

--Improvements to the Patriot's maintenance software are needed before the system can be adequately supported in the field.

An issue we have been looking at more closely in the past several years is affordability--is there sufficient fiscal resources to effectively and efficiently support the weapon system acquisitions. Increasing, incomplete, or uncertain program costs raise questions concerning the continued availability of program funds and could, in some instances, disrupt planned procurements. Nine of the weapon programs presented have experienced cost increases which raise the question of whether sufficient funds will be made available to procure enough quantities to meet force level requirements. Some examples are:

--The Army Helicopter Improvement Program has doubled in cost and additional increases can be anticipated since its capabilities have not been demonstrated and because of program uncertainties.

--The Patriot cost has nearly doubled in the last two years and some of the same factors are still present, making further cost increases likely and therefore available funding may not be sufficient to maintain the planned procurement schedule.