



Highlights of [GAO-10-95](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

Prior to the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization's (JIEDDO) establishment in 2006, no single entity was responsible for coordinating the Department of Defense's (DOD) counter improvised explosive device (IED) efforts. JIEDDO was established to coordinate and focus all counter-IED efforts, including ongoing research and development, throughout DOD. This report, which is one in a series of congressionally mandated GAO reports related to JIEDDO's management and operations, assesses the extent to which 1) capability gaps were initially identified in DOD's effort to defeat IEDs and how these gaps and other factors led to the development of JIEDDO, 2) JIEDDO has maintained visibility over all counter-IED efforts, 3) JIEDDO has coordinated the transition of JIEDDO-funded initiatives to the military services, and 4) JIEDDO has developed criteria for the counter-IED training initiatives it will fund. To address these objectives, GAO reviewed and analyzed relevant documents and met with DOD and service officials.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that JIEDDO (1) improve its visibility of all counter-IED efforts, (2) work with the services to develop a complete transition plan for initiatives, and (3) define criteria for funding training initiatives. DOD generally concurred with our recommendations and noted actions to be taken.

[View GAO-10-95 or key components.](#)
For more information, contact William M. Solis, (202) 512-8365 or solisw@gao.gov.

WARFIGHTER SUPPORT

Actions Needed to Improve Visibility and Coordination of DOD's Counter-Improvised Explosive Device Efforts

What GAO Found

With the escalation of the IED threat in Iraq, DOD identified several counter-IED capability gaps that included shortcomings in the areas of counter-IED technologies, qualified personnel with expertise in counter-IED tactics, training, dedicated funding, and expedited acquisition processes. For example, prior to JIEDDO's establishment, many different DOD entities focused on counter-IED issues, but coordination among these various efforts was informal and ad hoc. DOD's efforts to focus on addressing these gaps culminated in the creation of JIEDDO, but its creation was done in the absence of DOD having formal guidance for establishing joint organizations. Further, DOD did not systematically evaluate all preexisting counter-IED resources to determine whether other entities were engaged in similar efforts.

JIEDDO and the services lack full visibility over counter-IED initiatives throughout DOD. First, JIEDDO and the services lack a comprehensive database of all existing counter-IED initiatives, limiting their visibility over counter-IED efforts across DOD. Although JIEDDO is currently developing a management system that will track initiatives as they move through JIEDDO's acquisition process, the system will only track JIEDDO-funded initiatives—not those being independently developed and procured by the services and other DOD components. Second, the services lack full visibility over those JIEDDO-funded initiatives that bypass JIEDDO's acquisition process. With limited visibility, both JIEDDO and the services are at risk of duplicating efforts.

JIEDDO faces difficulties with transitioning Joint IED defeat initiatives to the military services, in part because JIEDDO and the services have difficulty resolving the gap between JIEDDO's transition timeline and DOD's base budget cycle. As a result, the services are mainly funding initiatives with funding for overseas contingency operations rather than their base budgets. Continuing to fund transferred initiatives with overseas contingency operations appropriations does not ensure funding availability for those initiatives in future years since these appropriations are not necessarily renewed from one year to the next. This transition is also hindered when service requirements are not fully considered during the development of joint-funded counter-IED initiatives, as evidenced by two counter-IED jamming systems. As a result, JIEDDO may be investing in counter-IED solutions that do not fully meet existing service requirements.

JIEDDO's lack of clear criteria for the counter-IED training initiatives it will fund has affected its counter-IED training investment decisions. As a result, JIEDDO has funded training initiatives that may have primary uses other than defeating IEDs. In March 2009, JIEDDO attempted to update its criteria for joint training initiatives by listing new requirements; however, these guidelines also could be broadly interpreted. Without specific criteria for counter-IED training initiatives, DOD may find that it lacks funding for future initiatives more directly related to the counter-IED mission.