



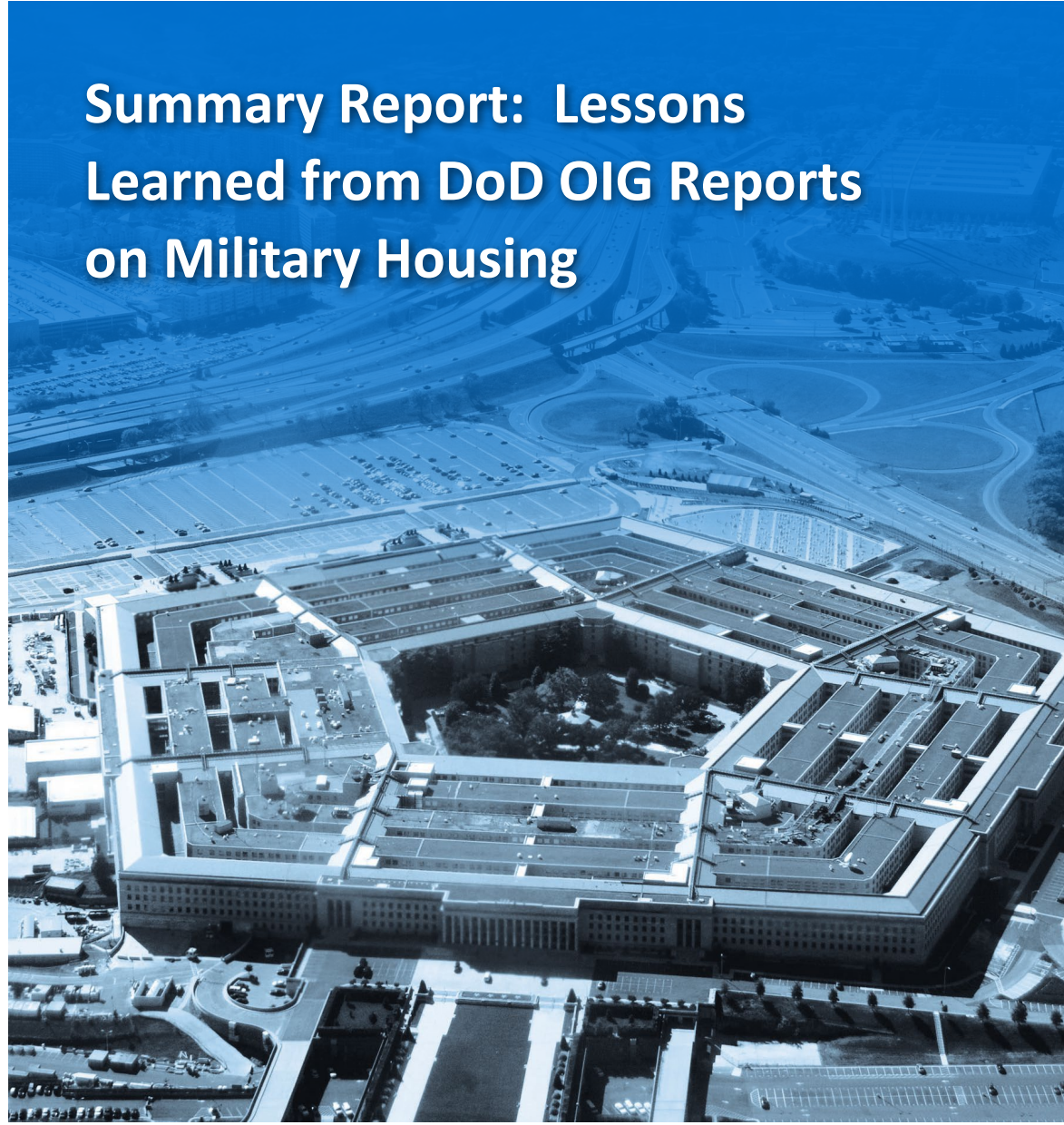
INSPECTOR GENERAL

U.S. Department of Defense

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Summary Report: Lessons Learned from DoD OIG Reports on Military Housing



INDEPENDENCE ★ INTEGRITY ★ EXCELLENCE ★ TRANSPARENCY





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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
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February 10, 2026

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR ACQUISITION AND SUSTAINMENT
UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS
AUDITOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
AUDITOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
AUDITOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

SUBJECT: Summary Report: Lessons Learned from DoD OIG Reports on Military Housing
(Report No. DODIG-2026-052)

In October 2025, the Secretary of Defense established the Barracks Task Force to address substandard living conditions and improve the quality of life for Service members. To support this critical initiative, we have prepared this summary report to provide the Department, Congress, and the Barracks Task Force with current and historical context from our extensive past oversight work on military housing. Drawing from nine DoD OIG reports issued between January 1, 2020, and December 31, 2025, this report highlights the recurring themes and systemic issues we have identified regarding military housing oversight, physical safety, and management. This report is intended for informational use; therefore, it does not contain new recommendations or require management comments.

This report of lessons learned is complemented by an ongoing audit on DoD's oversight of barracks condition improvement.* The objective of this audit is to conduct a high-level programmatic review that assesses the DoD's oversight and implementation of the directives in the November 2024 Deputy Secretary of Defense memorandum on improving barracks conditions. Through this review, we will evaluate the effectiveness of DoD guidance, assess the comprehensiveness of each Military Service's long-term maintenance plans, and assess the reported progress made in meeting habitability standards through targeted upgrades in prioritized barracks.

If you have any questions, please contact me at [REDACTED].

Richard B. Vasquez
Assistant Inspector General for Audit
Readiness and Global Operations

* Project No. D2025-D000RK-0130.000, "Audit of the DoD's Oversight and Military Services' Implementation of Barracks Improvement Directives," announced on July 14, 2025.



Introduction

Adequate military housing is crucial for each Service member’s well-being, morale, and mission readiness, and it directly impacts retention and the ability of U.S. forces to focus on their duties. Recognizing this, the Secretary of Defense established the Barracks Task Force in October 2025 to address substandard living conditions and improve quality of life for Service members. In direct support of this initiative, we prepared this summary report to provide the Department, Congress, and the Barracks Task Force with critical current context, historical context, and lessons learned from our past oversight work.

Military housing is divided into two broad categories—Government-owned and Government-controlled military housing and privatized military housing.¹ Military housing is further divided into family housing and unaccompanied housing. Family housing is military housing for military members, DoD civilians, or DoD-sponsored civilians and their dependent family members. Unaccompanied housing is military housing, such as dormitories and barracks, for military members who either do not have or do not live with dependent family members. Addressing deficiencies in military housing ensures a safe, healthy, and supportive environment for those who serve and their families. Figure 1 shows examples of Government-owned and Government-controlled military housing and privatized military housing, which were both located on military installations.



Figure 1. Exterior of Blanchard Barracks, Unaccompanied Housing, Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, Washington, D.C., (left), Observed January 31, 2023, and Exterior of 521 Truman Annex, Privatized Housing, Naval Air Station Key West, FL, (right), Observed February 12, 2025
Source: The DoD OIG.

¹ Government-owned and Government-controlled military housing is owned, managed, and maintained by the DoD. Privatized military housing is owned, operated, and maintained by private-sector companies.

To identify recurring challenges, we reviewed nine DoD OIG reports issued between January 1, 2020, and December 31, 2025. The lessons learned reported herein are intended to help responsible DoD officials, including the Barracks Task Force, avoid past pitfalls and implement effective, lasting improvements to military housing.

Lessons Learned from Past DoD OIG Reports

We reviewed DoD OIG audit and evaluation reports from the previous 6 years to identify recurring challenges related to military housing. We identified lessons learned in nine DoD OIG reports issued between January 1, 2020, and December 31, 2025, related to military housing. The nine publicly available reports included 51 recommendations, of which 12 are closed, 38 are resolved and open, and 1 is unresolved.² See the Appendix for reports reviewed, lessons learned identified by report, and ongoing projects.³

Ensuring suitable and well-maintained military housing, which includes robust oversight and effective management of the housing as well as open communication with tenants, is critical to support each Service member's well-being, enhance their morale, and promote military readiness. Since December 2019, Congress has passed multiple National Defense Authorization Acts (NDAA) with provisions in these areas to reform military housing. Previous DoD OIG reports also identified recurring challenges in these key areas.

As identified in prior DoD OIG reports, to ensure adequate, safe, and well-managed military housing, DoD officials should revisit and apply the following lessons learned.

- **Strengthen Oversight of Military Housing.** DoD officials should update policies to ensure robust oversight of both Government-owned and Government-controlled military housing and privatized military housing. This includes enforcing health and safety standards in Government properties and holding private companies accountable to their contractual obligations. The following reports highlight our past work identifying significant gaps in these areas.
 - Report DODIG-2025-154, "Audit of the Military Services' Oversight of Privatized Military Housing Maintenance." We determined that the Military Services were not effectively overseeing privatized housing maintenance, with local officials failing to conduct proper inspections or monitor work orders. We recommended that the DoD provide clearer inspection guidance and that the Services establish controls to verify that proper oversight is performed. Those recommendations are resolved but remain open as of the date of this report.

² Resolved and open recommendations are recommendations that management has agreed to implement, but for which corrective actions have not been completed. Unresolved recommendations are recommendations that management either has not agreed to implement or has not proposed actions that will address the recommendation.

Not all 51 recommendations directly relate to the lessons learned in this report.

³ See Table 2 in the Appendix for a list of reports that identified the lessons learned in this report.

- Report DODIG-2025-045, “Evaluation of the DoD’s Health, Safety, and Environmental Hazard Identification and Remediation in Military Housing.” We determined that the DoD failed to fully implement key health, safety, and environmental military housing requirements that were mandated by Congress in the FY 2020 NDAA. We recommended that DoD leadership develop a comprehensive plan to correct these deficiencies, update its housing policies to incorporate all NDAA requirements, and assess the feasibility of applying these standards and alternative funding models to Government-owned unaccompanied housing. Those recommendations are resolved but remain open as of the date of this report.
- **Enhance Communication with Residents.** DoD officials and private housing companies must improve communication to address resident concerns, provide timely updates, and solicit feedback. Our past work has identified critical failures, from not warning of immediate dangers to not collecting the data needed to identify long-term health trends. The following reports highlight our past work identifying significant gaps in these areas.
 - Report DODIG-2024-121, “Management Advisory: Concerns with Elevated Radon Levels at Naval Support Activity Naples.” We determined that officials at U.S. Naval Support Activity Naples, Italy, failed to inform nearly 4,000 personnel and their families of known, elevated radon risks in off-base housing. We recommended that the command update its communication plan to ensure all residents are proactively warned of such environmental dangers. Six recommendations are closed. Four recommendations are resolved but remain open as of the date of this report.
 - Report DODIG-2022-078, “Audit of Medical Conditions of Residents in Privatized Military Housing.” We determined that the DoD could not link resident health problems to specific housing units due to inadequate data collection. We recommended that the Services be required to update the Military Housing System, creating the comprehensive resident history needed to analyze and communicate potential health risks. One recommendation is closed and two recommendations are resolved but remain open as of the date of this report.
- **Enforce Standards and Address Safety Concerns.** DoD officials should consistently enforce habitability standards to ensure all military housing is safe and sanitary. Our past work reveals significant failures in these areas, including both poor oversight of private partners and neglect of Government-owned facilities. The following report highlights our past work identifying significant gaps in these areas.
 - Report DODIG-2026-034, “Management Advisory: Inadequate Housing of Soldiers Supporting the Southern Border Mission.” We determined that soldiers assigned to the Joint Task Force–Southern Border were housed in unsafe Government-owned barracks that violated Army regulations.

At Fort Bliss and the Doña Ana Range Complex in New Mexico, we observed significant health hazards. Figure 2 shows the nonfunctional toilets and leaking raw sewage. This highlighted a systemic failure to track and resolve critical deficiencies. Therefore, we recommended that the U.S. Northern Command develop a corrective action plan to ensure all Joint Task Force–Southern Border housing meets minimum standards and implement a policy requiring semiannual housing assessments. One recommendation is closed. One recommendation is resolved but remains open as of the date of this report.



Figure 2. Dried Raw Sewage on the Floor of a Bathroom at the Doña Ana Range Complex in Chaparral, NM, Observed on July 27, 2025
Source: The DoD OIG.

- Report DODIG-2025-154, “Audit of the Military Services’ Oversight of Privatized Military Housing Maintenance.” We determined that the Military Services failed to properly oversee privatized housing maintenance, with officials missing critical safety hazards like blocked emergency exits during inspections, leading to missed safety hazards. For example, during a formal inspection at Randolph Air Force Base in Universal City, TX, an official certified a window as a viable emergency exit even though the screen was screwed directly into the frame, completely blocking egress. Figure 3 shows the screen screwed into the window frame at the Randolph Air Force Base. We recommended providing clearer guidance, establishing stronger oversight controls, and ensuring housing offices are properly staffed and equipped to perform their duties. Those recommendations are resolved but remain open as of the date of this report.



Figure 3. Screen Screwed into Window Frame at Randolph Air Force Base in Universal City, TX, Observed on June 13, 2024
Source: The DoD OIG.

- **Ensure Adequate Funding for Housing.** DoD officials should allocate and execute sufficient funding for the maintenance and oversight of all military housing. The following reports highlight our past work identifying that a lack of adequate funding and resources for Military Housing Offices led to critical oversight failures.
 - Report DODIG-2025-154, “Audit of the Military Services’ Oversight of Privatized Military Housing Maintenance.” We determined that the Military Services did not adequately staff their Military Housing Offices to ensure effective oversight of privatized housing. This staffing shortage resulted in critical oversight failures. Therefore, we recommended that the DoD reevaluate Military Housing Office requirements and conduct a workforce study to determine the appropriate staffing levels for this critical mission. Those recommendations are resolved but remain open as of the date of this report.
 - Report DODIG-2020-086, “Followup Audit on Department of Defense and Military Department Corrective Actions Taken in Response to Department of Defense Office of Inspector General Reports on Military Housing.” We determined that the DoD and the Military Departments did not implement agreed-upon corrective actions needed to improve military housing and to address the remaining 10 recommendations. Therefore, we encouraged the DoD to implement corrective actions to address all open recommendations

such as reevaluating Military Housing Office requirements and conducting a workforce study to determine the appropriate staffing levels for critical missions. Although we did not make any new recommendations in this report, six recommendations we reviewed during this audit are closed. Four recommendations are resolved but remain open as of the date of this report.

Conclusion

For years, our oversight work has repeatedly highlighted the same core problems in military housing, recurring failures in oversight, standards enforcement, resident communication, and resource allocation. This summary report provides the Barracks Task Force and DoD leadership with a clear roadmap of past pitfalls to avoid. The well-being of our Service members and the integrity of the military housing program depend on addressing the symptoms of neglect and fundamentally correcting the root causes of these persistent issues. Applying these lessons learned is the critical first step toward ensuring the Barracks Task Force's efforts result in lasting, meaningful improvements for our Service members and their families.

Appendix

Reports Reviewed, Lessons Learned, and Ongoing Projects

We reviewed DoD OIG audit and evaluation reports from the previous 6 years to identify recurring challenges related to military housing. Table 1 lists the DoD OIG reports we reviewed to prepare this summary report, Table 2 lists the reports we reviewed and associated lessons learned, and Table 3 lists the ongoing audit and evaluation projects related to military housing. We are providing the tables as a resource for DoD management. The reports listed in each table contain additional details related to the lessons learned and past challenges the DoD OIG identified. Unrestricted DoD OIG reports can be accessed at <http://www.dodig.mil/reports.html/>.

Table 1. Comprehensive List of the Nine DoD OIG Reports Reviewed

Report No.	Title	Issue Date
DODIG-2026-034	Management Advisory: Inadequate Housing of Soldiers Supporting the Southern Border Mission	December 16, 2025
DODIG-2025-154	Audit of the Military Services' Oversight of Privatized Military Housing Maintenance	September 8, 2025
DODIG-2025-045	Evaluation of the DoD's Health, Safety, and Environmental Hazard Identification and Remediation in Military Housing	November 20, 2024
DODIG-2024-121	Management Advisory: Concerns with Elevated Radon Levels at Naval Support Activity Naples	August 15, 2024
DODIG-2022-139	Evaluation of the Department of Defense's Reform of Privatized Military Family Housing Oversight Related to Health, Safety, and Environmental Hazards	September 29, 2022
DODIG-2022-078	Audit of Medical Conditions of Residents in Privatized Military Housing	April 1, 2022
DODIG-2022-004	Evaluation of the Department of Defense's Implementation of Oversight Provisions of Privatized Military Housing	October 21, 2021
DODIG-2020-086	Followup Audit on Department of Defense and Military Department Corrective Actions Taken in Response to Department of Defense Office of Inspector General Reports on Military Housing	June 5, 2020
DODIG-2020-082	Evaluation of the DoD's Management of Health and Safety Hazards in Government-Owned and Government-Controlled Military Family Housing	April 30, 2020

Source: The DoD OIG.

Table 2. Lessons Learned Categorized by Areas Identified in the Nine DoD OIG Reports Reviewed

Report No.	Strengthen Oversight of Housing	Enhance Communication with Residents	Enforce Standards and Address Safety Concerns	Ensure Adequate Funding for Housing
DODIG-2026-034	X	X	X	
DODIG-2025-154	X		X	X
DODIG-2025-045	X	X	X	
DODIG-2024-121	X	X	X	
DODIG-2022-139	X	X	X	
DODIG-2022-078	X	X	X	
DODIG-2022-004	X	X	X	
DODIG-2020-086	X		X	X
DODIG-2020-082	X	X	X	

Note: The “X” indicates the lesson learned categorized by areas identified in that specific report.

Source: The DoD OIG.

Table 3. List of Ongoing DoD OIG Projects Related to Military Housing

Report No.	Title	Project Announcement Date
D2025-D000RJ-0034.000	Audit of the DoD’s Support for Illegal Alien Holding Operations at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay	January 5, 2026
D2025-DEV0SR-0049.001	Management Advisory: Immediate Attention Required to Protect DoD Infrastructure in the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Area of Responsibility	August 6, 2025
D2025-D000RK-0130.000	Audit of the DoD’s Oversight and Military Services’ Implementation of Barracks Improvement Directives	July 14, 2025
D2025-DEV0HC-0123.000	Evaluation of the U.S. Northern Command Joint Task Force–Southern Border’s Sustainment Operations for Units Deployed to the Southern Border	June 24, 2025
D2025-DEV0SR-0011.001	Management Advisory: Evaluation of the Department of Defense’s Actions to Address Mold Hazards in Naval Air Station Key West Privatized Military Housing	March 19, 2025
D2025-DEV0SR-0011.000	Evaluation of the Department of Defense’s Actions to Address Mold Hazards in Privatized Military Housing	November 25, 2024

Source: The DoD OIG.

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