Asia-Pacific region.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that DOD resolve capability deficiencies in the four selected identified areas, update its schedule for Guam infrastructure, complete a risk-management plan for Guam infrastructure, and revise its three cost estimates. DOD concurred with two recommendations, partially concurred with six, and did not concur with one. GAO continues to believe its recommendations are valid, as discussed in this report.

View [GAO-17-415](#). For more information, contact Brian Lepore at (202) 512-4523 or leporeb@gao.gov.

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MARINE CORPS ASIA PACIFIC REALIGNMENT

DOD Should Resolve Capability Deficiencies and Infrastructure Risks and Revise Cost Estimates

What GAO Found

The Department of Defense (DOD) has coordinated the relocation of Marines from Okinawa to other locations in the Asia-Pacific region through developing a synchronization plan and organizing working groups. However, DOD has not resolved selected identified capability deficiencies related to the relocation of Marine units; training needs in the region; the reduction in runway length at the Futenma Replacement Facility in Okinawa; and challenges for operating in Australia. DOD guidance indicates that mission requirements—which would include the capabilities needed to fulfill the mission—largely determine land and facility support requirements. If DOD does not resolve the selected identified capability deficiencies in its infrastructure plans, DOD may be unable to maintain its capabilities or face much higher costs to do so.

DOD has taken steps to develop infrastructure plans and schedules for its relocation efforts, but it did not develop a reliable schedule for the Marine relocation to Guam and has not completed its risk planning for infrastructure in Guam. DOD developed plans that will support construction efforts in Guam and Japan, and developed some initial infrastructure plans for Hawaii and Australia. However, GAO found the Marine Corps' integrated master schedule for Guam did not fully meet the comprehensive, well-constructed, and credible characteristics for a reliable schedule. For example, the schedule does not include resources needed for nonconstruction activities, such as information technology and design activities. Additionally, the Marine Corps has not completed its risk-management plan for infrastructure construction in Guam. Specifically, the Marine Corps has not identified its strategy to address construction risks including labor shortages and endangered-species protection. If DOD does not have a reliable schedule or has not completed risk planning for Guam, it may not have complete information to identify and address risks that may result in cost overruns and schedule delays.

DOD has made progress in developing cost estimates for Guam, but its estimates partially met GAO best practices for reliable cost estimates for the relocations to Guam and Hawaii and the establishment of a rotational presence in Australia. For cost estimates related to Guam military construction activities, DOD included ground rules and assumptions, but did not include some elements of a reliable cost estimate, such as a risk analysis. Additionally, DOD developed cost estimates for nonmilitary construction activities that provide a high-level planning overview of the requirements, but they did not incorporate several other best practices, including a unifying Work Breakdown Structure that defines in detail the work necessary to accomplish a program's objectives. For Hawaii and Australia, the cost estimates are not considered reliable because they did not include all life-cycle costs or a Work Breakdown Structure. If DOD does not revise the cost estimates for these locations, decision makers in DOD and Congress will not have reliable cost information to inform funding decisions and to help them determine the viability of relocation of Marines to Hawaii and the establishment of a rotational presence in Australia.