

**GAO**

National Security and International  
Affairs

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**Defense Management  
and NASA Issue Area  
  
Active Assignments**

# Foreword

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This report was prepared primarily to inform Congressional members and key staff of ongoing assignments in the General Accounting Office's Defense Management and NASA issue area. This report contains assignments that were ongoing as of July 6, 1995, and presents a brief background statement and a list of key questions to be answered on each assignment. The report will be issued quarterly.

This report was compiled from information available in GAO's internal management information systems. Because the information was downloaded from computerized data bases intended for internal use, some information may appear in abbreviated form.

If you have questions or would like additional information about assignments listed, please contact David Warren, Director, on (202) 512-8412; or James Wiggins, Associate Director, on (202) 512-4587.

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## ***Defense Management & NASA***

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### **MANAGEMENT OF DOWNSIZING**

**TITLE: EVALUATION OF DOD'S MANAGEMENT AND PRACTICES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO INVENTORY SHORTAGES (709029)**

**BACKGROUND :** In response to a draft GAO report that said DOD's approved acquisition objective inventory was overstated by \$15 billion, DOD commented that it had a shortage of on-hand and due-in inventory of \$26 billion.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What is the amount of the defense inventory shortage? (2) Are funding shortages the reason that item managers cannot obtain needed items?

**TITLE: DOD DEPOT MAINTENANCE--CAPACITY AND COMPETITION FOR WORKLOADS (709042)**

**BACKGROUND :** This code will support the second year of our depot maintenance task force work. This work will provide the foundation for our supporting key congressional decisions regarding future support for DOD systems and equipment. Congressional interest in this work has been high.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What changes are needed in the allocation of the depot maintenance workload between the public and private sectors? (2) What operational and management changes should be considered to reduce excess capacity and improve the cost-effectiveness of the depot management infrastructure, to include interservicing, consolidation, dual use with the private sector, and closure?

**TITLE: MILITARY BASES: ANALYSIS OF DOD'S 1995 PROCESS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CLOSURE AND REALIGNMENT (709059)**

**BACKGROUND :** GAO is required by Public Law 101-510 to transmit to Congress and the Defense Base Closure Commission by April 15, 1995, a report on our analysis of the Secretary of Defense's base closure and realignment recommendations. GAO has provided similar reports in 1991 and 1993.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1)What guidance and oversight role did the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) play in the process? (2)Did the components' processes comply with legislative requirements and OSD guidance? and (3)Are the recommendations adequately supported by accurate data and analysis?

**MANAGEMENT OF DOWNSIZING**

**TITLE: STATUS OF BASES CLOSED IN 1988 AND 1991 (709100)**

**BACKGROUND :** As part of our work on base closures, we gathered data on reuse planning at 37 bases closed in 1988 and 1991. While this data was necessary in deriving the answers to our requester's principal questions, its reporting was limited to examples.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) How does the community plan to reuse the property? (2) What is the status of the reuse plan? (3) What implementation problems have been encountered? (4) What unresolved issues remain?

**TITLE: HRA 7 : DOD MANAGEMENT OF INVENTORY IN NEED OF REPAIR (709111)**

**BACKGROUND :** DOD has a large amount of secondary inventory in need of repair--\$24 billion in the Air Force and Navy. Congressional staff are concerned that a lot of this material will not be used because of obsolescence. This effort is part of our high risk work on monitoring DOD's inventory reduction and will also compliment our best practice work in managing spare parts.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** We will attempt to answer two broad questions: 1) Are there opportunities to reduce this inventory? (2) What is it costing to retain this inventory?

**TITLE: REVIEW OF THE FY 1996 DOD BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE BUDGET SUBMISSION (709123)**

**BACKGROUND :** The Senate Appropriations Committee Report requires GAO to annually review the BRAC account to assist the Committee in validating the BRAC budget requests for base closure activities.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Has the obligation rate of previous BRAC appropriations increased in FY 1995. (2) Have findings from prior DOD/IG and Army, Navy and Air Force Audit Agencies' been considered in the preparation of the FY 1996 BRAC budget. (3) Are the cost estimates for projects related to base closure activities reasonable.

### **MANAGEMENT OF DOWNSIZING**

**TITLE: REVIEW OF COSTS AND SAVINGS RELATED TO DOD BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE ACTIVITIES (709135)**

**BACKGROUND :** Compared to initial estimates, DOD's current savings estimates for the 6-year period provided by law to implement base closures activities have been reduced by over \$5 billion, or 60 percent. Excluding estimated revenues from land sales, which have frequently failed to materialize, DOD now estimates it could experience a net loss of \$450 million over the 6-year period.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What is the basis for current cost and savings estimates for BRAC activities? (2) How well have estimates predicted actual costs and savings? (3) What implication do reduced savings have on future efforts to reduce infrastructure and control related costs? (4) What opportunities exist to reduce costs and increase savings?

**TITLE: TRANSITION AND REUSE PLANNING FOR BRAC 1993 MILITARY BASE CLOSURES TO CIVILIAN (709137)**

**BACKGROUND :** GAO has previously reviewed the BRAC 1988 and 1991 rounds. This effort extends GAO's monitoring of the transition of BRAC 1993 closed bases to civilian uses.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What are the current plans for disposing of base property closed in BRAC 1993? (2) What successes and what problems are BRAC 1993 bases and communities experiencing? (3) How much federal assistance has been provided to BRAC 1993 closure communities?

**TITLE: ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANUP COSTS AT DOD BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE ACTIVITIES (709139)**

**BACKGROUND :** Estimated environmental cleanup costs for bases being closed under DOD downsizing exceed \$5 billion and are likely to grow as more bases are closed and additional contamination is identified. DOD has begun to accelerate many of its cleanup activities and is substantially increasing its obligation of available funding.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) How much has been appropriated, obligated and expended for base closure environmental cleanup efforts? (2) How are cleanup funds being used and are proper controls in place to assure efficient and effective use?

### **MANAGEMENT OF DOWNSIZING**

**TITLE: DEVELOPING DOD DATA BASES (709148)**

### **BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

**TITLE: SURVEY OF COMMERCIAL PRACTICES APPLICABLE TO SPARE PARTS MANAGEMENT (709002)**

**BACKGROUND :** Since August 1990, GAO has completed or has had in progress several reviews comparing DOD logistics practices with the private sector. This work has resulted in the identification of new logistics practices for DOD and contributed to budget reductions of \$4 billion. We are expanding these comparisons for Air Force spare parts, given their \$32 billion investment value.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Can DOD save money by changing its current logistics system and reducing spare parts inventories using innovative private sector practices? (2) Can the Air Force eliminate redundant supply and distribution facilities with other aspects of the infrastructure using new techniques developed in the private sector?

**TITLE: ORGANIZATION AND PHILOSOPHY OF CIM (709049)**

**BACKGROUND :** The Subcommittee on Readiness is very concerned that DOD's Corporate Information Management (CIM) initiative will cost too much and result in no immediate and little long-term results. One primary concern is that CIM is out of step with current industry trends in the way process reengineering is approached and managed.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What are the current private sector trends and thinking in the area of business process reengineering? (2) What lessons can be learned from the private sector that can be applied to the philosophy and organization of CIM?

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## ***Defense Management & NASA***

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### **BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

**TITLE: STATUS OF DLA'S EFFORTS TO ADOPT PRIVATE SECTOR PRACTICES FOR CONSUMABLE ITEMS (709055)**

**BACKGROUND :** On December 3, 1993, the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, asked GAO to summarize past reviews where we compared DOD and private sector practices for DLA-managed consumable items. The Subcommittee was also interested in whether DOD was aggressively pursuing the actions GAO recommended.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Has DOD aggressively pursued GAO's recommendations to expand the use of commercial practices? (2) To what extent have commercial practices improved the economy and efficiency of defense logistics practices? (3) Could DOD do more to reduce inventories and save on storage and distribution costs by using leading-edge commercial practices?

**TITLE: RESTRUCTURING DEFENSE TRANSPORTATION (709075)**

**BACKGROUND :** TRANSCOM, a unified command, is DOD's single manager for air, land, and sea assets during peace and war. The services, however, continue to maintain separate component commands and associated infrastructure. A fundamental restructuring of the transportation network could reduce unnecessary overhead.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What actions has DOD taken to downsize and reengineer its transportation infrastructure? (2) What economies have been realized as a result of these actions and how can restructuring reduce unnecessary overhead?

**TITLE: DOD FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING SERVICE PLANS TO CONSOLIDATE AND STREAMLINE ITS OPERATIONS (709088)**

**BACKGROUND :** The HASC is concerned that infrastructure spending is not being reduced in proportion to force structure reductions. To reduce infrastructure costs, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service plans to consolidate and streamline its operations. DFAS plans to reduce personnel from 46,000 to 23,000 and offices 360 to 25 over the next 5 to 7 years.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Does the DFAS plan reflect leading-edge business practices? (2) How will productivity gains be achieved that will enable reductions in the DFAS workforce? (3) Is the plan's implementation strategy reasonable, given the stated time frames? (4) When will the military services realize price reductions that they are charged for DFAS services?

### **BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

**TITLE: MORE EFFECTIVE REUTILIZATION OF SURPLUS DOD PROPERTY THROUGH ADOPTION OF COMMERCIAL PRACTICES (709095)**

**BACKGROUND :** The Department of Defense (DOD) disposed of over \$27 billion worth of excess property in fiscal year 1994. DOD's disposal program is under the purview of the Federal Property Act which requires that DOD excess property first be reutilized by the military services before it is transferred to federal agencies, donated to state agencies, and sold to the general public.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Do shortcomings exist in DOD's disposal system that hinder DOD from better recouping its investment in excess property? (2) Do laws and regulations exist that preclude DOD from obtaining higher reutilization and return from sales rates? (3) Do progressive companies have techniques or approaches that allow them to best recoup their investment in excess property?

**TITLE: REENGINEERING DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (709098)**

**BACKGROUND :** DMN held a symposium on reengineering in the Department of Defense under code 709049. Due to high interest in reengineering, we are going to produce a video report to disseminate the information obtained in the symposium and to use it as a briefing tool.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** What are the major factors contributing to successful reengineering efforts in the private sector?

**TITLE: HOW DOES THE PRIVATE SECTOR USE TRAINING TO PROMOTE DESIRED VALUES AND BELIEFS IN INVENTORY MANAGEMENT (709108)**

**BACKGROUND :** To overcome problems with budget cuts and force downsizing, DOD is seeking to improve inventory management by changing its culture and emphasizing economy and efficiency through training. However, DOD has yet to use training in fostering desired changes. The Senate Governmental Affairs Committee thinks private industry may offer good examples for DOD to adopt.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Which large companies are known to be good inventory managers? (2) What is the nature and frequency of inventory management and TQM training they provide? (3) What key values and beliefs do they seek to develop? (4) Have they measured the results of their training? (5) Are there lessons from private industry that DOD can consider?

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## ***Defense Management & NASA***

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### **BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

**TITLE: APPLICATION OF COMMERCIAL PRACTICES TO THE NAVY'S REPARABLE PARTS MANAGEMENT (709140)**

**BACKGROUND :** In 1993, the Senate Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management asked GAO to begin focusing on the feasibility of applying commercial practices for reparable parts to reduce operations costs, starting with the Air Force. This assignment will focus on whether similar opportunities exist for the Navy whose aircraft reparable spares inventory amounts to about \$15 billion.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Can the Navy eliminate redundant processes by incorporating best practices into its operations? (2) What steps are Navy activities taking to reduce reparable parts inventories and repair cycle times? (3) What "best" practices are private sector firms using to minimize their inventory investment in reparable parts and to improve their logistics operations?

**TITLE: MILITARY USE OF COMMERCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES IN TIME OF WAR OR CRISIS (709142)**

**BACKGROUND :** The Army has a single, worldwide contract to preplan and provide for on-site support services in time of war or crisis. This contractor service augments U.S. forces with a flexible, commercial capability to support operations. This Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP), has been used in Somalia, Haiti, Rwanda, and Saudi Arabia, costing about \$240 million to date.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) How does this contract impact Army force structure and infrastructure requirements? (2) What military support services, if any, does this contract supplant? (3) What are the pros/cons/future of this type of contract? (4) Are these contracts properly awarded and administered?

### **PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

**TITLE: WHITE HOUSE PASS AND CLEARANCE PROCEDURES (709077)**

**BACKGROUND :** Media accounts indicate that some White House staff did not have permanent passes after being at the White House for over a year. In addition, media accounts and a recent GAO report indicate that individuals whose employment status is unclear have regular access to the White House. Requesters ask that we review White House pass and clearance procedures since January 20, 1993.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Have White House staff responded to clearance data requests in a timely and accurate manner? (2) Have the White House Counsel's office, Secret Service, and FBI processed pass and clearance data in a timely manner?

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## *Defense Management & NASA*

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### **PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

**TITLE: DMN STRATEGIC PLAN FOR REVIEWING DOD'S ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM (709093)**

**BACKGROUND :** DOD spends over \$5 billion annually to clean up hazardous waste sites, comply with environmental laws, prevent pollution, and conserve resources. GAO expects a continuing need to review DOD's efforts and needs a strategic plan to address applicable issues.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What are the key issues GAO should address in the strategic plan? (2) How can GAO validate key issues identified, develop methodologies for addressing these issues, and affect improvements in DOD environmental program management.

**TITLE: REVIEW OF ARMY PUBLIC PRIVATE COMPETITIONS (709113)**

**TITLE: REVIEW OF NAVY PUBLIC PRIVATE COMPETITIONS (709114)**

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## ***Defense Management & NASA***

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### **PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

**TITLE: COST COMPARISON STUDY OF CONTRACTOR-OPERATED PARTS STORE (COPARS) PROGRAM (709115)**

**BACKGROUND :** Conference Report 103-747 on Department of Defense Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1995, directed GAO to conduct a cost comparison study of the Contractor Operated Parts Stores (COPARS) program and any alternative programs the Air Force is considering to replace COPARS.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Is the Air Force's decision to stop using COPARS supported by a valid cost-comparison study? (2) Is the Air Force required by OMB Circular A-76 to perform a comparison of the cost of contracting and the cost of in-house performance? (3) What are the views of COPARS contractors regarding the Air Force's change in vehicle parts procurement systems?

**TITLE: COST RECOVERY PRACTICES AT ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL (RMA) (709117)**

**BACKGROUND :** This is a spin-off from "Status of Environmental Cleanup at the RMA" (709037). We identified financial management practices which may result in lost interest to the government. The practices involve the timing of the Army's billing for allocable costs and recover of interest on disallowed contractor costs.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Should the Army submit billings for allocable cleanup costs more frequently? (2) Can the Army recover interest on disallowed contractor costs?

**TITLE: CHEMICAL STOCKPILE DISPOSAL PROGRAM CONTRACT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (709125)**

### **PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

**TITLE: NUCLEAR CARRIER HOMEPORTING (709126)**

**BACKGROUND :** Congressman Steve Horn requested the assignment. He expressed concern that by planning to homeport three CVNs at San Diego, the Navy was going to spend over \$742 million to construct facilities in the San Diego area. In his opinion, these facilities largely duplicated facilities existing at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard, an installation less than 90 miles from San Diego.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What are the costs of homeporting up to three CVNs at San Diego and Long Beach? (2) Has the Navy applied its homeporting rule consistently in assigning three CVNs to San Diego?

**TITLE: ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL CLEANUP COSTS (709127)**

**BACKGROUND :** GAO's past and current work on environmental cleanup at Rocky Mountain Arsenal focuses on cleanup status and on the Army's efforts. Three congressmen have asked GAO to examine cleanup costs with particular emphasis on the costs borne by or reimbursed to Shell Oil.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What actions have the Army and Shell taken to comply with settlement agreement deadlines and requirements? (2) What reimbursements and allocable costs (including litigation) are reflected in Army and Shell Oil records and in prior audits? (3) What costs are considered allocable vs. Army or Shell-only costs?

**TITLE: ANALYSIS OF DOD/NAVY CLEANUP COST AND STATUS DATA (709128)**

**BACKGROUND :** Questions from Congress and GAO groups have dealt with environmental cleanup costs for selected periods, organizations, or locations. A specific congressional request addressed past DOD costs. Most recently, GAO/AIMD staff needed projected Navy cleanup cost data. We will develop the data in an automated format to respond to this and similar future requests.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What is the total past and projected cost and overall status for DOD-wide cleanups: (2) What is the site status and cost for selected installations (including by military service) and selected time periods?

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## ***Defense Management & NASA***

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### **PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

**TITLE: ASSISTANCE TO DOD-IG AND HILL STAFF IN MONITORING WHCA ACTIVITIES (709131)**

**TITLE: STOCKPILE AND NONSTOCKPILE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CAPPING REPORT (709134)**

**BACKGROUND :** The Army estimates that it will cost more than \$30 billion to safely dispose of the United States' chemical warfare materiel. Since 1985, GAO has reported numerous problems with the Army's cost and schedule estimates, disposal methods and rates, safety and security procedures, stability assessments, emergency preparedness program, and environmental compliance.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What are the key issues and concerns the Army must address to dispose of its stockpile and nonstockpile chemical warfare materiel? (2) Is the Army's approach the most efficient, effective, and economical way to safely dispose of chemical warfare materiel and meet other program objectives?

**TITLE: REVIEW OF THE NAVY'S DECISION TO TERMINATE THE F/A-18 MCAPP TERMINATION (709136)**

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## ***Defense Management & NASA***

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### **PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

**TITLE: NASA POTENTIAL RESPONSIBLE PARTY ISSUES AT CONTRACTOR SITES (709143)**

**BACKGROUND :** During briefings on DOD and NASA environmental issues, the requester's staff reaffirmed the former Chairman and Ranking Minority Member's request for information on NASA's liability for environmental contamination involving contractors at NASA facilities. In addition, they requested data on contamination for possible impact on restructuring decisions.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What is the extent of known contamination at NASA's contractor operated facilities? (2) What is the estimated cost for restoring NASA facilities, and how much is NASA potentially liable for? (3) Who are the other responsible parties and what is their share of the cleanup costs?

**TITLE: DOD ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANUP COSTS AT GOVERNMENT-OWNED, CONTRACTOR OPERATED PLANTS AND THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL (709145)**

### **NASA AND SPACE OPERATIONS**

**TITLE: NASA'S EFFORTS TO REDUCE SPACE SHUTTLE OPERATING COSTS (709032)**

**BACKGROUND :** The space shuttle is NASA's largest, most expensive program, consuming more than 25% of the agency's total budget. To free funding for new programs, NASA has established a goal of reducing shuttle operating costs by 25% over a 5-year period. The agency also must ensure that the shuttle's safety is not compromised.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What progress has NASA made in reducing shuttle operating costs, and how have the reductions been achieved? (2) How has NASA ensured that the cost reductions will not adversely impact flight safety? (3) Are there opportunities to further reduce shuttle operating costs without significantly increasing risks?

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## ***Defense Management & NASA***

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### **NASA AND SPACE OPERATIONS**

**TITLE: IDENTIFICATION AND USE OF RUSSIAN SPACE PROGRAM CAPABILITIES (709039)**

**BACKGROUND :** U.S. agencies could benefit from the extensive infrastructure and experience of the space program of the FSU. There may be opportunities for NASA and other federal agencies to reduce the costs of their space programs through increased cooperation with, or the acquisition of space assets and services from, Russia and other FSU republics.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Are U.S. agencies taking advantage of FSU space assets and expertise to further the goals of their space programs and to minimize their costs? (2) What are the obstacles to conducting space business with FSU? (3) Are there potential disadvantages in increasing space cooperation with FSU?

**TITLE: REQUIREMENTS AND CAPABILITIES FOR SPACE SHUTTLE LAUNCHES (709056)**

**BACKGROUND :** The space shuttle is the only U.S. launch vehicle for transporting humans into space and, therefore, the only U.S. vehicle which can be used for space station launch and assembly operations. The shuttle will have to be modified to increase its performance for space station assembly because of the orbital inclination at which the station will operate.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What future uses does NASA project for the shuttle, and are these consistent with congressional policy? (2) What modifications will be needed to enable the shuttle to meet projected requirements such as space station assembly? (3) Can these modifications be accomplished within cost and schedule estimates?

**TITLE: NASA'S APPROACH TO THE ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF RISKS IN THE SPACE SHUTTLE (709066)**

**BACKGROUND :** The space shuttle is the nation's only means of launching humans into space. NASA says that shuttle safety is the agency's top priority, but officials acknowledge that risks cannot be totally eliminated from the program. Recent news reports have questioned NASA's management of shuttle risks and raised fears of another Challenger disaster.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What methods does NASA use in assessing risk in the shuttle program, and are they credible? (2) What is NASA's plan for managing the risks involved in continuing to fly the shuttle? (3) Do decisionmakers receive all information needed for making launch decisions?

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### **NASA AND SPACE OPERATIONS**

**TITLE: DEVELOPMENT OF AN UPDATED NASA ISSUE AREA STRATEGIC PLAN (709099)**

**BACKGROUND :** GAO conducted its last broad-based planning survey of NASA operations in mid-1989. Since 1989, NASA's budget has increased, significant program management problems have surfaced, and the agency's mission and programs have become more politically sensitive and controversial.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What are the key issues affecting NASA on which GAO can make a contribution to management and operational improvement? (2) What new information can GAO contribute to the public debate on issues that affect NASA? (3) How can NASA improve its stewardship of the resources provided to the agency? (4) What are the interests of congressional customers?

**TITLE: CONSORTIUM FOR INTERNATIONAL EARTH SCIENCE INFORMATION NETWORK (CIESIN) (709107)**

**BACKGROUND :** Initially, the Consortium for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN) conducted research in the field of earth sciences in support of NASA's Earth Observing System program. However, CIESIN's mission has switched to specializing in the acquisition and distribution of data on human dimensions of global change.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Nature of CIESIN's mission,(2) sources of CIESIN's funding,(3) what CIESIN's annual funding and building requirements should be given its mission, (4) whether NASA is the appropriate agency to oversee the work on human global change,(5) whether NSF's Centers for Human Dimensions of Global Change will function like CIESIN.



