



2006 Quadrennial Defense Review: Shifting Emphasis

The United States is engaged in what will be a long war.

2006 Quadrennial Defense Review

The “Long War”

The Department of Defense (DoD) has been in a continuous state of change since 11 September 2001; this is reflected in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) Report released 3 February 2006. Senior civilian and military leaders at DoD used the report as a medium to address the need to “find, fix and finish” combat operations in an era of the unpredictable. Throughout the report, the phrase “the long war” is used by Pentagon officials to describe the irregular nature of current operations that requires the U.S. military to adopt unconventional and indirect approaches to warfighting.

The QDR is conducted by DoD senior military and civilian officials to notify Congress of where DoD is and where it needs to be to best execute its responsibilities and missions. It is an opportunity to refine the balance between people and technology, and between the current and future forces. The 2006 QDR is the third since Congress commissioned a review of the long-term vision of DoD to be submitted every four years; the first report was released in 1997. The second, in 2001, required last-minute revisions after the 11 September terrorist attacks. The 2006 review is unique because it is the first to be written while the nation is at war, the first to be written by

a Secretary of Defense who had four years of experience in office¹ before drafting the QDR, and the first to be submitted to Congress along with the President’s Budget.

Senior DoD leaders used the 2006 report to focus on challenges that transcend the responsibilities and authorities of DoD, such as homeland defense, the war on terrorism, stability operations and postconflict reconstruction. The review also serves as a platform from which Defense officials can stress that success depends on the men and women in uniform.

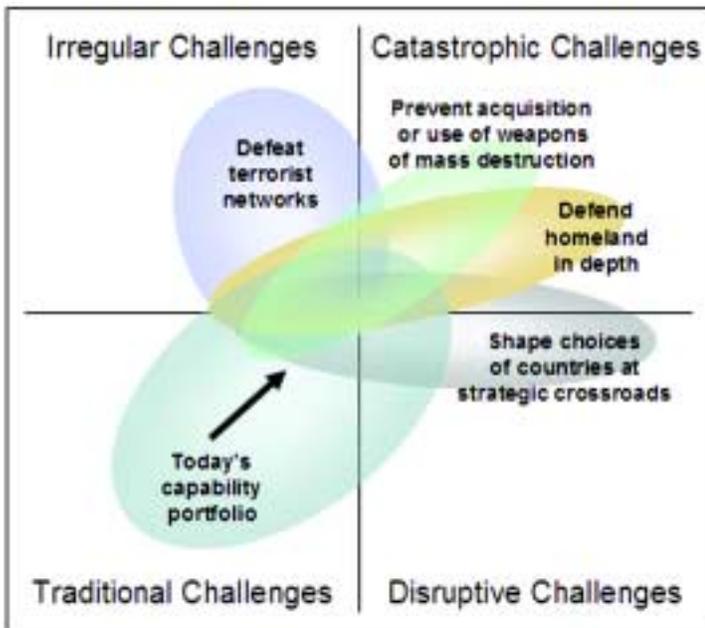
Shifting Emphasis

The 2006 QDR is not a radical document identifying a new direction; rather, it is what Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England calls a “midcourse correction” reflecting a shifting of emphasis from conventional areas of warfare to a whole range of approaches. DoD identifies four categories of challenges facing the United States (with no hard boundaries between them): Conventional, Irregular, Catastrophic and Disruptive (see figure on page 2).

China is singled out to have the greatest potential to become a military threat to the United States (a conventional challenge). The continuing war on terrorism and the need to defeat terrorist networks are classified as

¹ Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld has served the Bush administration since January 2001; he also served two years (1975–77) as Secretary of Defense under the Ford administration, before the Quadrennial Defense Review was first commissioned by Congress.





As the diagram shows, the Department of Defense is shifting its portfolio of capabilities to address irregular, catastrophic and disruptive challenges while sustaining capabilities to address traditional challenges.

Source: 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Report

irregular challenges. The report also examines the need to help shape the choices of countries at strategic crossroads (many of them in the Middle East) so freedom of action may be assured for the United States, its allies and partners.

Four priorities emerge as the short- and long-term focus of DoD:

- defeating terrorist networks;
- defending the homeland in depth, including improving communications and command systems so that military efforts can be better coordinated with state and local governments;
- shaping the choices of countries at strategic crossroads. This means dissuading China, Russia and India from becoming potential enemies;
- preventing hostile states and non-state actors from acquiring or using weapons of mass destruction.

DoD will reorient its capabilities and forces based on these areas of concern to become more lethal and agile, prepare for wider asymmetric challenges and hedge against uncertainty. The review lists many shifts in emphasis to meet new strategic environment challenges, including more focus on:

- the needs of combatant commanders to give commanders and troops maximum flexibility to react;
- information, knowledge and timely, actionable intelligence rather than on guns, ships and tanks;
- tailorable, flexible forces rather than on a predetermined force package.

The 2006 QDR also calls for a shift in emphasis as regards its business enterprise, thus altering the manner in which the Pentagon is organized and operates. DoD leaders are seeking new and more flexible authorities in budget, finance, acquisition and personnel. An important aspect of the review is the concession that inefficient business practices are a handicap to the armed forces. Also, DoD must be responsive to its stakeholders—to serve the President and provide the best value to the taxpayer.

Senior DoD leaders cite the need to clearly delineate roles and responsibilities to improve the flow of business processes, reduce redundancies and work more efficiently with state and local agencies. The goal is to change the manner in which the Pentagon is run to improve visibility into supply chain logistics costs and to build a foundation for continuous improvements in performance. In turn, DoD will be better suited to assist the armed forces in executing their missions successfully.

Force Planning Construct Refined

This year-long assessment of DoD capabilities and long-term strategic vision refines but does not radically change the Force Planning Construct that guides the shape and size of the armed forces. Important concerns that carry over from the 2001 QDR are:

- the capability to defend the U.S. homeland;
- the capability to operate in and from four forward areas (Europe, the Middle East, the Asian Littoral and Northeast Asia); and
- the capabilities and forces to wage multiple campaigns in an overlapping timeframe.

So that the 2006 QDR might better reflect the realities of the current strategic environment, DoD leaders integrated lessons learned from operations in Afghanistan, Iraq and the war on terrorism into the Force Planning Construct. The resulting analysis underscores the need to operate around the globe and not just in the four regions identified in the 2001 QDR. The United States must

account for long-duration operations such as counter-insurgency and counterterrorism operations as well. DoD will need to prepare for and participate in peacetime shaping activities. The refined Force Planning Construct, a means by which DoD leaders can address inefficiencies in the current force, is divided into three objective activities that serve as a guide to determine the appropriate size of the armed forces and the types of capabilities needed:

- Homeland Defense,
- Irregular Warfare and the Global War on Terrorism; and
- Conventional Campaigns.

The QDR does not call for any major weapons cuts in the armed forces. Among the QDR recommendations are extending the Air Force's F/A-22 fighter program through 2010, accelerating the procurement of Navy Littoral Combat Ships and doubling the procurement of attack submarines.² The Army's Future Combat Systems (FCS) program comes through unscathed, as does the Navy's DD(X) destroyer.

The report focuses not on cuts but on knowledge and information as the best means to bridge the gap between the current and future forces:

- training thousands of additional special operations troops;
- building futuristic weapons;
- increasing irregular-warfare capabilities of general-purpose ground forces;
- increasing long-range strike and surveillance capabilities;
- improving nuclear detection and defenses against advanced biological threats; and
- focusing on language training in the armed forces.

Among the QDR recommendations are a 15 percent increase in special operations forces, establishment of a special operations unmanned aerial vehicle squadron under the Air Force, an increase in Navy SEAL (Sea, Air, Land) and riverine warfare capabilities and an increase in psychological warfare and civil affairs units

of 33 percent, or 3,700 troops. A call is made to nearly double the capacity of unmanned aerial vehicles for surveillance. In the area of improving nuclear detection, DoD leaders call for the creation of special teams to find, track and defuse nuclear bombs and other catastrophic weapons. Among the other QDR recommendations is to improve the U.S. capability to locate, tag and track weapons of mass destruction and other related materials and invest \$1.5 billion in the development of medical countermeasures against bio-weapons. The increased focus on language training is a product of lessons-learned analysis that reinforces the need to have greater language skills and culture awareness in areas where the armed forces are conducting operations.

The 2006 QDR also stresses the importance of partnership and relationship building. DoD classifies working with other government agencies, allies and partners as "imperative." To achieve mission success, a new design in organization and management of joint activities must be implemented. Victory depends on the use of strategic communication between the United States and its international partners to win credibility, trust and, ultimately, the long war.

The emphasis on Homeland Defense, Irregular Warfare and Conventional Warfare is a result of DoD's desire to take immediate action to reduce near-term risk while increasing flexibility to hedge against future unpredictability.

The Army and the QDR

On the whole, the Army's vision is in line with the vision coming out of the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review. The Army emerges "remarkably well," enjoying a level of support and resourcing that is unprecedented.³ The Army Plan and the QDR coincide in that both attempt to maintain the momentum of transformation, modernization and modularity. The Army will continue to insert Future Combat Systems technologies into the current and future forces in phased two-year increments called "**spin-outs.**" The integration of these advanced capabilities remains a priority to ensure the availability of the infrastructure and support required for the Army to be able to execute its mission.

² To a production rate of two attack submarines per year no later than 2012.

³ Lieutenant General David F. Melcher, Institute of Land Warfare Breakfast, Association of the United States Army. Arlington, VA, 9 February 2006.

The report addresses the Army's commitment to sustain an all-volunteer force in its recommendation to stabilize the Army's endstrength by 2011. The Army will man the active component at 482,400 personnel (with additional Army special operations forces incorporated in that number). Both the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve will be resourced at their actual achieved strengths, up to the congressionally-mandated endstrength of each.

With The Army Plan and the 2006 QDR as guidance, the Army is moving into the future and is committed to combining all individual elements into a strong whole. The QDR and the Army both envision a fully manned, equipped, trained and resourced force. All units will be ready for the missions they are called to execute.

Roadmaps for the Future

The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review is to be interpreted as a document that guides the Department of Defense into the future. Therefore, the report also calls for continuous reassessment and periodic updates in the coming years in the form of "roadmaps" for the future. These roadmaps will be directed with emphasis on these particular areas of concern:

- department institutional reform and governance;
- irregular warfare;
- building partnership capability;
- strategic communication; and
- intelligence.

The nature of warfare is changing and so must the armed forces. The Information Age has contributed to the ease of gaining and disseminating knowledge, including the kind of information used in the production of improvised explosive devices and other tools and methodologies of asymmetric warfare. The 2006 QDR notes that phrases used in the 2001 QDR such as "swiftly defeating" and "winning decisively" will be less useful for some types of operations that require a long-term approach.

Senior DoD leaders are attempting to address what they see as capability gaps that prevent the United States and its partners from winning the long war. By calling for continuous reassessment and refinement in the future, the 2006 QDR goes beyond the initial document into roadmaps that will address continuous changes in the security environment.

Key Points

- The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review report was released on 3 February 2006 and submitted to Congress along with the Fiscal Year 2007 Presidential Budget Request.
- The three main objectives of the Department of Defense are to protect and secure the homeland, increase irregular warfare capabilities and defeat terrorist networks, and continue to be prepared for conventional warfare.
- To create a more lethal and agile force, the 2006 QDR does not mandate radical changes; rather, it calls for shifts in emphasis to make DoD more prepared to execute the "long war" on terror.
- The 2006 QDR calls for expanding the military's special operations forces, emphasizing critical language skills, and improving the military's capability to detect and defend against weapons of mass destruction.
- The long-term vision of the 2006 QDR and The Army Plan is that of a fully manned, equipped, trained and resourced force with continuing emphasis on modernization and modularity.