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# Defense Report

AUSA



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## **Army Ammunition Requirements — No Bullets, No Successful Battle**

In the event of an attack by Soviet forces, the military success of the NATO alliance will depend heavily on the defensive stand taken by the one-third of our active Army now deployed in Europe, their timely reinforcement by divisions from the United States, and the sufficiency of munitions and other consumable supplies in the theater. Presently, one of the weakest links in the sustainability chain is a critical shortage of ammunition. Army field commanders continually identify inadequate ammunition resources as a major constraint on their combat capabilities.

There has been much talk of late concerning the high quality of young people coming into the Army and of the excellent training and modern equipment they are fielding. Unfortunately, the best trained and equipped Army in the world cannot fight without ammunition. So much of the shortfall is in the more modern munitions which provide increased firepower but at unit costs which inhibit large inventories.

The Army also has the predicament of attempting to fund increases in its war reserve ammunition stockpiles from an ever diminishing share of the defense budget. Finally, there is the self-inflicted wound whereby the Army uses its ammunition account to help balance cuts in other parts of its budget made by the Department of Defense and the final budget authority — Congress.

The lack of reserve ammunition in our Army units seriously diminishes their ability to carry their share of the defense of the Western world.

The Army asked for funds to improve the posture of its ammunition war reserve stocks in the 1985 budget request, but even before Congress had a chance to vote on it, this request was reduced by more than \$185 million. These war reserves are absolutely necessary to support the worldwide commitment of Army forces with the most modern munitions available. The Army knows it cannot have everything it needs at once, but a request for something as basic as ammunition should be taken more seriously. Without ammunition, our Army could soon become a paper tiger.