



Strategy-Policy Mismatch

How the U.S. Army Can Help Close Gaps in Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction

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Although two successive presidents have determined that weapons of mass destruction (WMD) pose the greatest threat to the American people and have listed countering their proliferation as a top strategic priority, neither administration has followed through by allocating appropriate budgetary resources to it. This report addresses and analyzes the ground force capacity and capabilities needed to perform WMD elimination missions and tasks.



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How can this national strategy-resource policy gap be closed?
- How much ground force capacity, as well as what joint capabilities, will be needed to achieve gap closure, at least to greater degrees than at present?
- How can the U.S. Army help—especially, with one critical counter-WMD mission, namely, WMD elimination?



KEY FINDINGS

Previous Neglect Means Gaps Need to Be Closed

- Countering WMD comprises a mission area of overarching importance.
- Because counter-WMD missions have not been given priority for defense resources, the United States may lack both the capabilities and the capacity required to conduct WMD-elimination operations in, for example, a collapsed state.
- The potential ground force requirements for WMD-E operations could be substantial.

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Counter-WMD Efforts Should Be Properly Structured

- The size, complexity and strategic importance of WMD elimination operations will require the dedicated efforts of a joint task force (JTF).
- In addition to special operations forces and technical units, this JTF will require general-purpose forces for security and logistical operations, as well as combat forces if sites must be found and seized in the presence of hostile populations and military forces.
- The number of troops needed can range from as few as 15,000 for small efforts in relatively low-threat environments to more than 270,000 troops for large operations in high-threat environments posing dangers of theft and proliferation. For WMD elimination operations in a collapsed DPRK scenario, our best estimate is 188,000 troops.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Policymakers need to answer a key question: What is the number and size of WMD sites the United States should be prepared to assault, secure, and neutralize simultaneously?
- DoD should promote countering WMD to the status of missions that drive resourcing priorities—in terms of both military capacity (force size) and the development of military capabilities (force structure).
- DoD should assess the force requirements for missions countering and eliminating WMD across a wide range of scenarios and in both contingency and operational campaign planning.
- DoD should perform a capabilities gap analysis of countering and eliminating WMD within the Joint Capabilities Integration Development System.



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