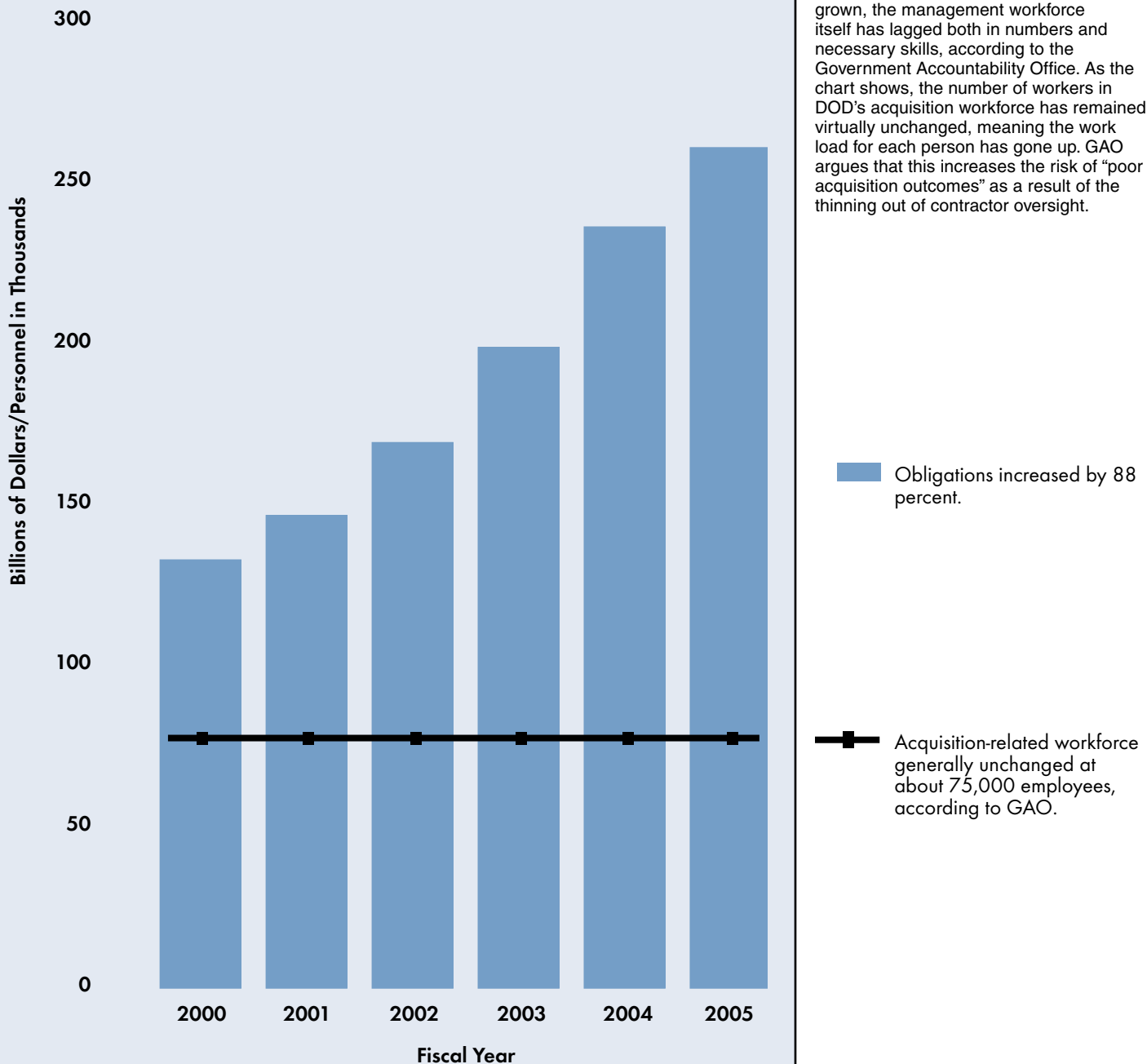


The Chart Page

By Tamar A. Mehuron, Associate Editor

Tidal Wave?

Contracts, Workforce Go in Opposite Directions



In recent years, DOD has presided over an increase in spending on goods and services, the amount of which has risen from about \$140 billion in 2000 to some \$270 billion in 2005 (the last year of complete data). That's an 88 percent boost in five years.

Even as the magnitude of DOD acquisition management needs has grown, the management workforce itself has lagged both in numbers and necessary skills, according to the Government Accountability Office. As the chart shows, the number of workers in DOD's acquisition workforce has remained virtually unchanged, meaning the work load for each person has gone up. GAO argues that this increases the risk of "poor acquisition outcomes" as a result of the thinning out of contractor oversight.

Sources: Contract obligations: DD350 database. Workforce: GAO analysis of OPM data of 14 acquisition-related job series.