

In addition, in GAO reports to the Secretary of Defense on March 15, 1981, 1/ March 17, 1982, 2/ and November 5, 1982, 3/, we encourage much greater use of mission area analysis for identifying mission deficiencies and weapon systems needs. Also, in an April 7, 1983 letter to the Secretary of the Army, we complimented the Army on their progress in conducting mission area analyses. 4/

A very real problem encountered when discussing mission area management is the definition of the term "mission." As you know, the term "mission" can mean many things to many people. For example, on one end of the spectrum it can be used to refer to a mission of a particular weapon system or an individual DOD organizational unit. On the other hand the ten program categories that are used in DOD's budget submission to the Congress have also been referred to as "DOD's missions."

During our initial work in the mission management area, we had come to believe that there was no standard mission area structure within DOD. This belief was based on the existence of many different mission area structures. For example, each of the services has developed its own set of missions; the various components of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (e.g., USDR&E, MRA&L, PA&E, Comptroller) each has its own set of DOD "mission areas"; parts of the Defense Guidance are mission-oriented, but we have been told that the missions do not parallel the services' missions; and the FYDP mission categories are somewhat different from any of the other mission categories used within DOD.

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1/ Improving the Weapon Systems Acquisition Process (GAO/MASAD-81-29).

2/ Review of the Impact of A-109 on Weapon Systems (GAO/MASAD-82-10).

3/ An Analysis of the Counterair Mission is Required to Help Ensure that the Air Force is Buying the Capabilities It Needs (GAO/MASAD-83-1).

4/ Mission Area Analyses Conducted By The Army Training and Doctrine Command (GAO/MASAD-83-20).