

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-16-627](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

DOD relies on its training ranges within the United States and overseas to help prepare its forces for combat and complex missions around the globe.

Section 366 of the Bob Stump National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003 required DOD to submit a comprehensive plan on its efforts to address training constraints caused by limitations on the use of military lands, airspace, and marine areas in the United States and overseas for training. The act, as amended, further requires DOD to provide annual progress reports on its efforts through 2018. The act also included a provision for GAO to submit annual evaluations of DOD's reports. This report assesses the extent to which DOD's 2016 Sustainable Ranges Report met statutory reporting requirements.

To conduct this work, GAO reviewed DOD's 2016 report and compared it with the statutory reporting requirements. GAO also obtained written responses from cognizant DOD and military service officials regarding preparations made to complete the 2016 report.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is not making recommendations in this report. DOD agreed with GAO's report after reviewing the draft.

View [GAO-16-627](#). For more information, contact Brian Lepore at (202) 512-4523 or leporeb@gao.gov.

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MILITARY TRAINING

DOD Met Annual Reporting Requirements in Its 2016 Sustainable Ranges Report

What GAO Found

The Department of Defense's (DOD) 2016 Sustainable Ranges Report met the annual statutory reporting requirements to describe DOD's progress in implementing its plan to sustain training ranges and any additional actions taken or planned for addressing training constraints caused by limitations on the use of military lands, marine areas, and airspace. DOD's 2016 report provides updates to the plan required by the act, specifically: (1) proposals to enhance training range capabilities and address any shortfalls, (2) goals and milestones to describe DOD's progress in implementing its comprehensive training range sustainment plan, and (3) projected funding requirements for each of the military services to implement their planned actions. In the report, DOD used goals and milestones to address the statutory requirement to describe its progress in implementing its comprehensive training range sustainment plan. Using these goals as a common framework, each military service developed its own milestones and needed actions for reaching those milestones. The report also identifies evolving activities and emerging issues related to training range sustainability and includes actions taken to mitigate them.

In updates pertaining to military services' issues related to range capability, the report noted that the Marine Corps has lacked the capability to fully exercise a large Marine Air-Ground Task Force in a realistic training scenario. For example, the report states that the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, California, has not been able to accommodate a full-scale, live-fire Marine Expeditionary Brigade exercise. However, according to DOD's 2016 report, the ongoing expansion of the center will correct this training and readiness deficiency, and significantly enhance the Marine Corps' ability to conduct training in support of U.S. national security.

Military Training Exercise



Source: Defense Video and Imagery Distribution System. | GAO-16-627

Marines conduct a raid on a simulated hostile village during a training exercise at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, California.