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## **PREFACE**

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This document summarizes the results from a six-week special assistance study conducted by RAND's Arroyo Center. This study was requested by the Assistant Vice Chief of Staff of the Army and was coordinated with the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans (DCSOPS). The specific objective of the special assistance effort was to explore the utility of the Crusader system to the future of the Army. Along these lines, specific questions were asked about Crusader's ability to provide firepower on the future battlefield and to serve as a major technology "carrier" into the Army After Next (AAN) era. This document not only includes our answers to the questions posed by DCSOPS but also addresses some of the other issues that may surface in considering the relative need for a state-of-the-art self-propelled howitzer (SPH) in light of other U.S. Army interests. Thus, it should be of interest to defense acquisition officials and policymakers.

The research was carried out in the Force Development and Technology Program of RAND's Arroyo Center, a federally funded research and development center sponsored by the United States Army.