
COOPER-LED ARMED SERVICES PANEL RELEASES LANDMARK REPORT

Roles and Missions Panel

report looks at how the country's national security infrastructure can continue to succeed in the 21st century

Congressman Jim Cooper today announced the release of the final report of the House Armed Services' Roles and Missions Panel, chaired by Cooper, which in July 2007 was charged with analyzing the changing responsibilities of the U.S. military services.

The report of the Roles and Missions Panel represents the first branch-by-branch Congressional evaluation of threats facing American and the capability of our U.S. military to respond since the 1994 Commission on Roles and Missions.

"When you are the world's only superpower, how do you stay Number One? That is the simple question this Report tries to answer," Cooper wrote in the report's introductory letter. "In this volume, my colleagues and I want to challenge our colleagues and fellow citizens to join us in rethinking national security."

The 96-page report is a series of discussions and essays divided into three main categories:

- Inter-agency problems of coordination on nation-building, Africom, and the use of American soft power.

- Pentagon-wide problems of procurement, management and strategic vision.

- Inter-service rivalry over which branch of the military controls drones, airlift, or even the infantry;

"We do not attempt to define the wisest foreign or military policies, but to start probing some of the U.S. institutional weaknesses in the implementation of any security policy. American strength requires that we are able to achieve our policy goals," Cooper wrote.

"Normally confined to the Pentagon, the recent need for nation-building has broadened security thinking to agencies outside the Department of Defense. The task of our "Panel on Roles and Missions" is to examine the roles of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard, as well as the particular missions of the Armed Services, Intelligence Agencies, State Department, the National Security Council and other agencies, in protecting American security."

Cooper has served on the House Armed Services Committee since his return to Congress in 2003. The panel also included Rep. Phil Gingrey (R-GA), Ranking Member, and Reps. Rick Larsen (D-WA), Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY), Joe Sestak (D-PA), Geoff Davis (R-KY) and Michael Conaway (R-TX).

The entire Roles and Missions Report can be viewed here .

In anticipation of and since the release of the report, a number of media outlets have discussed the work of the Roles and Missions Panel. Below are some of those news stories, the first of which is an essay Congressman Cooper penned for the Armed Forces Journal.

- Request for proposals By U.S. Rep. Jim Cooper; Armed Forces Journal

- Report calls for roles and missions debate By William H. McMichael; Military Times

- Congress: Why should each military branch get same budget? By Gordon Lubold; The Christian Science Monitor

- This Week in Defense News with Vago Muradian WUSA-9 Washington, DC; 3/2/08 episode

On March 11 the Center for Strategic and International Studies hosted a discussion on the Roles and Missions report. Cooper and Rep. Phil Gingrey, who served as the Panel's Ranking Republican, discuss the report and field questions from veteran defense officials and experts in the audience.

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