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*Funding for Military and Peacekeeping Operations: Recent
History and Precedents*

Jeffrey Chamberlin, Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division

Updated November 7, 2003

Abstract. This report examines 46 cases since FY1990 in which Congress approved funding for combat or peacekeeping operations using regular appropriations, supplemental appropriations, or a combination of the two. The report shows that since 1990, Congress generally has funded combat operations with supplemental appropriations. In initial stages of post-combat peacekeeping operations, however, Congress has tended to rely on a combination of supplemental and regular appropriations. As peacekeeping operations have become ongoing, congress has switched to using regular appropriations.

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November 7, 2003

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Funding for Military and Peacekeeping Operations: Recent History and Precedents

Summary

Congress recently completed action on the Bush Administration's FY2004 supplemental budget request to fund continuing military operations and reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan. It was signed into law, P.L. 108-106, on November 6, 2003. A major issue in the congressional debate on this, and other such supplementals of the past, is whether military and peacekeeping operations should be funded with supplemental requests or via the regular defense appropriations process. Some Members of Congress have urged the President to include the costs of current and future operations in Iraq and Afghanistan in the Department of Defense's (DOD's) regular appropriations, arguing that these are now ongoing operations that should be planned for and funded in the annual defense budget. Others prefer supplementals due to the unpredictability of military and peacekeeping circumstances in Iraq and Afghanistan. This unpredictability, they argue, makes it extremely difficult to estimate the costs of either type of operation in advance.

This report examines 46 cases since FY1990 in which Congress approved funding for combat or peacekeeping operations using regular appropriations, supplemental appropriations, or a combination of the two. The report shows that since 1990, Congress generally has funded combat operations with supplemental appropriations. In initial stages of post-combat peacekeeping operations, however, Congress has tended to rely on a combination of supplemental and regular appropriations. As peacekeeping operations have become ongoing, Congress has switched to using regular appropriations.

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Funding for Military and Peacekeeping Operations: Recent History and Precedents

Introduction

Congress recently completed action on the Bush Administration's FY2004 supplemental budget request to fund continuing military operations and reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan.¹ A major issue in the congressional debate on this, and other such supplementals of the past, is whether military and peacekeeping operations should be funded with supplemental requests or via the regular defense appropriations process. Some Members of Congress have urged the President to include the costs of current and future operations in Iraq and Afghanistan in the Department of Defense's (DOD's) regular appropriations, arguing that these are now ongoing operations that should be planned for and funded in the annual defense budget. Others prefer supplementals due to the unpredictability of military and peacekeeping circumstances in Iraq and Afghanistan. This unpredictability, they argue, makes it extremely difficult to estimate the costs of either type of operation in advance.

This report examines 46 cases since FY1990 in which Congress approved funding for combat or peacekeeping operations using regular appropriations, supplemental appropriations, or a combination of the two. Table 1 shows that since 1990, Congress generally has funded combat operations with supplemental appropriations. In initial post-combat peacekeeping operations, however, Congress has tended to rely on a combination of supplemental and regular appropriations. As peacekeeping operations have become ongoing, Congress has switched to using regular appropriations.

Initial Appropriations: Usually Supplementals

Examining the funding patterns for combat operations in the First Gulf War, Somalia, Haiti, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Operation Iraqi Freedom shows they were all funded initially with supplemental appropriations. In each case, the President requested supplemental funding shortly after operations were underway, and Congress approved the requests within months.

¹ President Bush signed P.L. 108-106, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense and for the Reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan, into law on November 6, 2003. For more information on the supplemental, see CRS Report RL32090, *FY2004 Supplemental Appropriations for Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Global War on Terrorism: Military Operations and Reconstruction Assistance*, by Stephen Daggett.

The only exception to this pattern is Bosnia, where United States' involvement began in 1993 with a humanitarian airlift. DOD funded this airlift using resources previously appropriated by Congress in FY1993 regular appropriations.² In FY1995, when the United States first launched airstrikes in support of U.N. peacekeepers, DOD used a combination of supplemental appropriations and FY1995 regular appropriations to fund combat operations. Thus, although supplemental appropriations were not used to fund the United States' initial involvement in Bosnia, Congress did turn to supplemental appropriations to fund combat and later peacekeeping operations after the initial humanitarian airlift.

The Transition to Regular Appropriations

Table 1 suggests that in the past decade, Congress generally has funded combat operations with supplemental appropriations and ongoing peacekeeping operations with regular appropriations. Each operation, however, has gone through an interim period of initial post-combat peacekeeping in which Congress has used different combinations of supplemental and regular appropriations.

Haiti and Kosovo

Congress funded combat operations in Haiti and Kosovo with supplemental appropriations in FY1994 and FY1999, respectively. In both cases, Congress also used supplemental appropriations to fund initial post-combat peacekeeping. In Haiti, Congress funded peacekeeping through the remainder of FY1994 and all of FY1995 with supplemental appropriations, and switched to regular appropriations in FY1996. Similarly, Congress funded FY1999 post-combat peacekeeping in Kosovo with supplemental appropriations, and continued to fund peacekeeping in Kosovo with supplemental appropriations in FY2000. In FY2001, however, Congress switched to using regular appropriations to fund operations in Kosovo. Regular appropriations have also been used in FY2002 and FY2003 as peacekeeping has remained ongoing.

Bosnia

FY1995 combat operations in Bosnia were funded mostly with supplemental appropriations, and since FY1999 ongoing peacekeeping operations have been funded with regular appropriations. From FY1995 to FY1998, however, a mixture of supplemental and regular appropriations was used to fund peacekeeping operations. In FY1995 and FY1996, this mixture consisted of supplemental funding and the use of previously appropriated funds. In FY1997 and FY1998, both supplemental and regular appropriations were used.

² For a detailed explanation of how DOD "absorbs" and "transfers" previously appropriated funds, see CRS Report 98-823 F, *Military Contingency Funding for Bosnia, Southwest Asia, and Other Operations: Questions and Answers*, by Nina Serafino.

The First Gulf War and the “No-Fly” Zones

Funding for the First Gulf War and the “No-Fly” zones established in Southwest Asia after the war underwent a transition from supplemental to regular appropriations, but it was over the course of 11 years. The long duration of the operations and the use of some regular appropriations to fund combat during the First Gulf War distinguish these operations from Bosnia, Kosovo, and Haiti.

Operation Desert Shield for the First Gulf War was initially funded with supplemental appropriations that were included in the FY1991 continuing resolution. The next funding for Operation Desert Shield, consisting of \$1 billion, was included in the FY1991 regular Defense Appropriations Act from amounts contributed by allies. This use of regular appropriations early in the Gulf War was contrary to the use of supplemental appropriations to fund combat operations in Bosnia, Kosovo, Haiti, Afghanistan, and Operation Iraqi Freedom. However, it may reflect congressional use of the funding vehicle that was immediately available to cover the initial costs of the operation. The next and largest appropriations for the First Gulf War were included in the FY1991 Desert Shield/Desert Storm supplemental, which was signed into law on March 22, 1991. The size of this supplemental appropriation (\$42.6 billion) suggests that the \$1 billion included in FY1991 regular appropriations was indeed an exception, rather than a significant change, to the practice of funding combat operations with supplemental appropriations.

The “No-Fly” zones (Southwest Asia operations) following the First Gulf War were funded at least partially with supplemental appropriations for 7 years, the longest use of supplemental appropriations in any of the cases examined. Unlike Kosovo and Haiti, the “No-Fly” zones did not progress directly from supplemental to regular appropriations as they became ongoing operations. Instead, they were funded partially with supplemental appropriations in FY1992 and FY1993 and fully with supplemental appropriations in FY1994 and FY1995. In FY1996, Congress used regular appropriations to fund the “No-Fly” zones. At this point, rather than continuing to use regular appropriations, Congress returned to a combination of regular and supplemental appropriations from FY1997 through FY1999. In FY2000 and FY2001, regular appropriations were used again.

Thus, although Desert Shield/Desert Storm and the “No-Fly” zones began with supplemental appropriations and ended with regular appropriations, the 7-year interim between those points differed from the interim between combat operations and ongoing peacekeeping operations in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Haiti. Not only was this interim longer in the case of the “No-Fly” zones, but it also provided two instances where Congress returned to either partial or full supplemental funding after having used only regular appropriations during the prior fiscal year.

Recent Operations in Afghanistan and Iraq

According to the President, the United States concluded major military operations in Afghanistan in December, 2001 and in Iraq on May 1, 2003.³ Except for funds appropriated for Afghanistan in the FY2003 Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, both operations have been funded to date using supplemental appropriations, including the recently enacted FY2004 supplemental. Although the President has declared the end of major combat in both operations, low intensity conflict is still prevalent, making it unclear whether Iraq and Afghanistan can yet be referred to as ongoing peacekeeping operations. Going forward, Congress might designate a point at which an operation becomes ongoing, and thus merits funding in the regular appropriations process.

³ “President Bush Announces that Combat Operations in Iraq Have Ended”, *White House Press*, May 1, 2003.

Table 1: Methods of Funding for Wars and Contingency Operations, First Persian Gulf War to Operation Iraqi Freedom

Notes: Please note that certain operations, such as Operation Desert Shield, were funded more than once in the same fiscal year. An asterisk indicates that DOD covered some of the cost by using existing resources that were originally programmed for other purposes.

Name of Conflict or Operation	Type of Operation	Fiscal Year	Type of Appropriation		Notes
			Regular	Supplemental	
Desert Shield	combat	1991		X	P.L. 101-403; Supplemental Appropriations for FY1990 ^a
Desert Shield	combat	1991	X		P.L. 101-511; In DOD's FY1991 appropriations, Congress included \$1 billion from amounts contributed by allies for Desert Shield
Desert Shield & Desert Storm	combat	1991		X	P.L. 102-28; FY1991 Desert Shield/Desert Storm Supplemental Appropriations
Southwest Asia (SWA)	peacekeeping	1992		X*	P.L. 102-368
SWA	peacekeeping	1993		X*	P.L. 103-50
SWA	peacekeeping	1994		X	P.L. 103-211
SWA	peacekeeping	1995		X	P.L. 104-6
SWA	peacekeeping	1996	X*		P.L. 104-61; Costs were not originally included in P.L. 104-61, but were later covered using appropriations from P.L. 104-61.
SWA	peacekeeping	1997		X*	P.L. 105-18
SWA	peacekeeping	1997	X		P.L. 104-208; Part of FY1997 costs funded in regular FY1997 Defense Appropriations Act

^a FY1990 supplemental appropriations for Operation Desert Shield were added to the FY1991 Continuing Resolution . Both are contained in P.L. 101-403.

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Name of Conflict or Operation	Type of Operation	Fiscal Year	Type of Appropriation		Notes
			Regular	Supplemental	
SWA	peacekeeping	1998		X	P.L. 105-174
SWA	peacekeeping	1998	X		P.L. 105-56; Part of FY1998 costs funded in regular FY1998 Defense Appropriations Act
SWA	peacekeeping	1999		X	P.L. 105-277
SWA	peacekeeping	1999	X		P.L. 105-262; Part of FY1999 costs funded in regular FY1999 Defense Appropriations Act
SWA	peacekeeping	2000	X		P.L. 106-79
SWA	peacekeeping	2001	X		P.L. 106-259
Haiti	combat/ peacekeeping	1994		X	P.L. 103-211
Haiti	peacekeeping	1995		X	P.L. 104-6
Haiti	peacekeeping	1996	X		P.L. 104-61
Somalia	peacekeeping	1993		X	P.L. 103-50
Somalia	peacekeeping	1993	X*		A portion of FY1993 costs were covered by funds in regular defense appropriations that were not rescinded as planned.
Somalia	peacekeeping	1994		X	P.L. 103-211
Bosnia	peacekeeping	1993	X*		P.L. 102-484
Bosnia	peacekeeping	1994		X*	P.L. 103-211
Bosnia	combat/ peacekeeping	1995		X*	P.L. 104-6
Bosnia	peacekeeping	1996		X*	P.L. 104-134
Bosnia	peacekeeping	1997	X		P.L. 104-208
Bosnia	peacekeeping	1997		X	P.L. 105-18
Bosnia	peacekeeping	1998	X		P.L. 105-56
Bosnia	peacekeeping	1998		X	P.L. 105-174
Bosnia	peacekeeping	1999	X		P.L. 105-262
Bosnia	peacekeeping	2000	X		P.L. 106-79

Name of Conflict or Operation	Type of Operation	Fiscal Year	Type of Appropriation		Notes
			Regular	Supplemental	
Bosnia	peacekeeping	2001	X		P.L. 106-259
Bosnia	peacekeeping	2002	X		P.L. 107-117
Bosnia	peacekeeping	2003	X		P.L. 107-248
Kosovo	combat/ peacekeeping	1999		X	P.L. 106-31
Kosovo	peacekeeping	2000		X	P.L. 106-246; FY2000 supplemental request included in FY2001 Military Construction Appropriations act
Kosovo	peacekeeping	2001	X		P.L. 106-259
Kosovo	peacekeeping	2002	X		P.L. 107-117
Kosovo	peacekeeping	2003	X		P.L. 107-248
Afghanistan	combat	2001		X	P.L. 107-38; FY2001 Emergency Terrorism Response Supplemental appropriated in P.L. 107-38 and allocated by the President
Afghanistan	combat	2002		X	P.L. 107-38; Separate chapter for supplemental, using funds appropriated in P.L. 107-38, included in P.L. 107-117, FY2002 Defense Appropriations Act.
Afghanistan	combat	2002		X	P.L. 107-206
Afghanistan	combat	2003	X		P.L. 108-7; FY2003 Consolidated Appropriations Resolution
Afghanistan	combat	2003		X	P.L. 108-11
Iraq	combat	2003		X	P.L. 108-11
Iraq	combat/ peacekeeping	2004		X	P.L. 108-106

Sources: This table was conceived of and partially assembled by Amy Belasco and Nina Serafino of CRS, using the cited public laws and corresponding congressional reports. For more specific cost information on Bosnia and Southwest Asia, see CRS Report 98-823 F, *Military Contingency Funding for Bosnia, Southwest Asia, and Other Operations: Questions and Answers* by Nina Serafino. For more

specific information on funding for Kosovo, see CRS Report RS20161, *Kosovo Military Operations: Costs and Congressional Action on Funding*, by Stephen Daggett. Specific information on Persian Gulf War funding can be found in CRS Issue Brief IB91019, *Persian Gulf War: U.S. Costs and Allied Financial Contributions*, by Stephen Daggett and Gary J. Pagliano.