

# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

CHRISTOPHER R. HIXON, STAFF DIRECTOR  
GABRIELLE A. BATKIN, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

April 11, 2016

The Honorable Gene Dodaro  
Comptroller General  
US Government Accountability Office  
441 G St. NW  
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

Over the last several years, work by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) has raised concerns about contracting in the Army, including the use of short-term and sometimes improper practices that do not constitute good contract management.<sup>1</sup> In addition, GAO has found that the Army has struggled to maintain a strong acquisition workforce, which is necessary to meet future contracting demands.<sup>2</sup> In 2008, the Department of Defense undertook an effort to implement numerous recommendations to restructure the Army's contracting organization in order to improve contract management and promote responsive acquisitions.<sup>3</sup> Despite these efforts at reform, I have questioned whether the Army employs the necessary management and oversight to ensure successful contracting outcomes.<sup>4</sup>

Given these ongoing concerns, I believe it is necessary for GAO to assess how the Army is currently managing and overseeing its contracting process. I request that you review the following:

- (1) How is the Army organized to manage its contracting process?

---

<sup>1</sup> See e.g., Government Accountability Office, *Sole Source Contracting: Defining and Tracking Bridge Contracts Would Help Agencies Manage Their Use* (Oct. 14, 2015) (GAO-16-15); Government Accountability Office, *Army Contracting: Training and Guidance Needed to Ensure Appropriate Use of the Option to Extend Clause* (Jan. 28, 2016) (GAO-16-262R).

<sup>2</sup> Government Accountability Office, *Defense Acquisition Workforce: Actions Needed to Guide Planning Efforts and Improve Workforce Capability* (GAO-16-80) (Dec. 14, 2015).

<sup>3</sup> Department of Defense Task Force on Contracting and Contract Management in Expeditionary Operations, *2008 Report to Congress* (June 2, 2008).

<sup>4</sup> Letter from Chairman Claire McCaskill, Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight, to Comptroller General Gene L. Dodaro (Sept. 11, 2014).

The Honorable Gene L. Dodaro  
April 11, 2016  
Page 2

- (2) Under the current organization, how is accountability for contracting decisions maintained?
- (3) How is contracting workflow and oversight managed throughout the contracting community?
- (4) How does the Army measure and assess contracting outcomes?

Thank you for your assistance with this matter. If you have questions about this request please contact Sarah Garcia with my Subcommittee staff at (202) 224-5602. Please send any official correspondence relating to this request to [Kelsey\\_Stroud@hsgac.senate.gov](mailto:Kelsey_Stroud@hsgac.senate.gov).

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill  
Ranking Member  
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

cc: Rob Portman  
Chairman  
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations