

GAO

National Security and International
Affairs Division

1A 2408

SP-107

October 1990

**Plan to Address
Issues Related to the
Persian Gulf Crisis**

Foreword

In the wake of dramatic changes in Europe and improved East-West relations, the United States is now facing a volatile situation in the Persian Gulf. U.S. defense forces have undergone the largest rapid deployment since World War II. Whereas U.S. forces have long been faced with the prospect of a conventional war in Europe against Warsaw Pact forces, they now face a different military adversary in a vastly different environment. Many would argue that the crisis in the Persian Gulf is a field test of U.S. military capability and an indicator of the kinds of military forces and equipment needed for future contingencies. The crisis is further affecting our domestic and international affairs as they relate, for example, to the budget deficit and our foreign military and economic assistance programs.

Operation "Desert Shield" has become one of the most significant multinational military operations in the past 40 years—one that holds long-term implications for the United States. How well the United States will fare in the crisis and the aftermath is uncertain at this point. However, it could be a significant sign of our military posture and standing in world affairs into the next century. We have prepared this plan to guide our efforts in evaluating issues arising from the Persian Gulf crisis. We have received several requests from the Congress related to some of these issues and expect to receive other requests. Our work is intended to assist U.S. policymakers, government administrators, and legislators in decisions they face as events unfold in the region.



Frank C. Conahan
Assistant Comptroller General

Contents

A. U.S. and Foreign Commitments	1
B. Planning for the Crisis	1
C. Mobilization and Deployment of U.S. Forces	3
D. Military Operational Considerations	3
E. International Relations	5

Abbreviations

DOD	Department of Defense
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
U.N.	United Nations

A. U.S. and Foreign Commitments

The worldwide concern with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was evident in the prompt and unanimous vote by member nations of the U.N. Security Council to condemn it. A continued commitment—financial and otherwise—of allied nations is essential if the Iraqi threat to world peace is to be thwarted. Questions have been raised as to the full cost of military operations in the Gulf and the extent to which other nations are sharing in the costs and commitments necessary to resolve the crisis. Concerns are also being expressed over U.S. efforts to provide long-term regional security to the Persian Gulf area. Key issues are as follows:

1. What are the economic costs to the United States of supporting Operation "Desert Shield" and of the United Nations' sanctions against Iraq? What are the domestic economic ramifications and the U.S. response?
2. What is the extent of burden-sharing among sympathetic countries for the crisis in terms of finances, military support, and other aid?
3. To what extent are new arrangements or agreements being made between the United States and other countries with respect to military overflights, stationing, and other requirements?
4. What commitments has the United States made for sustaining and repatriating refugees and displaced persons from the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait? How are the resulting costs being shared among the international community?
5. What impact will the Persian Gulf crisis have on the U.S. ability to fulfill its security commitments in other parts of the world?

B. Planning for the Crisis

Sound planning is essential for the success of U.S. operations and their impact in the Gulf crisis. From a military perspective, the Department of Defense's

(DOD) planning responsibilities include force mobilization, deployment, and wartime operations against an unfamiliar adversary under a radically different scenario from that of the NATO/Warsaw Pact confrontation in Europe. The State Department also has Gulf crisis planning responsibilities such as those related to noncombatant evacuation. Key issues are as follows:

1. How effective have DOD-established plans been in carrying out military operations in the Persian Gulf crisis? What "lessons learned" can be applied to future contingency planning?
2. To what extent has the "Total Force Policy" been a workable concept in establishing the appropriate force for Gulf operations? What criteria were predominant in DOD's force mix selection?
3. Did DOD clearly define appropriate roles for the various services (e.g., Army vs. Marines) and their forces in the Gulf crisis so as to maximize resources?
4. To what extent are Gulf operations affecting planned DOD force reductions and restructuring?
5. To what extent do DOD plans include the use of host nation resources for supporting U.S. military operations in the Gulf?
6. What programs are in place or proposed to assist affected Gulf-deployed service personnel and their families?
7. How effective/efficient was State Department emergency action planning in Iraq and Kuwait?

C. Mobilization and Deployment of U.S. Forces

The mobilization and deployment of U.S. active and reserve forces for the Gulf crisis have been massive undertakings. Not since the early 1970s has there been such a large-scale mobilization of our reserve forces. How well the U.S. executed these operations is a significant measure of our defense capability and important for planning future contingency operations. Key issues are as follows:

1. How effective was DOD in mobilizing its forces and having them properly trained for a Persian Gulf conflict? What problems have been encountered, and how are they being resolved?
2. How effective were airlift/sealift plans and execution in deploying U.S. forces and equipment to the Persian Gulf region?
3. Did the recently created U.S. Transportation Command perform during mobilization as intended?
4. To what extent was the movement of U.S. troops and equipment constrained by port facilities and intra-theater transportation in the Gulf region?

D. Military Operational Considerations

The United States faces enormous challenges in its preparations for conducting war-fighting operations in the Persian Gulf. Confronted with an unfamiliar foe in a harsh environment, DOD must ensure the adequacy of its operations if the United States is to achieve a favorable outcome should hostilities erupt in the Gulf.

Weapon System Performance

The environmental realities—high heat and sand—of the Gulf pose major threats to the performance and availability of DOD's major weapon systems. Key issues are as follows:

1. Does DOD have the proper mix and types of weapon systems to conduct effective military operations in the Gulf?

2. Are U.S. major weapon systems (e.g., the Apache and the F-117A) performing as expected in the Gulf? What problems and "lessons learned" have surfaced that have applicability to future military operations?

3. How effective have weapon systems' vulnerability analyses been in anticipating problems in the Gulf region?

Chemical/Biological Warfare

The threat of a conflict in a chemical or biological environment in the Gulf is a concern. Iraq reportedly has both offensive chemical and biological capability and has used it in past conflicts. Key issues are as follows:

4. Can the United States sustain military operations (forces and equipment) in a chemical/biological environment in the Gulf region without large and unacceptable losses?

5. Are U.S. medical resources adequate for the care and treatment of chemical/biological casualties in the Gulf region?

**Communications/
Electronic Warfare**

The effective use of communications and electronic warfare capabilities may provide a decisive edge in waging war against Iraqi forces. Maximum use of these capabilities requires continued interactions within our own forces as well as with our allies. Key issues are as follows:

6. How effective have tactical communications been among U.S. forces and foreign allies in the Gulf region?

7. How effective will U.S. electronic warfare assets be in countering the Iraqi threat?

**Sustainability/
Logistics**

The United States is faced with the task of supporting its forces—possibly for a protracted war—without the benefit of an established logistical infrastructure in the Gulf area. Key issues are as follows:

8. How effective has logistics support been in providing supplies and equipment to meet mission needs?
9. What logistics plans and infrastructure would be necessary for a protracted conflict in the Gulf?
10. Were prepositioned equipment and supplies in ready condition when off-loaded from maritime ships?
11. How effective have maintenance operations been in ensuring the maximum availability of critical equipment?
12. To what extent are contract services being used in the Persian Gulf crisis? What are the associated costs and risks involved in the event of hostilities?
13. Has the industrial base been able to overcome expanded production bottlenecks in order to meet surge requirements for mission needs in the Gulf?

**E. International
Relations**

Although the Gulf crisis has definitive implications for the U.S. military posture, it also has implications for U.S. international relations.

Foreign Assistance

Spurred by the crisis, several of our allies in the Gulf region have requested increased assistance from the United States. Key issues are as follows:

1. What security arrangements exist for the sale of weapon systems (e.g., Stinger missiles) to countries in the Gulf region (e.g., Saudi Arabia)?

2. Do countries in the Gulf region (e.g., Saudi Arabia) have the capability to effectively maintain and support weapon systems (e.g., F-15 fighters) sold to them by the United States?

3. What is the impact of increased military and economic assistance to friendly Middle East countries on our assistance programs to other nations?

4. To what extent have U.S. economic assistance recipients (e.g., Egypt and Pakistan) suffered losses as a result of the Gulf crisis? What are the implications for the U.S. economic assistance program?

Sanctions/Trade

The United States and the United Nations have advocated and imposed economic sanctions against Iraq in an effort to resolve the crisis. These sanctions will have worldwide economic impacts. Key issues are as follows:

5. To what extent have foreign governments complied with United Nations-imposed embargo sanctions against Iraq?

6. How effective have U.S. Treasury efforts been in blocking Iraqi and Kuwait assets?

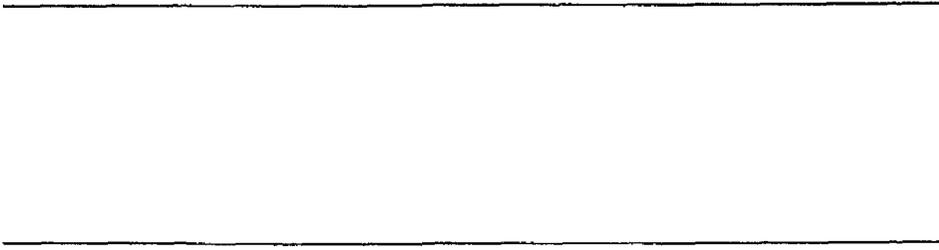
7. What are the impacts of the trade embargo on U.S. commodity markets?

8. How effective are U.S. and international efforts to monitor and counter the effects of a worldwide oil shortage?

Terrorism

Iraq has announced the threat of employing terrorist attacks against U.S. installations and personnel. A key issue is as follows:

9. What measures have the State Department and DOD taken to combat the threat of international terrorism arising from the Gulf crisis?





**Requests for copies of GAO documents should
be sent to:**

**U.S. General Accounting Office
Post Office Box 6015
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877**

Telephone 202-275-6241

**The first five copies of each document are free.
Additional copies are \$2.00 each.**

**There is a 25% discount on orders for 100 or
more copies mailed to a single address.**

**Orders must be prepaid by cash or by check or
money order made out to the Superintendent of
Documents.**

**United States
General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548**

**Official Business
Penalty for Private Use \$300**

**First-Class Mail
Postage & Fees Paid
GAO
Permit No. G100**
