

JOSEPH I. LIEBERMAN, CONNECTICUT, CHAIRMAN

CARL LEVIN, MICHIGAN
DANIEL K. AKAKA, HAWAII
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE
MARK L. PRYOR, ARKANSAS
MARY L. LANDRIEU, LOUISIANA
CLAIRE McCASKILL, MISSOURI
JON TESTER, MONTANA
MARK BEGICH, ALASKA

SUSAN M. COLLINS, MAINE
TOM COBURN, OKLAHOMA
SCOTT P. BROWN, MASSACHUSETTS
JOHN MCCAIN, ARIZONA
RON JOHNSON, WISCONSIN
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO
RAND PAUL, KENTUCKY
JERRY MORAN, KANSAS

MICHAEL L. ALEXANDER, STAFF DIRECTOR
NICHOLAS A. ROSSI, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

September 21, 2011

The Honorable Gene Dodaro
Comptroller General of the United States
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G. Street, NW
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

I am writing to request that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) review the Defense Department's compliance with former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates' directives regarding strategic and operational planning for contractors in contingencies.

On January 24, 2011, Secretary Gates issued a memorandum which instructed the Secretaries of the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Under Secretaries of Defense (USD) for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics (AT&L), Policy (P), and Personnel and Readiness (P&R) to inventory, review, coordinate, and provide guidance on a list of factors to determine the appropriate level of contractor dependence by the military. Secretary Gates directed these officials to undertake steps to mitigate the risk of overdependence on operational contract support (OCS) through "better planning at the strategic and operational levels for contract support" including use of the Civilian Expeditionary Workforce (CEW).¹

To better understand the progress made by the Secretaries of the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Under Secretaries of Defense in achieving better strategic and operational planning for contractor support, I request that GAO assess the Department's compliance in carrying out the directives in Secretary Gates' memorandum, including:

- (1) Status of force planning for use and integration of the CEW, including the current capabilities of the CEW for critical services;
- (2) Progress in determining the non-acquisition community OCS capabilities, requirements, and resource needs and integrating such determinations into OCS planning by the USD (AT&L) and combatant commands and selected service component commands;

¹ Memorandum from Secretary of Defense to Secretaries of the Military Departments, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, et al., *Strategic and Operational Planning for Operational Contract Support (OCS) and Workforce Mix* (Jan. 24, 2011).

- (3) Steps taken to fully integrate OCS and force-mix analysis into strategic planning documents with input from the USD (P) and USD (P&R);
- (4) Steps taken by the USD (P) to provide policy guidance on use of contractors and by the USD (P&R) to provide an inventory of "critical civil service skill sets" needed in contingencies, including coordinating with the Joint Staff to incorporate these efforts in planning documents; and
- (5) Steps taken to develop an effective and cost efficient program to obtain and manage the "critical civil service skill sets" to ensure that these sets of skills are available during the next contingency.

I also request that GAO examine whether the Defense Department continues to use contractors to assist in developing planning documents, including operational plans and annexes that include planning for use of contractors in sustained military operations.

Please have your staff contact Alan Kahn with the Subcommittee staff at (202) 224-3230 with any questions. Please send any official correspondence related to this request to Kelsey_Stroud@hsgac.senate.gov.

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill
Chairman
Subcommittee on Contracting Oversight

cc: Rob Portman
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Contracting Oversight