

GAO

JOINT MANPOWER PROCESS

Limited Progress Made in Implementing DOD Inspector General Recommendations

HEARINGS



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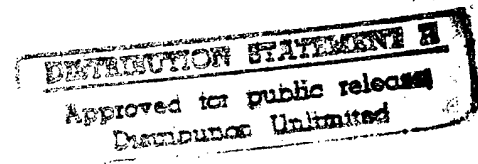
National Security and
International Affairs Division

B-277624

September 19, 1997

The Honorable Strom Thurmond
Chairman
The Honorable Carl Levin
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate

The Honorable Floyd Spence
Chairman
The Honorable Ronald Dellums
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on National Security
House of Representatives



In November 1995, the Department of Defense (DOD) Inspector General (IG) reported significant deficiencies in DOD's joint personnel requirements and management program and made recommendations for improvement.¹ Section 509 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997 directs us to assess and report on the completeness and adequacy of the corrective actions taken by the Secretary of Defense with respect to the matters covered in the IG's report.² This report responds to that mandate.

Background

In a 1985 study, the Senate Armed Services Committee staff found that the quality of military personnel assigned to joint duty was inadequate. The study's recommendations were grouped into three categories: (1) change promotion policies to increase interest in joint assignments, (2) improve the preparation and experience levels of officers serving in joint duty assignments, and (3) provide for improved personnel management of all military officers serving in joint duty assignments.³ A 1986 House Armed Services Committee report contained similar findings. That report described a weak joint organizational structure and an unsatisfactory

¹Inspection of the Department of Defense Joint Manpower Process, Department of Defense Inspector General (96-029, Nov. 29, 1995).

²Section 509(c) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997, Public Law 104-201, September 23, 1996.

³Staff of Senate Committee on Armed Services, 99th Cong., Report on Defense Organization: The Need for Change, S. Rep. No. 99-86, at 179 and 196 (1985).

personnel management system that failed to fill joint positions with officers that had the required talent, education, training, and experience.⁴

The Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act of 1986⁵ was passed as a result of the significant concerns expressed about organizational and personnel problems affecting joint U.S. military operations.⁶ Title IV of the act established procedures for selection, education, assignment, and promotion of joint duty officers.

In May 1994, the DOD IG began its inspection of DOD's joint personnel requirements and management program. The inspection objectives were to evaluate the processes and mechanisms used to determine, validate, and approve requirements and assign and manage personnel at joint organizations. The DOD IG found that (1) the processes and mechanisms used to determine personnel requirements for joint organizations are inefficient, ineffective, and inadequate; (2) the processes and mechanisms used to validate and approve personnel requirements for joint organizations are inadequate; (3) the services are unable to satisfy the personnel requirements for joint organizations; (4) support from the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the service secretaries in monitoring the careers of officers who serve or have served in joint assignments is inadequate; and (5) joint policy, education, and training of reserve officers assigned to joint organizations are inadequate. The report included 17 recommendations for improving the program.

Results in Brief

DOD management concurred with 11 of the DOD IG recommendations, partially concurred with 5, and proposed alternative corrective action to satisfy the intent of the remaining recommendation. One recommendation has been fully implemented, and DOD has taken some action on all but two of the others. However, resolution of most of the concerns raised by the DOD IG will not be completely accomplished for some time, if at all. For example, although DOD has drafted or is developing policies and procedures to address nine of the concerns, approval is not assured because the policies and procedures are still being coordinated among the affected organizations. In addition, the corrective actions prescribed or planned in some cases may not adequately address the DOD IG's concerns.

⁴H.R. Rep. No. 99-700, at 38 (1986).

⁵Public Law 99-433, Oct. 1, 1986.

⁶S. Rep. No. 99-280, at 4-11 (1986).

Table 1 summarizes our findings by recommendation. Appendix I contains a detailed analysis of our position on the completeness and adequacy of the actions taken on each specific recommendation in the DOD IG's report.

Table 1: Status of the Implementation of DOD IG Recommendations

Recommendation	DOD concurrence^a	Action taken	Effect of action	App. I page numbers
1. Issue guidance with criteria for determining requirements	Partial	Guidelines drafted	Too early to tell/not fully resolved	10
2. Issue guidance on military versus civilian requirements and protect funding of conversions	No	No action	Too early to tell	12
3. Revalidate personnel requirements	Yes	Guidelines drafted	Too early to tell/not fully resolved	13
4. Develop analysis capability for reallocating positions	Yes	Guidelines drafted	Too early to tell/not fully resolved	14
5. Establish plan for service equity	Partial	No action	Too early to tell	15
6. Develop joint manpower validation guidance	Partial	Guidelines drafted	Too early to tell/not fully resolved	16
7. Bring services on line with automation system	Yes	Short-term fix is planned	Too early to tell	17
8. Designate joint duty positions as stated in law	Yes	Board is reviewing positions	Adequate progress not made	19
9. Streamline process for requirements changes	Yes	Guidelines drafted	Too early to tell/not fully resolved	20
10. Publish joint assignment guidance	Yes	Guidelines drafted	Too early to tell	21
11. Change joint tour length calculation	Partial	DOD General Counsel's original opinion was superseded; no other action taken	Unable to tell ^b	21
12. Issue joint officer management guidance	Partial	Partial guidance drafted	Too early to tell/not fully resolved	23
13. Seek legislative relief on critical joint duty positions and reporting requirements	Yes	Legislative relief granted ^c	Too early to tell how relief will be implemented	26
14. Report promotion results as stated in law	Yes	Yes	Fully implemented	28
15. Identify and exempt certain positions from interruption	Yes	Guidelines drafted	Too early to tell	29
16. Conduct revalidation boards	Yes	^d	Too early to tell	30
17. Develop policy guidance for training of reserve officers	Yes	Working group developing guidelines	Too early to tell	32

^aConcurrence was based on the official comments of the organization responsible for taking action.

^bWe were unable to verify the validity of the substitute DOD General Counsel opinion, as no written rationale to support this change has been provided.

^cPublic Law 104-201, Div. A, Title V, sec. 510, Sept. 23, 1996.

^dThe Marine Corps and the Air Force say they have no need for boards. The Navy and the Army are considering holding boards.

Agency Comments

DOD provided oral comments on a draft of this report and generally concurred with its findings. DOD stated that our report accurately portrayed DOD's actions regarding implementation of the DOD IG's recommendations. DOD further commented that, in its view, the report understates the progress DOD has made toward improving the joint manpower process. DOD believes that its improvements will correct problems in all areas of joint manpower, including areas in which it did not concur with the DOD IG report.

Scope and Methodology

We examined the November 1995 DOD IG report and supporting DOD IG workpapers and discussed the report with DOD IG officials. We also discussed progress and problems in this area with manpower and personnel officials in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, other joint organizations, and the services.

To determine the status of actions to implement the 17 DOD IG recommendations contained in the DOD IG report, we reviewed DOD's April 1997 report to Congress on improvements to the joint personnel requirements and management program and verified and updated the status through interviews and analysis of supporting documentation.

To determine whether completed actions appear to have resolved the concerns raised by the DOD IG, we reviewed documentation of any changes made and analyzed the effect of those changes.

To determine whether actions planned but not completed appear likely to resolve the concerns raised by the DOD IG, we reviewed and analyzed plans and draft directives and instructions and considered the views obtained from officials of the involved agencies and organizations.

We conducted our review between February and July 1997 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

On September 9, 1997, DOD Directive 1300.19 received final approval and became effective immediately. At that time, however, this report was already in the final stages of publication. Consequently, we were not able to assess the completeness and adequacy of the final directive for correcting the problems identified in the DOD IG report and still meet the mandated reporting date.

We are sending copies of this report to other appropriate congressional committees; the Secretaries of Defense, the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force; the Commandant, Marine Corps; the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and the Director, Office of Management and Budget. Copies will also be made available to others on request.

Please call me at (202) 512-5140 if you or your staff have any questions on this report. Major contributors to this report are listed in appendix II.



Mark E. Gebicke
Director, Military Operations and
Capabilities Issues

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	Table 1: Status of the Implementation of DOD IG Recommendations

Abbreviations

CJCS	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
DOD	Department of Defense
IG	Inspector General
JPME	Joint Professional Military Education
JSO	Joint Specialty Officer
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense

Status of the Implementation of Department of Defense Inspector General Recommendations

Recommendation 1

The November 1995 Department of Defense (DOD) Inspector General (IG) report recommended that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness develop, coordinate, and submit for approval a DOD Directive on Joint Manpower Management that incorporates a baseline methodology and criteria for joint organizations to determine military and civilian manpower requirements against standardized processes.

DOD IG Findings

According to the DOD IG report, the personnel requirements determination process is the basis for an organization to determine the number and skill level of personnel resources necessary to effectively and efficiently accomplish its mission. The DOD IG found that a lack of definitive guidance from the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) or the Joint Staff resulted in wide variations in the processes used by joint organizations to determine requirements.

Most organizations used an ad hoc process to respond to events such as major mission changes, reorganizations, or staff reductions. The DOD IG reported two key deficiencies with using an ad hoc process. First, the use of such a process makes it difficult to ensure consistency across organizations in their assessments of the personnel required to perform similar functions. Therefore, the DOD IG concluded that no sound basis existed for OSD and the Joint Staff to use in comparing competing demands among joint organizations, setting priorities, or determining whether guidance was being followed. Second, the lack of documentation of criteria used and data relied on to determine requirements made it difficult to respond to future demands for personnel.

Status of Action on the Recommendation

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness partially concurred with the recommendation, agreeing that some standardization of operational processes was needed for consistency in managing requirements. However, the Under Secretary noted that the diverse missions of the joint organizations make a single requirements determination methodology impractical.

DOD Directive 1100.XX and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Manual 1600.XX addressing the DOD IG findings have been drafted. They have not been approved and, because they are still being coordinated among the affected organizations, may be changed considerably before approval or not be approved at all. As currently drafted, however, the January 2, 1997, draft of the DOD directive designates the CJCS as

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responsible for developing guidelines and criteria for determining, validating, and prioritizing joint requirements and requires the joint organizations to comply with the CJCS guidelines. In addition, the June 20, 1997, draft of the CJCS manual states that each joint activity will establish its own internal system to determine joint requirements, lists several methods for doing so, and requires each joint activity to document its validation process.

OSD and Joint Staff officials told us that the main problem in approving these documents concerns DOD's proposal to make the CJCS responsible for developing the guidelines and criteria for personnel requirements in all joint organizations. Currently, many joint organizations report to OSD rather than through CJCS for approval of personnel requirements. The officials told us that some of the organizations that do not currently report through the CJCS do not want to be bound by the CJCS guidance, since the guidance represents a change in the structure for requesting and obtaining personnel resources. Joint Staff officials told us that, if the DOD directive will not be signed or will be delayed for some time because of these concerns, they will issue a CJCS manual that will apply only to the joint organizations that already report through the CJCS. The officials also said that, even if both documents are approved as currently drafted, the Joint Staff would not be able to implement the manual immediately at all joint organizations. The officials plan to implement the manual first at the organizations that report through the CJCS and then start implementation at the other joint organizations.

Our Assessment

We believe that the current draft DOD directive and CJCS manual offer the opportunity to implement the DOD IG's recommendation. The documents allow joint organizations the flexibility to employ requirements determination methods appropriate for them while requiring that the process used be documented so that independent assessments of requirements can be conducted. However, the documents have not been approved. Moreover, if the CJCS manual is issued and applied only to the joint organizations reporting through the CJCS, the guidance, procedures, and processes for implementing the DOD IG's recommendation will be in place for only those organizations. As a result, this recommendation has not yet been implemented, and it is too early to tell whether it eventually will be implemented.

Recommendation 2

The DOD IG recommended that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness issue additional, more instructive guidance on military and civilian requirements determination criteria and procedures and take action to protect the funding of positions identified for conversion of military positions to civilian positions.

DOD IG Findings

The DOD IG found that joint policy governing civilian personnel requirements was fragmented and that the guidance that was available was incomplete and ambiguous. In the absence of any DOD-wide guidance for requirements determination for civilians, the commands followed the supporting host service regulations for determining civilian personnel requirements.

As the services downsize, greater emphasis is being placed on converting military personnel in support positions to civilian personnel. The DOD IG noted that DOD provides general guidance but does not define any criteria for determining the appropriate military and civilian mix for a joint organization.¹ The DOD IG reported that commanders and managers of joint organizations could not see the advantage of converting military positions to civilian ones unless they had some assurance that their civilian end strength would be increased and necessary funding could be guaranteed.

Status of Action on the Recommendation

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness did not concur with the recommendation. The Under Secretary noted that it is not in DOD's best interest to fence payroll dollars from the effects of general budget adjustments because this action would encourage a less productive and efficient mix of labor and capital. In evaluating these comments, the DOD IG reported that the Under Secretary's staff said that they were working with the Joint Staff to develop a systematic process for determining the requirements of the unified commands and Joint Staff activities. The Under Secretary's staff also said that, once the process had been refined and tested, it could be adopted for use at all activities that employ joint personnel. The DOD IG concluded that this proposed action satisfied the intent of the recommendation.

The guidelines for determining whether a joint position should be military or civilian are the same as they were when the DOD IG conducted its work. In addition, an OSD official told us that although about 3,000 DOD positions

¹Our recent study, *DOD Force Mix Issues: Converting Some Support Officer Positions to Civilian Status Could Save Money* (GAO/NSIAD-97-15, Oct. 23, 1996), found that DOD could save as much as \$95 million annually by converting about 9,500 military positions to civilian status.

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had been converted from military to civilian during fiscal year 1996, none of these positions were in joint organizations. Furthermore, OSD officials told us that they do not plan to take any specific action on this recommendation. The officials believe that this issue will adequately be addressed by the process being developed in response to recommendation 1.

Our Assessment

No specific action has been taken to implement this recommendation. It is too early to tell whether the process being developed in response to recommendation 1 will adequately address this issue.

Recommendation 3

The DOD IG recommended that the Commanders in Chief of the unified commands and directors of the defense agencies revalidate manpower requirements using the methodology established by the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

DOD IG Findings

The DOD IG found that the various requirements determination processes used by the DOD activities they visited were fragmented and inefficient. The processes ranged from a subjective analysis to in-house board of director reviews, to contracted studies. The DOD IG reported that the results of those processes were not supported by documented evidence of any quantitative or objective measurement criteria.

The DOD IG recognized that the development of quantitative approaches to validate requirements may be costly, labor intensive, and time-consuming but noted that, in DOD's current downsizing environment, joint activities are challenged to accomplish increased missions with less funding and fewer personnel. The DOD IG concluded that, under these conditions, relevant and objective analyses were necessary to ensure that the highest priority needs were met.

**Status of Action on the
Recommendation**

The three Commanders in Chief of the unified commands who responded to this recommendation concurred with it. However, implementation of this recommendation requires using the methodology and criteria developed to implement recommendation 1. Although DOD Directive 1100.XX and CJCS Manual 1600.XX have been drafted, they have not yet been approved. Because the guidance is still being coordinated among the affected organizations, they may be changed considerably

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before approval or not approved at all. In addition, as discussed in recommendation 1, consideration is being given to applying the manual only to those joint organizations which report through the CJCS.

Our Assessment

Implementation of this recommendation depends on the approval of the guidance developed to implement recommendation 1. Because that guidance has not been approved, this recommendation has not yet been implemented and it is too early to tell whether it will be.

Recommendation 4

The DOD IG recommended that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Joint Staff Manpower and Personnel Directorate develop a comparative analysis capability of unified command and defense agency missions, priorities, funding, and manpower levels for use in aiding the decision-making process for reprioritizing and reallocating limited joint manpower assets.

DOD IG Findings

To help ensure that joint activities are able to accomplish mission objectives, quantitative or objective measurement criteria are needed to help identify priority needs within an environment of reduced funding and reduced personnel strength. The DOD IG, acknowledging that each joint organization has a unique mission with unique requirements, stated that the requirements determination process should be measured against proven criteria that are consistently applied. The DOD IG found that the lack of comprehensive requirements determination guidance makes it difficult for the Joint Staff to meet its responsibility of validating the joint organizations' requirements in a consistent and comparable manner.

**Status of Action on the
Recommendation**

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness partially concurred with the recommendation, agreeing that it is appropriate for the Joint Staff to advise the CJCS regarding resource allocations for those activities under his cognizance. The Joint Staff concurred with the recommendation.

The June 20, 1997, draft of CJCS Manual 1600.XX describes a methodology for predicting and validating requirements of the unified commands by comparing their staffing levels for common functions. Joint Staff officials told us that, once the manual has been approved, this comparative analysis will be used to resource new requirements by reallocating resources

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among the unified commands and requesting additional manpower from the services only by exception. OSD and Joint Staff officials said that if the manual is issued applying to all joint organizations, this methodology, once it has been applied successfully to the unified commands, will be modified and used for the defense agencies.

Our Assessment

We believe that the current draft CJCS manual offers the opportunity to implement this recommendation. However, it has not been approved. Therefore, this recommendation has not yet been implemented and it is too early to tell whether it will be.

Recommendation 5

The DOD IG recommended that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, with the advice of the CJCS, establish a time-phased plan to realign military service contributions to joint manpower. The plan should place military service "equity" in the context of requirements and ability to meet those requirements, rather than a simplistic "proportionate share analysis." In that regard, the following elements should be evaluated:

- (a) which positions must be filled with service-unique specialists;
 - (b) of the remaining positions, what specialty and rank is required;
 - (c) for each specialty and rank identified, what distribution, among the four services, of personnel meet those criteria; and
 - (d) whether proportionate distribution among the services of requirements by specialty and rank results in critical shortages of personnel to meet in-service requirements.
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DOD IG Findings

The DOD IG noted that the issue of service equity was not adequately considered within the joint personnel requirements determination process, given that the obligation to fill joint positions can have an impact on the services' ability to meet their internal demands for personnel. The DOD IG looked at actual service contributions for fiscal year 1994 and found that they differed from Joint Staff goals for service contributions. For example, the Air Force contribution was 37 percent and the goal was 26 percent. Requirements and personnel officials in each of the services wanted the matter of service equity addressed and resolved.

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Recommendation

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness partially concurred with the recommendation, stating that a plan to realign service contributions was not needed and that changing work force incentives was a more desirable way to effect realignment. The Director of the Joint Staff concurred with the recommendation commenting that they would coordinate with the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to implement the recommendation through the methodology for revalidating requirements that was being developed to implement recommendation 1.

OSD and Joint Staff officials told us that no particular action has been taken to implement this recommendation. However, the officials also said that actions taken to implement recommendation 1 may result in a change in the relative contributions of the services.

Our Assessment

No specific action has been taken to implement this recommendation. It is too early to determine whether actions taken by DOD to implement recommendation 1 will resolve this issue.

Recommendation 6

The DOD IG recommended that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness ensure that the DOD Directive on Joint Manpower Management contains joint manpower validation guidance that would

- (a) ensure consistency in approving manpower authorizations to joint organizations,
- (b) establish effective and consistent joint manpower validation criteria for both military and civilian positions, and
- (c) effectively prioritize competing demands for joint manpower by joint organizations.

DOD IG Findings

The DOD IG concluded that the processes and mechanisms for validating and approving joint organizations' personnel requirements are inadequate. According to the DOD IG report, the mechanisms used to validate requirements are intended to be a check and balance for the requirements decisions made by joint organizations and therefore should be separate and distinct from the processes used for determining the requirements. The DOD IG found that joint organizations used ad hoc validation processes

that did not consist of two separate and distinct functions. Rather, the IG found that the two functions were generally part of a single process. The report cited the following problems related to this area:

- The roles and responsibilities of the CJCS and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness for validating and approving joint personnel requirements are not clearly defined.
- The processes and mechanisms in place to review and validate joint personnel requirements at the local or Joint Staff level were not adequately defined as separate and distinct from the requirements determination process.

Status of Action on the Recommendation

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness partially concurred with this recommendation. The Under Secretary agreed that he and the CJCS should work together to provide some standardization of processes as discussed in recommendation 1. DOD Directive 1100.XX and CJCS Manual 1600.XX addressing the DOD IG findings have been drafted. The January 2, 1997, draft of the DOD directive defines the organizations responsible for validating and approving joint personnel requirements, and the June 20, 1997, draft of the CJCS manual includes guidance on the process and criteria for determining and prioritizing requirements.

Our Assessment

We believe that the current draft DOD directive and CJCS manual offer the opportunity to implement this recommendation. However, as discussed in recommendation 1, the documents are still being coordinated among the affected organizations. They may be changed considerably or not be signed at all. As also discussed in recommendation 1, there is some question as to whether a CJCS manual applying to all joint organizations will be approved. If the manual is issued and applied only to the joint organizations reporting through the CJCS, the guidance, procedures, and processes for implementing this recommendation will not be in place for those joint organizations that do not report through the CJCS. Because guidelines have been drafted but not approved, this recommendation has not yet been implemented, and it is too early to tell whether it eventually will be implemented.

Recommendation 7

The DOD IG recommended that the Joint Staff Manpower and Personnel Directorate and military service personnel centers work together and set milestones for upgrading the capabilities of the Joint Manpower

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Automation System to bring all the military services on line prior to publication of the next Joint Duty Assignment List. The Joint Staff could then update the approved Joint Duty Assignment List, providing the military services access for verification and enhancing assignment accommodation (fill) for the unified commands and other joint organizations.

DOD IG Findings

The DOD IG concluded that the automated data processing system used for coordinating and validating joint manpower requirements was inefficient and ineffective and contributed to lengthy delays in making changes to joint manpower requirements. These delays negatively impacted the services' ability to provide the personnel the joint organizations needed and created some staffing gaps of several months.

The automated information system used to produce requirements documents for joint organizations that report to or through the Joint Staff was called the Joint Manpower Automation System. Since the services did not have on-line access to this system, the validation process for changes to requirements relied on manual coordination efforts, often resulting in delays of 1 year or more in processing the requests.

**Status of Action on the
Recommendation**

The Director of the Joint Staff concurred with the recommendation. According to Joint Staff officials, the Joint Manpower Automation System has been enhanced and is now called the Joint Manpower and Personnel System. The officials told us that this system does not fully satisfy the DOD IG recommendation in that the services still do not have on-line access to the system. However, a recent upgrade to the system is expected to allow the Joint Staff to periodically provide the services an updated joint requirements file that they can use with their systems. Joint Staff officials told us that each service will have to create a program to make the file compatible with its own programs. They said that, because changes are made to the database once a month, the services will be sent an updated file each month.

Joint Staff officials told us that they plan to replace the Joint Manpower and Personnel System because of major inadequacies. They are currently planning to identify the requirements for an improved system and plan to field the new system by mid-fiscal year 1999 if funding is available. They said they expect that the services will have on-line access to the new system.

Our Assessment

We believe the action taken by the Joint Staff is a reasonable short-term action. However, it is too early to determine if, in the longer term, this recommendation will be implemented.

Recommendation 8

The DOD IG recommended that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, with the assistance of the CJCS revise the Joint Duty Assignment List to correspond with congressional intent that joint duty assignments be designated based on the level of experience in joint matters required by each position rather than on the organization in which the billet is located. The use of "100 percent" and "50 percent" organization quotas for joint duty credit should be eliminated.

DOD IG Findings

Officers must complete a joint duty assignment to be eligible for flag rank. The DOD IG reported that, although the Goldwater-Nichols Act limits the joint duty assignment designation to those positions in which the officer gains significant experience in joint matters, in practice the designation is not based on the duties performed and skills required for a particular position but on the mission of the organization in which the position is located. The DOD IG found that certain organizations (OSD, the Joint Staff, and the unified commands), because of their involvement in planning and directing the integrated employment of joint forces, were referred to as 100-percent joint organizations and that all positions for major or lieutenant commander and above in those organizations were designated joint duty assignments.

All of the defense agencies, however, were referred to as 50-percent joint organizations, and the number of joint duty assignments they were allowed was limited to no more than 50 percent of their total positions for major or lieutenant commander and above. Furthermore, the DOD IG reported that the 50-percent organizations had not been provided guidance on how to allocate their share of joint duty assignments. The DOD IG found some officers were receiving credit for a joint duty assignment, whereas other officers within the same organization who performed the same basic functions did not receive credit. In addition, the DOD IG reported the results of a congressionally directed study. That study indicated that not all joint duty assignment positions provided significant joint experience, whereas some non-joint duty assignment positions provided this experience.

**Status of Action on the
Recommendation**

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Director of the Joint Staff concurred with the recommendation. Review

and validation of joint duty assignments is currently underway. The Joint Duty Assignment List Validation Board, established in June 1996, is tasked with reviewing all positions in joint organizations at the level of major or lieutenant commander and above (about 15,000 positions) using specific criteria, including consideration of duties associated with each position and the mission of the organization in which each position is located. As of June 1997, the Board had considered 1,100 (7 percent) of the positions.

Our Assessment

Although it appears that the approach being taken by the Board addresses the problems found by the DOD IG, at the current pace of deliberations, it will take many years to review and validate all of the current joint duty assignments. Given the importance of this effort and the fact that progress in implementing recommendations 12 and 13 relies on the validation effort, we believe that adequate progress is not being made.

Recommendation 9

The DOD IG recommended that the Joint Staff Manpower and Personnel Directorate in conjunction with each military service headquarters, establish a process action team to review and streamline the Joint Manpower Program change process with emphasis on updating service manpower documents.

DOD IG Findings

Having the right personnel available to fill assignment vacancies when they occur depends partly on sufficient notice of changes to personnel requirements. The DOD IG found that lengthy procedures for documenting, approving, and transmitting to the services changes to requirements contributed to assignment gaps and shortages of officers with the necessary skills.

Status of Action on the Recommendation

The Director of the Joint Staff concurred with the recommendation. A joint working group formed in August 1995 proposed changes to the process for updating service requirements documents. These changes are included in the June 20, 1997, draft CJCS Manual 1600.XX that is currently being coordinated with the affected organizations.

Our Assessment

Although guidelines have been drafted, this recommendation has not yet been implemented and it is too early to tell whether it will be.

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Recommendation 10

The DOD IG recommended that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, with the advice of the CJCS, publish joint personnel assignments guidance for all joint organizations.

DOD IG Findings

The DOD IG found that service guidelines and procedures did not cover some personnel actions and other aspects of the joint assignment process that applied only to joint duty assignments. The DOD IG concluded that additional guidance from above the service level was needed to preclude unnecessary conflict with the assignments process. Examples of topics on which additional guidance was needed included attendance at joint professional military education (JPME), early release from joint tours of duty, and tour length requirements.

**Status of Action on the
Recommendation**

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness concurred with the recommendation. The November 22, 1996, draft of DOD Directive 1300.19 and DOD Instruction 1300.20 addressing these topics have been coordinated among the affected agencies. On September 9, 1997, the directive was approved, clearing the way for release of the instruction.

Our Assessment

Because various drafts of this directive have been proposed for over 10 years without approval, there is no assurance this directive will be approved. Therefore, it is too early to tell whether this recommendation will be implemented.

Recommendation 11

The DOD IG recommended that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness immediately stop including the temporary duty and return period of Phase II of JPME in calculating joint tour length and modify the Joint Duty Assignment Management Information System data base to reflect that change. The DOD IG further recommended the following:

- (a) The Secretary of Defense inform Congress of the General Counsel, DOD interpretation and the impact on previously reported tour length averages.
- (b) The Secretary of Defense process tour length curtailment waivers for those officers that completed previous Joint Duty Assignments with attendance at Phase II of JPME in a temporary duty and return status.

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(c) The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, along with the Joint Staff and the military departments, determine whether the impact of the General Counsel interpretation on joint officer management warrants a statutory change. Alternatives that should be considered include exclusion of Phase II of JPME from the definition of assignments for training and education, effectively reversing the General Counsel opinion; a change to the duration and location of Phase II of JPME; or a change in the statutory minimum tour length.

DOD IG Findings

The Goldwater-Nichols Act prescribes specific average tour lengths for joint duty assignments² and specifies that such assignments “shall exclude . . . assignments for joint training or joint education.”³ As required by 10 U.S.C. 667, the Secretary of Defense reports the average tour length to Congress each year. The DOD IG found that, although the Secretary of Defense reported to Congress that DOD met the statutory requirements for tour length averages, the method used to calculate tour lengths was incorrect. When officers attended the 12-week Phase II JPME program during their joint duty assignment, that 12-week period was included in the average tour length. The DOD IG based its finding on an opinion of the DOD General Counsel.

**Status of Action on the
Recommendation**

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness partially concurred with the recommendations, stating that the DOD General Counsel had been asked to provide further review of the issue and that appropriate action would be taken based on the results of that review. Since the DOD IG report was released, the DOD General Counsel has withdrawn its earlier opinion and replaced it with one that purports to support the way DOD has been handling temporary duty for JPME in calculating joint tour length. However, the General Counsel has not provided any detailed support for its current position. Without a written rationale to support this change, we are unable to verify the validity of the second opinion.

Our Assessment

Without a written rationale to support this change, we are unable to verify the validity of the DOD General Counsel’s second opinion.

²See 10 U.S.C. 664(a).

³See 10 U.S.C. 668(b)(1).

Recommendation 12

The DOD IG recommended that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness incorporate comprehensive policy guidance in DOD Directive 1300.19, "Joint Officer Management Program," that includes as a minimum:

- (1) criteria for designating the appropriate joint duty billets as critical positions requiring assignment of officers who hold the joint specialty designation,
- (2) more stringent requirements on movement of established critical joint billets to provide the military services with a stable target to program the development of appropriately qualified Joint Specialty Officers (JSO),
- (3) career guidelines for military officers that address the timing of joint duty assignments and the impact of those assignments on service career advancement,
- (4) a limitation on the designation of Lieutenant Colonel and Commander joint critical positions to the minimum needed to meet operational requirements so that appropriate time is available for in-service officer career development assignments at those ranks,
- (5) a time-phased plan for reducing the number of waivers granted for filling critical joint positions with officers who are not JSOs,
- (6) more stringent criteria for the CJCS to use in granting waivers for the assignment of non-JSOS to critical joint positions,
- (7) criteria related to future JSO requirements for use in identifying officers selected to attend Phase II of JPME, and
- (8) uniform JSO selection criteria for use by the military service JSO selection boards.

DOD IG Findings

The Goldwater-Nichols Act requires the Secretary of Defense to establish policies, procedures, and practices for the effective management of active duty officers who are trained in, and oriented toward, joint matters. The central purpose for the joint officer management provisions was to develop a pool of qualified JSOs to draw upon for future Joint needs, especially for assignment to critical joint duty assignments. The DOD IG found problems in the identification of critical joint duty assignment

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positions that are required to be filled by JSOs and in the management of these officers. These problems were as follows:

Findings 1 and 2

DOD had not established a standardized approach or adequate guidance for identifying and designating critical joint duty assignment positions. Joint organizations were given wide latitude to select which positions to designate as critical. Joint organizations were moving the critical designation to accommodate JSO availability rather than basing the designation on the work performance requirements of the particular position. Instability in the management of JSOs resulted. The services could not program for development of officers with specific skills and backgrounds because the critical joint position designation continually moved from one position to another.

Findings 3 and 4

Although each service had established career paths for officers, with expectations regarding the type of assignments, education, and other duties that officers should successfully complete to be competitive for promotion, the Goldwater-Nichols Act added joint duty and JPME to those career paths. The DOD IG found that the career path models can accommodate the joint requirements but that timing of initial and subsequent critical joint assignments is crucial for an officer to stay competitive for promotion to the next higher grade.

Findings 5 and 6

Too many waivers were being granted allowing non-JSOs to serve in critical joint positions. The waivers were being granted as a direct result of the services' inability to develop sufficient numbers of JSOs, combined with ineffective procedures for designating appropriate critical joint billets and competing in-service demands for quality officers normally selected for JSO designation. The DOD IG reported that waivers had been granted for 11.9 percent of filled critical joint positions. OSD officials told the DOD IG that Senate Committee staff said that the number of waivers granted should not exceed 5 percent of the filled joint positions.

Findings 7 and 8

The DOD IG found that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Joint Staff had not developed objective criteria for use in identifying, nominating, and selecting officers for joint duty assignments and for JSO designation, which could be used in identifying officers permitted to attend JPME. Given the limitations on the number of seats available for JPME, this action negatively impacted the development of JSOs.

**Status of Action on the
Recommendation**

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness partially concurred with the recommendation. The Under Secretary noted that a

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draft DOD directive and instruction, which were being coordinated with the affected agencies, would be comprehensive and enable the services and CJS to comply with legislative mandates and foster sound management practices to achieve the objectives set forth in the Goldwater-Nichols Act.

The draft DOD Directive 1300.19 was in process for over 10 years and was just approved on September 9, 1997. DOD Instruction 1300.20, which provides more detailed guidance than the directive, has been approved, and can now be released. The status of action on the particular parts of the DOD IG recommendation is as follows:

Findings 1 and 2

The DOD instruction provides general guidance to use in designating critical joint duty assignments. However, OSD and Joint Staff officials told us that implementation of the guidance as it relates to designating critical joint assignments is related to the Joint Duty Assignment List Validation Board's review of joint assignments. This review (discussed in recommendation 8) will probably take several years to accomplish. The officials told us that actions to improve the designation and stabilization of critical joint positions will not occur until the Board's effort is completed and the universe of joint positions has been established. However, officials of the Joint Staff predicted that it will continue to be necessary for joint organizations to designate many positions as critical based on the skills of available JSOs. It is too early to tell whether the management of critical joint positions will solve the problems identified by the DOD IG.

Finding 3

The DOD instruction assigns the Joint Staff responsibility for establishing career guidelines that address the timing of joint assignments for military officers. However, Joint Staff officials told us they have not taken action on this item and have no plans to do so at this time, choosing instead to let the services develop their own career guidelines. Air Force, Army, Navy and Marine Corps officials told us they have no plans to develop new career guidance. Therefore, this part of the recommendation has not been implemented.

Finding 4

The DOD guidance does not direct the joint organizations to limit the number of Lieutenant Colonel and Commander critical joint positions to the minimum needed to meet operational requirements. OSD and Joint Staff officials pointed out that, if requirements have been accurately determined and critical positions have been appropriately identified, the number of Lieutenant Colonel and Commander joint critical positions will have been kept to the minimum needed to meet operational requirements. We agree. However, there is no assurance that requirements have been accurately

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determined, and critical positions have not been appropriately identified. Therefore, this part of the recommendation has not been implemented, and it is too early to tell whether improvements to the requirements determination process will be implemented and whether they will solve the problem identified by the DOD IG.

Findings 5 and 6

The DOD guidance does not include a time-phased plan for reducing the number of waivers granted for filling critical joint positions with non-JSOS or criteria for the CJCS to use in granting such waivers. OSD and Joint Staff officials told us that they have no plans to create the plan or criteria. Therefore, this part of the recommendation has not been implemented.

Finding 7

The DOD guidance also does not include criteria for selecting officers to attend Phase II of JPME. OSD and Joint Staff officials noted that the problem of JPME course capacity may be resolved by the Joint Duty Assignment List Validation Board. If the actions of the Board result in a much smaller list of joint positions, as expected, fewer requirements for officers who have attended the course will exist, and the capacity problem may be resolved. Therefore, no action has been taken to specifically implement this recommendation, and it is too early to determine whether other actions being taken will solve the problem identified by the DOD IG.

Finding 8

Policy guidance for use by the military service JSO selection boards is included in DOD's draft guidance and is addressed in CJCS Instruction 1332.01, dated June 15, 1997. Action on this part of the recommendation is complete.

Our Assessment

Guidance has been issued to implement one of the eight areas specified in the DOD IG recommendation. DOD has no plans to issue guidance to implement four of the areas. The November 22, 1996, draft of DOD Directive 1300.19 and the approved DOD Instruction 1300.20 provide guidance that addresses three of the eight areas but implementation of the guidance may not occur. Therefore, actions taken to date and planned will not fully implement this recommendation.

Recommendation 13

The DOD IG recommended that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, along with the CJCS, develop a legislative proposal to

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(a) seek legislative relief from the requirement that DOD maintain an arbitrary minimum of 1,000 critical joint duty positions set forth in 10 U.S.C. 661(d)(2)(A) and

(b) seek legislative relief from the semiannual promotion reporting requirement set forth in 10 U.S.C. 662(b).

DOD IG Findings

The Goldwater-Nichols Act requires DOD to maintain a minimum of 1,000 critical joint duty assignments.⁴ The DOD IG found that DOD had not established a standardized approach or adequate guidance for identifying and designating critical joint duty assignment positions. Joint organizations were given wide latitude to select which positions to designate as critical. Joint organizations moved the critical designation to those positions for which JSOS were available rather than base these designations on the actual requirements of the positions. That action led to instability in the management of JSOS, as the critical joint position designation continually moved from one position to another and the lack of firm requirements for critical joint positions made it difficult for the services to identify the skills and backgrounds to provide future JSOS.

The DOD IG reported that the 1,000 minimum critical positions were regarded as arbitrary and that officials at each joint organization they visited expressed the opinion that DOD should seek legislative relief from the requirement to designate a minimum of 1,000 joint duty assignment positions as critical.

The Goldwater-Nichols Act also required the Secretary of Defense to submit semiannual reports to Congress on promotion results for officers who are serving in or have served in joint duty assignments.⁵ Because military promotion boards convene only on an annual basis, the DOD IG concluded that the reporting of promotion data on a semiannual basis appeared to be excessive.

**Status of Action on the
Recommendation**

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Director of the Joint Staff concurred with the recommendation.

(a) Legislation amending 10 U.S.C. 661(d)(2)(A) to reduce the number of required critical joint positions from 1,000 to 800 was included in section

⁴Public Law 99-433, sec. 401, Oct. 1, 1986.

⁵Id.

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501 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1996. However, OSD and Joint Staff officials told us that implementing the lower minimum is tied into the actions of the Joint Duty Assignment List Validation Board (see recommendation 8) and that once the Board has completed its review of all joint positions (estimated to take many years), OSD and the Joint Staff will consider how to implement the lower minimum for critical positions. Moreover, Joint Staff officials told us they believe it is unlikely that the services will have sufficient numbers of JSOs with the right skills to fill even 800 fixed critical positions. Consequently, the officials predicted that, to meet the legislative numerical requirement, it will continue to be necessary for joint organizations to designate as many as 400 positions as critical based on the skills of available JSOs, a process the DOD IG referred to as arbitrary.

OSD and the Joint Staff sought and have been granted the legislative relief recommended by the DOD IG. However, it is too early to tell whether they will implement the requirement for 800 critical joint positions in a manner that will solve the problems identified by the DOD IG.

(b) The requirement in 10 U.S.C. 662(b) for semiannual reporting on joint officer promotions was changed to an annual requirement in section 510 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997.⁶ This part of the recommendation is complete.

Our Assessment

Legislative relief has been granted. However, it is too early to tell if its implementation by DOD will resolve the problems identified by the DOD IG.

Recommendation 14

The DOD IG recommended that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness report JSO promotion results consistent with requirements set forth in 10 U.S.C. 662(b) and 10 U.S.C. 667(5).

DOD IG Findings

The Goldwater-Nichols Act requires the Secretary to report promotion rate data to Congress.⁷ When the data shows a “. . . significant imbalance between officers serving in Joint Duty Assignments or having the joint specialty and other officers, a description of what action has been taken

⁶Public Law 104-201, Sept. 23, 1996.

⁷10 U.S.C. 662(b).

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(or is planned to be taken) by the Secretary to correct the imbalance” must be included in the report.⁸

The DOD IG found that, even though each service has had problems in achieving the statutory promotion objectives, the Secretary’s annual report to Congress does not highlight these unfavorable promotion results and provide corrective actions to improve joint officer promotion imbalances. More specifically, the DOD IG found that, starting with the fiscal year 1993 report, OSD discontinued providing complete promotion statistics for all categories of officers. DOD did not provide promotion statistics to indicate whether officers who were serving in or have served in joint duty assignments were promoted at a pace that was equal to, earlier than, or later than their peers.

**Status of Action on the
Recommendation**

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness concurred with the recommendation. CJCS Instruction 1330.02A, dated May 1, 1997, contains guidance on reporting JSO promotion results in accordance with this recommendation. Joint Staff officials told us that the annual report to Congress for fiscal year 1997 will reflect these changes.

Our Assessment

Action on this recommendation is complete.

Recommendation 15

The DOD IG recommended that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness encourage joint commanders and heads of other joint organizations to

- identify key positions that are adversely affected by interruption of a joint duty assignment to attend the Armed Forces Staff College and
- designate those positions as “JPME Exempt,” precluding interruption of a joint duty assignment to attend the Armed Forces Staff College.

DOD IG Findings

The DOD IG found that some joint organizations could make better use of an available tool to limit the disruption of certain key functions caused when a joint duty officer’s tour is interrupted to attend Phase II of JPME at the Armed Forces Staff College. Because of the limited capacity of the school and the number of officers who attend but are not going to joint duty, only about one-third of the officers who attended could do so before reporting

⁸10 U.S.C. 667(13).

to their joint organization. Thus, joint organizations frequently released officers for a 12-week period to attend the school.

The personnel requirements and management officials that the DOD IG interviewed at all 17 joint organizations expressed concern about the impact of losing these officers for 12 weeks on the mission of the joint organization. The DOD IG also found that the Director of the Joint Staff addressed this problem in a July 1989 memorandum that told managers to screen their joint duty assignment positions; identify those jobs that were one-of-a-kind, key, and essential or that had direct mission impact; and specify that the officers in such positions be exempted from attending JPME while in that position. The exemptions each organization could establish was limited to no more than 15 percent of its joint duty assignments. The DOD IG found that this exemption provision was not being used consistently, and some commands were not using it at all.

Status of Action on the Recommendation

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness concurred with the recommendation. DOD Instruction 1300.20 provides guidance on designating positions to be exempt from lengthy temporary duty assignments, such as for JPME. The instruction has been approved but is awaiting final approval of the directive before it will be formally released. Various drafts of this directive have been proposed for over 10 years without approval.

Our Assessment

Although the OSD guidance addresses this issue, it is too early to tell whether it will be approved and, if approved, whether the joint organizations will effectively follow the guidance.

Recommendation 16

The DOD IG recommended that the secretaries of the military departments hold JSO Revalidation Boards for the purpose of identifying those transition-era JSOs who do not qualify for future joint duty assignments and recommending withdrawal of JSO designation where appropriate.

DOD IG Findings

The Goldwater-Nichols Act established promotion objectives for officers who are serving in or have served in joint positions. According to the act, these officers are expected, as a group, to be promoted to the next higher grade at a rate not less than the rate for other officers in their respective peer groups.

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The DOD IG found that each service has had problems achieving the statutory promotion objectives. Military service officials told the DOD IG that the inability to meet the joint officer promotion objectives was because many officers were designated JSO status under transitional guidelines in effect from 1987 to 1989. The criteria for designating those transition-era JSOs were less stringent than current criteria and did not encompass an assessment of each officer's competitiveness for future promotion.

The Air Force and the Army requested and received approval from the Secretary of Defense to hold JSO revalidation boards to take the JSO designation away from those officers who would not pass current criteria for a joint duty assignment. The Navy and the Marine Corps did not identify a need to conduct such boards. As a result of the boards, the JSO designation was withdrawn from 315 Air Force officers and 65 Army officers. On the basis of its analysis of joint officer promotion results and the actions of the Air Force and the Army revalidation boards, the DOD IG concluded that the Army did not take sufficiently aggressive steps to address its JSO promotion problem or improve its subsequent JSO promotion rates.

**Status of Action on the
Recommendation**

The Army and the Navy concurred with the recommendation. The Air Force did not comment on it. Air Force and Marine Corps personnel officials told us they have no current need to conduct JSO revalidation boards because most transition-era JSOs have either left or are leaving the service. Navy officials told us they are considering holding JSO revalidation boards during fiscal year 1998 but have not made a decision yet because the natural attrition of transition-era JSOs may resolve the situation.

The Army's request to hold a JSO revalidation board in 1996 was denied by OSD. An OSD official told us the request was denied because the Army wanted to reconsider the JSO status of not only transition-era officers but other JSOs as well. This action was viewed by OSD as an attempt to revoke JSO status from non-transition-era officers who were not promotable to help the Army meet the statutory promotion objectives. The OSD official said that such an action would not be in keeping with the intent of the Goldwater-Nichols Act—that the services should (1) provide quality officers for joint duty who are competitive for promotion at a rate at least equal to that of officers in their peer group and (2) provide these officers when not on joint duty status with career opportunities and roles that will allow them to be competitive for promotion with their non-JSO peers.

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The OSD official stated that to allow the Army to revoke the JSO status from non-transition-era officers would in effect bail the Army out of a situation in which it either did not provide the right officers for JSO designations or failed to provide adequate career opportunities to those officers. The official said that the Army still has the option of requesting permission to conduct a revalidation board for transition-era JSOs.

Our Assessment

Until the Army and Navy finish assessing the need for withdrawal of JSO designation from some of their transition era JSOs, it is too early to tell if the problems identified by the DOD IG have been resolved.

Recommendation 17

The DOD IG recommended that the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy and the Joint Staff Director for Operational Plans and Interoperability, develop policy guidance that provides for the necessary training and education of reserve component officers assigned to joint organizations.

DOD IG Findings

The Goldwater-Nichols Act requires the Secretary of Defense to establish personnel policies emphasizing education and experience in joint matters for reserve officers not on the active duty list.⁹ The act also specifies that such policies for the reserve component should be similar to those required by the act for the active component, to the extent practical.¹⁰ The DOD IG found that, although some reservists perform duties similar to their active duty counterparts within joint organizations, there was no published DOD guidance regarding joint education or training for reservists and there were no provisions for the education and training necessary to prepare these officers to meet joint qualification standards.

**Status of Action on the
Recommendation**

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness concurred with the recommendation. A reserve joint officer management working group has been established to develop policy guidance to govern the education and personnel management of reserve officers who serve in joint positions. However, officials in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs and OSD told us many details need to be resolved with this issue. For example, they said that, since reservists

⁹Public Law 99-433, Title IV, sec.401(a), Oct. 1, 1986, 10 U.S.C. 666.

¹⁰Id.

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typically perform military duties on an intermittent or part-time basis, it is difficult for reservists to find the time to attend the 12 week JPME, Phase II, course. Reservists also cannot readily be assigned to locations outside their reserve unit area, thus limiting their availability for joint training. Also, an OSD official told us that if the education and experience requirements for reservists are too stringent, the available pool of reservists who can meet them will be limited, thereby denying joint duty assignments to many highly qualified reserve personnel.

Because the issues concerning reservists are so complex, Reserve Affairs officials said that they do not anticipate that any guidance will be issued during calendar year 1997.

Our Assessment

Although a working group is developing guidance on the education and management of reserve officers in joint positions, it is too early to determine if this recommendation will be implemented.

Major Contributors to This Report

**National Security and
International Affairs
Division, Washington,
D.C.**

Sharon Cekala, Associate Director
William E. Beusse, Assistant Director

Norfolk Field Office

Janet Keller, Evaluator-in-Charge
Lynn Johnson, Senior Evaluator
Janine Cantin, Evaluator