

# Status of Coast Guard Heavy Polar Icebreaker Acquisition: GAO DHS

## Delays and cost overruns plague program

The Coast Guard's heavy polar icebreaker acquisition program has been plagued by delays and cost overruns. A recent report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that the program is now estimated to cost \$12.9 billion, up from the original estimate of \$9.2 billion. The GAO report also found that the program is now scheduled to deliver the first icebreaker in 2029, four years later than originally planned.



## Coast Guard Acquisitions: Status of Coast Guard's Heavy Polar Icebreaker Acquisition (GAO - DHS)

by Robert E. Quinn

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The delays and cost overruns are due to a number of factors, including the complexity of the icebreakers, the lack of a qualified shipyard, and the Trump administration's decision to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific

Partnership (TPP). The TPP would have provided the Coast Guard with access to lower-cost steel from South Korea.

The delays and cost overruns have raised concerns about the Coast Guard's ability to meet its mission in the Arctic. The Arctic is becoming increasingly important as the sea ice melts and new shipping routes open up. The Coast Guard needs icebreakers to ensure that these routes are safe and navigable.

### **GAO recommendations**

The GAO report made a number of recommendations to the Coast Guard, including:

- Develop a more realistic acquisition plan
- Identify a qualified shipyard
- Explore options for reducing costs
- Work with Congress to secure additional funding

The Coast Guard is currently working on implementing the GAO's recommendations. The Coast Guard has developed a new acquisition plan that includes a more realistic timeline and budget. The Coast Guard is also working with Congress to secure additional funding for the program.

The Coast Guard's heavy polar icebreaker acquisition program is a critical program for the United States. The icebreakers are needed to ensure that the United States can meet its mission in the Arctic. However, the program has been plagued by delays and cost overruns. The Coast Guard is

working to address these issues, but it is unclear if the program will be able to deliver the icebreakers on time and on budget.



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