

GAO Reports

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[Combating Nuclear Smuggling: NNSA's Detection and Deterrence Program Is Addressing Challenges but Should Improve Its Program Plan](#), 6/2016, GAO

“This report examines (1) NSDD’s plans for completing key activities and achieving its goals, (2) selected partner countries’ use of NSDD-provided equipment to detect or interdict nuclear or radiological material, and (3) NSDD’s challenges. GAO reviewed NSDD documents, interviewed officials, and visited a nonprobability sample of 19 sites, including land border crossings, airports, and seaports in three countries—Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, and Georgia—selected on the basis of the number and types of sites, their potential as nuclear smuggling routes, and program expenditures, among other factors.”

[DOE Made Progress to Secure Vulnerable Nuclear Materials Worldwide, but Opportunities Exist to Improve Its Efforts](#), 9/2015, GAO

“This report (1) assesses the extent to which DOE achieved its goals for four key activities under the initiative and (2) examines DOE’s goals going forward and assesses challenges that may limit its ability to secure additional vulnerable nuclear materials. GAO continues to believe that DOE and other U.S. agencies should complete an inventory of U.S. plutonium at worldwide sites as GAO recommended in September 2011. In this report, GAO recommends that DOE complete its prioritization of nuclear materials at foreign locations. GAO also recommends that DOE and other agencies visit sites containing key quantities of U.S nuclear materials that have not been visited in at least 5 years.”

[Nonproliferation and Disarmament Fund: State Should Better Assure the Effective Use of Program Authorities](#), 11/2012, GAO

“This report examines (1) State’s use of NDF authorities in developing and implementing NDF projects and (2) the extent to which State has conducted a program evaluation of NDF and used this information to improve program performance. To conduct this review, GAO analyzed NDF program and project data and documentation, analyzed a sample of NDF project close-out documents, and interviewed NDF and other U.S. officials.”

[U.S. Agencies Have Limited Ability to Account for, Monitor, and Evaluate the Security of U.S. Nuclear Material Overseas](#), 9/2011, GAO

“GAO was asked to (1) assess U.S. agency efforts to account for U.S. nuclear material overseas, (2) assess the Department of Energy’s (DOE) and U.S. agencies’ efforts to evaluate the security of U.S. material overseas, and (3) describe DOE’s activities to secure or remove potentially vulnerable U.S. nuclear material at partner facilities. GAO suggests, among other things, that Congress consider directing DOE and NRC to compile an inventory of U.S. nuclear material overseas. DOE, NRC, and State generally disagreed with GAO’s recommendations, including that they conduct annual inventory reconciliations with all partners, stating they were unnecessary. GAO continues to believe that its recommendations could help improve the accountability of U.S. nuclear material in foreign countries.”

[Comprehensive U.S. Planning and Better Foreign Cooperation Needed to Secure Vulnerable Nuclear Materials Worldwide](#), 12/2010, GAO

“GAO assessed (1) U.S. government-wide efforts to implement the President’s 4-year nuclear material security initiative; (2) the status and challenges, if any, of NNSA’s nuclear security programs in Russia; and (3) NNSA efforts to secure nuclear materials in countries other than Russia. GAO suggests that Congress consider extending the deadline for NNSA to complete Material Protection, Control, and Accounting (MPC&A) program activities in Russia. GAO recommends that the Department of Energy (DOE) and NNSA take several actions regarding three nonproliferation program efforts in Russia, such as clarifying the remaining scope and costs of MPC&A work in Russia. GAO also recommends that the National Security Council (NSC) lead interagency development of a more detailed implementation plan for the President’s 4-year initiative. DOE and NNSA agreed with the recommendations. NSC did not comment on GAO’s recommendations.”

[Nuclear Nonproliferation: DOE Needs to Reassess Its Program to Assist Weapons Scientists in Russia and Other Countries](#), 1/2008, GAO

“During the decades before its dissolution, the Soviet Union produced a cadre of scientists and engineers whose knowledge and expertise could be invaluable to countries or terrorist groups trying to develop weapons of mass destruction (WMD). After the Soviet Union’s collapse in 1991, many of these scientists suffered significant cuts in pay or lost their government-supported work. To address concerns about unemployed or underemployed Soviet-era weapons scientists, the Department of Energy (DOE) established the Initiatives for Proliferation Prevention (IPP) program in 1994 to engage former Soviet weapons scientists in nonmilitary work in the short term and create private sector jobs for

these scientists in the long term. GAO was asked to assess (1) DOE's reported accomplishments for the IPP program, (2) DOE's exit strategy for the program, and (3) the extent to which the program has experienced annual carryovers of unspent funds and the reasons for any such carryovers."

[Nuclear Nonproliferation: Progress Made in Improving Security at Russian Nuclear Sites, but the Long-term Sustainability of U.S.-Funded Security Upgrades Is Uncertain](#), 2/2007, GAO

"GAO recommends that DOE (1) revise the metrics it uses to track progress in securing buildings with weapons-usable nuclear material and (2) develop a management information system to track DOE's progress in providing Russia with a sustainable MPC&A system by 2013."

[Cooperative Threat Reduction: DOD Needs More Reliable Data to Better Estimate the Cost and Schedule of the Shchuch'ye Facility](#), 5/2006, GAO

"GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense direct the Defense Threat Reduction Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to (1) ensure that the EVM system contains valid and reliable data, (2) set aside a portion of the contractor's award fee until the EVM system produces reliable data, and (3) require the contractor to perform an integrated baseline review (IBR) after awarding the contract for completing Building 101."

[Cooperative Threat Reduction: DOD Has Improved Its Management and Internal Controls, but Challenges Remain](#), 6/30/2005

"GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense conduct performance reviews of CTR projects upon their completion. Such reviews would provide a mechanism to document lessons learned and apply them to future project planning and implementation. DOD concurred with our recommendation."

[Weapons of Mass Destruction: Nonproliferation Programs Need Better Integration](#), 1/28/2005, GAO

"GAO recommends (1) that the Secretaries of Defense and Energy develop an integrated plan for all U.S. threat reduction and nonproliferation programs and (2) that the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs issue clear guidance for the coordination of border security programs. DOE agreed with the recommendations, while State and the NSC staff did not comment. DOD concurred with the need for better integrated nonproliferation programs, but did not specify whether it agreed with the need for an integrated plan."

[Russian Nuclear Submarines: U.S. Participation in the Arctic Military Environmental Cooperation Program Needs Better Justification](#), 9/9/2004, GAO
“GAO recommends, among other things, that DOD determine whether AMEC activities should include improving security around Russian nuclear submarine bases and whether DOD’s technology development efforts should be expanded to nuclear submarine dismantlement in Russia’s Pacific region.”

[Nonproliferation: Delays in Implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention Raise Concerns About Proliferation](#), 3/2004, GAO

“The OPCW recognizes that it must increase the number of inspections conducted at facilities that produce dual-use chemicals. Some of these facilities may pose a proliferation threat. The lack of a credible Russian chemical weapons destruction plan has hindered and may further delay destruction efforts, leaving Russia’s vast chemical weapons arsenal vulnerable to theft or diversion. Russia’s destruction efforts rely heavily on international assistance. State and DOD commented that our report is not balanced because it does not provide more examples of successful CWC implementation, and concern that we included a policy option to condition future U.S. aid on development of a credible Russian chemical weapons destruction plan.”

[Weapons of Mass Destruction: DTRA Addresses Broad Range of Threats, But Performance Reporting Can Be Improved](#), 2/2004, GAO

“GAO recommends that the Director of DTRA improve the agency’s annual performance report by comparing the agency’s actual performance against planned goals and, where appropriate, explain why goals were not met and the agency’s plan to address these unmet goals in the future. DTRA agreed with the GAO recommendation that it improve its annual performance report. DTRA stated that it is refining its performance report methodology to better address the linkage of reported performance to planned goals and future efforts.”

[Weapons of Mass Destruction: Additional Russian Cooperation Needed to Facilitate U.S. Efforts to Improve Security at Russian Sites](#), 3/24/2003, GAO

“GAO recommends that DOE reevaluate its plans for securing Russia’s nuclear material, and with DOD, develop an integrated plan to ensure coordination of efforts to secure Russia’s nuclear warheads. GAO also recommends that DOD develop criteria to guide efforts to secure biological pathogens and revisit its decision not to secure additional chemical weapons sites. DOD agreed with 3 of our 4 recommendations. DOD did not agree to improve security at additional chemical weapons sites.”

[Weapons of Mass Destruction: Observations on U.S. Threat Reduction and Nonproliferation Programs in Russia](#), 3/5/2003, GAO

“U.S. threat reduction and nonproliferation programs have consistently faced two critical challenges: (1) the Russian government has not always paid its agreed-upon share of program costs and (2) Russian ministries have often denied U.S. officials access to key nuclear and biological sites.”

[Nuclear Nonproliferation: U.S. Efforts to Help Other Countries Combat Nuclear Smuggling Need Strengthened Coordination and Planning](#), 5/16/2002, GAO

“We recommend that the Secretary of State take the lead in facilitating the development of a government-wide plan to help other countries develop an integrated approach to combat nuclear smuggling. This report makes several recommendations designed to improve management of U.S.-provided radiation detection equipment and to secure recipient country assurances of exchanging information about smuggling incidents.”

[Cooperative Threat Reduction: DOD Has Adequate Oversight of Assistance, but Procedural Limitations Remain](#), 6/2001, GAO

“Our analysis indicated that because of access restrictions imposed by the Russian government, a limited amount of equipment—less than 5 percent of the total value of assistance provided—is in locations where access by U.S. personnel is not permitted. DOD can enhance the quality of its program oversight function by better targeting and expanding the scope of its formal audit and examination procedure. we recommend that the Secretary of Defense better target audit and examination visits to avoid unnecessary duplication of coverage, but expand the scope of such visits to include assessments of projects on the basis of well-defined criteria.”

[Biological Weapons: Effort to Reduce Former Soviet Threat Offers Benefits, Poses New Risks](#), 4/28/2000, GAO

“The U.S. strategy for addressing bioweapon proliferation threats at the source has been to fund collaborative research activities with the relevant Russian institutes. We found that expanding the program will risk 1) sustaining Russia’s existing biological weapons infrastructure, 2) maintaining or advancing Russian scientists’ skills to develop offensive biological weapons, and 3) the potential misuse of U.S. assistance to fund offensive research.”

[Cooperative Threat Reduction: DOD's 1997-1998 Reports on Accounting Were](#)

[Late and Incomplete](#), 3/2000, GAO

“DOD was 16 months late in submitting its CTR accounting report for 1997 and 10 months late in 1998. The delays were primarily due to DOD’s prolonged review of the draft reports and the relatively low priority that its officials placed on ensuring the reports’ timely submission. Our report recommends that the Secretary of Defense establish (1) mechanisms to ensure that future reports are submitted to Congress by January 31 of each year, (2) quality controls and processes to ensure that future reports contain more complete and accurate information, and (3) clear guidance to other executive branch agencies concerning the type of information that DOD needs and the deadline for submitting such information for future accounting reports.”

[Weapons of Mass Destruction: Effort to Reduce Russian Arsenals May Cost More, Achieve Less Than Planned](#), 4/13/1999, GAO

“Russian funding shortfalls have substantially increased the Mayak facility’s estimated cost while underscoring the need for substantial additional assistance if the Shchuch’ye project’s broader objectives are to be attained. Russian reluctance to share critical information with the United States may limit Mayak’s national security benefits and has contributed to delays in the Shchuch’ye project. Congress may wish to require DOD to identify specific funding sources for the construction of the four additional chemical weapons destruction facilities or provide further justification for continuing the Shchuch’ye project.”

[Cooperative Threat Reduction: Status of Defense Conversion Efforts in the Former Soviet Union](#), 4/1997, GAO

“The Defense Special Weapons Agency and the Defense Enterprise Fund have not established the required evaluation benchmarks necessary for DOD to measure the success of the Fund, and the Fund’s long-range plan for attracting private capital has yet to be finalized.”

[Weapons of Mass Destruction: Status of the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program](#), 9/1996, GAO

“The draft 1996 CTR multiyear plan is a significant improvement over its predecessor, but it does not adequately reflect uncertainties associated with some projects and cost estimates and it does not explain significant changes from the 1995 plan. This report recommends that the Secretary of Defense make needed improvements to future CTR multiyear plans and refrain from obligating funds for constructing a pilot chemical weapon destruction facility until DOD

prepares a more reliable estimate of how much the facility's construction will cost the United States. It also suggests that Congress may wish to consider linking DOD's authority to obligate CTR funds for the nuclear storage facility to progress in concluding an agreement on the facility's openness to the United States."

[Nuclear Nonproliferation: Status of U.S. Efforts to Improve Nuclear Materials Controls in Newly Independent States](#), 3/8/1996, GAO

This report addresses (1) the nature and extent of problems with controlling direct-use nuclear materials in the newly independent states; (2) the status and future prospects of U.S. efforts to help strengthen controls in Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus; and (3) the executive branch's consolidation of U.S. efforts in DOE.

[Former Soviet Union: Assessment of U.S. Bilateral Programs](#), 12/15/1995, GAO

"We recommended that the Secretary of Defense institute a proactive, long-term CTR planning process to help DOD allocate CTR funds among competing demands and to guide preparation of annual budgets. DOD accepted our recommendation. DOD's report to Congress contained incomplete, outdated, and inaccurate data. DOD agreed with our recommendation that any future reports (1) contain accurate data, (2) integrate sources of data on CTR aid to show how it is being accounted for and is being used, (3) link this data to its overall determination, and (4) provide more information on planned audits and examinations."

[Former Soviet Union: U.S. Bilateral Program Lacks Effective Coordination](#), 2/1995, GAO

"While the Freedom Support Act gives the State Department Coordinator broad responsibility for U.S. bilateral programs with the FSU—and calls on him to coordinate with other countries and international organizations on aid programs to the FSU—we found that, in practice, the Coordinator's role is much more limited. The Coordinator has limited or no authority to direct activities of the CTR program or worldwide programs with the FSU components, such as those of the Export-Import Bank, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and Department of Agriculture, and thus has no way of ensuring that all programs for the FSU complement one another."

[Weapons of Mass Destruction: DOD Reporting on Cooperative Threat Reduction Assistance Can Be Improved](#), 9/1995, GAO

“DOD made some progress in the CTR program’s first year audit. However, the report does not fully present all of DOD’s audit and examination activities for fiscal year 1995, as required, and does not describe how DOD plans such activities. The report does not describe the condition of the assistance, as required, and contains outdated and inaccurate listings of CTR assistance deliveries. The limited number of projects DOD reviewed raises questions about the basis for DOD’s program-wide determination that CTR assistance has been accounted for and used for its intended purpose. Other sources of information for the projects included random observations by U.S. technical teams, recipient-provided data, and national technical means.”

[Weapons of Mass Destruction: Reducing the Threat From the Former Soviet Union: An Update](#), 6/17/1995, GAO

“In some areas, the CTR program has made progress over the past year and its long-term prognosis for achieving its objectives may be promising. CTR aid should allow Ukraine to meet its START obligations. On the other hand, difficulties in working with the Russians in resolving key issues, such as the design of a chemical weapon disposal facility, have slowed progress on several projects that could have major long-term significance.”

[Weapons of Mass Destruction: Reducing the Threat From the Former Soviet Union](#), October 6 1994, GAO

“We recommend that the Secretary of Defense institute a proactive, long-term CTR planning process to help DOD properly allocate the billions of dollars it hopes to spend, including developing estimates of total requirements for achieving CTR objectives, prioritization of competing objectives, evaluations of projects, and assessments of what U.S. aid could reasonably achieve. DOD officials should periodically update the plan and use it in producing annual budgets keyed to achieving priority CTR goals.”

[Soviet Nuclear Weapons: Priorities and Costs Associated with U.S. Dismantlement Assistance](#), 3/8/1993, GAO

“The U.S. government has not prepared a single prioritized list of all items affecting the destruction of former Soviet nuclear weapons, since Russia has ruled out a direct U.S. role in dismantling former Soviet nuclear weapons. U.S. officials have instead developed potential projects that do not directly involve nuclear weapons dismantlement and made plans to obligate funds for such projects. Also, U.S. private industry experts have not been involved in developing priorities for dismantling nuclear weapons.”

[Soviet Nuclear Weapons: U.S. Efforts to Help Former Soviet Republics Secure and Destroy Weapons](#), 3/1993, GAO

“Significant gaps remain in our nation's understanding of how best to deal with the FSU’s nuclear weapons. Russia's refusal to permit direct U.S. involvement in its dismantlement process appears to seriously constrain U.S. options for accelerating the rate of dismantlement. Uncertainties remain concerning Russia's storage facility, the ultimate disposition of Russia's plutonium, and other matters. Such uncertainties may be acceptable, given the historic opportunities open to the United States. Congress should nonetheless be aware of them.”

[Russian Nuclear Weapons: U.S. Implementation of the 1991 Soviet Nuclear Threat Reduction Act](#), 7/27/1992, GAO

“We believe that a number of important questions should be addressed before the United States commits to building a large permanent fissile material storage facility as the best way of ensuring that the Soviet Union's nuclear legacy will be dismantled as quickly and as safely as possible. The difficult is to quickly develop an integrated, long-term policy on the storage and ultimate disposition of fissile materials while taking advantage of what may prove to be an historic opportunity to facilitate the rapid and safe destruction of Soviet weapons.”