



Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments

**PRESS RELEASES**

## **CSBA Report: Upcoming QDR Should Change the Mix of Capabilities**

June 18, 2013

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“The Pentagon has an opportunity to use its upcoming Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) to define and then resource a new mix of military capabilities that will be needed for future contingency operations,” argues a new Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA) report released at a congressional briefing last week.

The report’s author, CSBA Senior Fellow Mark Gunzinger (<http://www.csbaonline.org/about/people/mgunzinger/>), drew on his extensive QDR experience to assess the effectiveness of planning policies adopted by the Defense Department over the last twenty years. In *Shaping America’s Future Military: Toward a New Force Planning Construct* (<http://www.csbaonline.org/publications/2013/06/shaping-americas-future-military-toward-a-new-force-planning-construct/>), he recommends the Pentagon avoid a budget-driven planning approach that could result in a smaller version of a force that may be best prepared for fading threats instead of future challenges.

“I am delighted to see this kind of analysis,” said Representative J. Randy Forbes (<http://forbes.house.gov/>)(R-VA), Chair of the House Armed Services Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, who co-sponsored the report’s public release with Representative Colleen Hanabusa (<http://hanabusa.house.gov/>)(D-HI). “Those of us who work in defense know that we have to develop a strategy and then implement a budget to support it.”

Gunzinger's report suggests guiding principles that could help avoid a budget-driven QDR, including:

- identifying clear priorities for the U.S. military's major mission areas;
- prioritizing development of the right mix of capabilities that may be needed in future operations first, rather than beginning with program changes to support near-term budget cuts;
- developing planning scenarios for hybrid conflicts, operations to counter weapons of mass destruction, and power-projection operations into highly contested areas;
- adopting realistic assumptions for its planning scenarios that reflect the increasingly non-permissive nature of the air, land, sea, space, and cyberspace operating domains; and
- creating innovative operational concepts that could foster investments in a new generation of "crown jewel" capabilities such as penetrating, long-range surveillance and strike systems, advanced unmanned aircraft, undersea warfare weapons, and special operations forces.

"At the end of the Cold War, we had to wipe out our old planning assumptions and start with a clean slate to help define what our new force structure should look like," said Representative Hanabusa in her remarks on the study. "And that's what this report does very well," she concluded.

CSBA's new report recommends the Pentagon complement its next force planning construct with new strategic concepts for the Services that describe how, when, and where each anticipates they will need to defend the nation against future threats. For example, the future Navy and the Air Force could become the primary force providers for AirSea Battle operations to counter enemy anti-access and area-denial challenges. Together, they could also constitute a "swing" force capable of rapidly deploying from one theater operation to deter or spoil opportunistic acts of aggression in a second theater. The future Army focus could center on organizing, training, and equipping in support of major hybrid conflicts, as well as operations to secure, render-safe, or destroy weapons of mass destruction. Instead of acting as a second land army, the Marine Corps could tailor its capabilities to rapidly respond to future crises and missions to help build the capabilities of America's allies and security partners.