

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-19-118](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

DOD maintains stockpiles of ammunition for use during operations, including SRC I ammunition. SRC I ammunition requires a high level of protection and security due to its ability to cause extreme damage or lethality.

Senate Report 114-255 (2016), included a provision that GAO evaluate how DOD and the military services have established and maintained physical security measures at DOD locations with SRC I ammunition. GAO's report evaluates the extent to which (1) military service guidance is consistent with DOD's requirements for safeguarding SRC I ammunition and (2) the military services have identified and resolved physical security deficiencies at selected locations that store SRC I ammunition. GAO reviewed DOD guidance, visited selected military locations that were chosen based on size and variety of SRC I inventory, and interviewed officials. GAO also analyzed security inspection reports from 2014 to 2017.

This is a public version of a sensitive report that GAO issued in September 2018. Information that DOD deemed sensitive has been omitted.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is making five recommendations, including that the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps take actions to ensure their physical security inspections of locations that store SRC I ammunition are completed in accordance with policy, and that DOD revise its guidance to require that the services establish a process to consistently document the resolution of all identified physical security deficiencies. DOD concurred with all five recommendations.

View [GAO-19-118](#). For more information, contact Diana Maurer at (202) 512-9627 or maurerd@gao.gov.

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DEFENSE LOGISTICS

Actions Needed to Enhance the Security of High-Risk Ammunition at Storage Locations

What GAO Found

Military service guidance for safeguarding Security Risk Category (SRC) I ammunition—which consists of nonnuclear, portable missiles and rockets in a ready-to-fire configuration—is not consistent with all of the Department of Defense's (DOD) minimum requirements. For example, DOD's guidance requires at least 8 hours of backup power for intrusion detection systems, but the Army, Navy, and Air Force guidance requires only 4 hours. The Army and Navy have drafted updates to their guidance to be consistent with DOD requirements and planned to issue revised guidance by or before the end fiscal year 2018. Marine Corps and Air Force officials told GAO they also plan to revise their guidance to be consistent with DOD requirements.

Examples of Physical Security Requirements for Ammunition Storage



Intrusion detection systems



Restricted area signage



Exterior lighting

Source: GAO. | GAO-19-118

The military services have conducted inspections of the physical security at locations with SRC I ammunition that GAO reviewed, and have identified security deficiencies. However, GAO is not identifying examples of deficiencies in this report because DOD deemed such information sensitive. GAO determined that some inspections were not conducted on time in accordance with military service guidance. For example, GAO reviewed 125 Army, Navy, and Marine Corps inspection reports from select locations and found that 54 inspections (or 43 percent) were late by 1 day to 14 months. These services have not taken actions to help ensure that physical security inspections are being conducted on time. Without taking actions to help achieve the services' requirements for timely inspections—such as assigning roles and responsibilities for monitoring—the services are at greater risk of compromising the security of SRC I ammunition.

In addition, it is unknown whether the military services have resolved all security deficiencies because the services do not consistently document resolutions. For example, only 3 of 14 Army locations provided documentation about how identified physical security deficiencies were resolved. DOD guidance does not require such documentation, and therefore GAO could not determine whether 29 of the 35 selected locations reviewed across the services had consistently resolved all identified deficiencies and, if so, what steps were taken to do so. Revising DOD guidance to ensure that the military services establish a process for documenting the resolution of all identified security deficiencies would help the services further reduce the risk of loss or theft of SRC I ammunition.