



MEDIA RELEASE

Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Program



On the Web:

<https://www.jnlwp.com>

Media contact: +1 (703) 432-0905

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JNLWD Statement on GAO Report Regarding DoD Non-Lethal Weapons Program

Statement from the Director, Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Directorate, on the GAO report, GAO-09-344, "DEFENSE MANAGEMENT: DoD Needs to Improve Program Management, Policy, and Testing to Enhance Ability to Field Operationally Useful Non-Lethal Weapons."

Quantico, Va.—The Director of the Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Directorate (JNLWD) today issued the following statement regarding the Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, GAO-09-344, "DEFENSE MANAGEMENT: DoD Needs to Improve Program Management, Policy, and Testing to Enhance Ability to Field Operationally Useful Non-Lethal Weapons."

"Improving our management process, policy and testing are among our most important priorities," said Colonel Kirk Hymes, Director, JNLWD. "The Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Program commends the GAO on their professionalism and thoroughness in their assessment. We have informed the GAO that the JNLWD will continue to work on improving all aspects of the Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Program and will work to incorporate recommendations made to the DoD as appropriate."

The GAO report describes how non-lethal weapons provide an alternative when lethal force is undesirable. The report specifically highlights, "Non-lethal weapons are also meant to enhance the capability of U.S. forces to discourage, delay, or prevent hostile actions; limit escalation; take military action in situations where use of lethal force is not the preferred option; better protect the forces; temporarily disable equipment, facilities and personnel;

and help decrease the post-conflict cost of reconstruction.”

DoD defines non-lethal weapons as those that are explicitly designed and primarily employed to incapacitate personnel or materiel, while minimizing fatalities, permanent injury to personnel and undesired damage to property and the environment.

DoD created the Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Directorate in 1997 to have centralized responsibility for the development of non-lethal weapons and coordinate requirements among the services.

The GAO was asked to review the status of non-lethal weapons programs with DoD and the military services. The performance audit was conducted March 2008-April 2009. DoD provided information to the GAO in preparing the report.

The GAO recommends that DoD needs to improve its management process, policy and testing to enhance the ability to field operationally useful non-lethal weapons.

The DoD's response to the GAO report is now available. Download the DoD response [here](#). For more information on the JNLWP, visit <https://www.jnlwp.com>.