

# Encouraging An Informed Citizenry:

Locating and Using Congressional Research Service Reports

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**Starr Hoffman**

Librarian for Digital Collections

University of North Texas Libraries

# What is a CRS Report?

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- published by the Congressional Research Service
- created by research specialists at CRS
- created for members of Congress
  - on topics relevant to current legislation
  - intended to provide objective research



# Sample CRS Report

Order Code RL33110

## CRS Report for Congress

Received through the CRS Web

### The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11

Updated September 22, 2006

Amy Belasco  
Specialist in National Defense  
Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division

Congressional Research Service ♦ The Library of Congress

#### The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11

##### Summary

Through FY2006, Congress has appropriated a total of about \$437 billion for military operations, base security, reconstruction, foreign aid, embassy costs, and veterans' health care for the three operations initiated since the 9/11 attacks: Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) covering Afghanistan and other Global War on Terror (GWOT) operations, Operation Noble Eagle (ONE) providing enhanced security at military bases, and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), Iraq.

In the last week of September 2006, the House and Senate are slated to consider the conference versions of the FY2007 defense appropriations bill, H.R. 5631, and the national defense authorization bill (H.R. 6122/S. 2766), both of which include an additional \$70 billion for war costs. This \$70 billion bridge fund is to cover war costs in the first half of the fiscal year plus \$23 billion for reset — to repair and replace war-worn equipment. The Administration is expected to submit a FY2007 supplemental for additional war costs some time next year.

If the FY2007 defense appropriation bill passes, total war appropriations for all three operations would reach about \$507 billion. Another \$2 billion is included in other appropriations bills for foreign and diplomatic operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and VA medical costs. In its July 2006 mid-session update, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) estimates that war funding in FY2007 will total \$110 billion, including bridge funding. Based on this OMB projection, cumulative war funding for all of FY2007 would reach about \$549 billion. OMB also assumes a \$30 billion bridge fund for FY2008.

DOD has not provided Congress with the individual costs of each operation. Based on previous spending and a rough allocation of the FY2007 bridge fund, CRS estimates that Iraq will receive about \$379 billion (78%), OEF about \$87 billion (20%), and enhanced base security about \$26 billion (5%), with about \$4 billion (1%) that CRS cannot allocate. Generally, about 91% of these funds are for DOD and about 8% are for foreign aid programs and embassy operations, with 1% for medical care for veterans and 1% are unallocated.

On a monthly basis, DOD spent an average of about \$6.4 billion for OIF, \$1.3 billion for OEF, and \$180 million for enhanced base security in FY2005. During FY2006, these monthly spending levels may increase to about \$8.0 billion for OIF and \$1.5 billion for OEF, an overall increase of 20%.

Based on an alternate path that assumes a drawdown from about 258,000 troops currently engaged in these operations to 74,000 in FY2010, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that war costs could total \$371 billion between FY2007 and FY2016. If that CBO estimate is added to funds already appropriated, total funding for Iraq and the GWOT could reach \$803 billion by 2016.<sup>4</sup> DOD's annual war funding rose from about \$73 billion in FY2004 to \$102 billion in FY2005, \$118 billion in FY2006, and is projected by OMB to drop to \$110 billion in FY2007. This report will be updated as warranted.

CRS-4

these differences in cost estimates, and problems with current budgeting methods and the quality of cost estimates.<sup>5</sup> It is not clear why these estimates differ.

##### War Appropriations: FY2001-FY2006

The total cost for all three operations — Iraq, Afghanistan, and other GWOT and enhanced security — has risen steeply since the 9/11 attacks primarily because of higher DOD spending in Iraq. Annual war appropriations more than doubled from about \$31 billion in FY2001-FY2002 to between \$74 and \$81 billion with the preparation for and invasion of Iraq in FY2003.<sup>6</sup> By FY2004, annual war funding had tripled over the FY2002 level to \$94 billion (see Table 1).

By FY2005, annual war-related appropriations increased to \$107 billion. If the FY2006 supplemental request is approved, annual funding will have risen from \$31 billion in FY2001-2002 — dedicated primarily to U.S. operations in Afghanistan — to \$122 billion in FY2006 for the continuation of Iraq and Operation Enduring Freedom and enhanced DOD security, a fourfold increase since the first year of operations (see Table 1).

Table 1. War-Related Funding, Total and By Operation:  
FY2001/FY2002-FY2006 Supplemental  
(in billions of dollars of budget authority)

Fiscal Year & Agency	FY01 & FY02	FY03	FY04 <sup>a</sup>	FY05 <sup>a</sup>	FY06 Total including FY2006 supp conf. (H.R. 4939) <sup>b</sup>	Cum. FY01-FY06 <sup>c</sup>
Defense	30.8	70.3 to 77.4 <sup>a</sup>	72.6	102.5	117.6	363.9 to 401.0 <sup>a</sup>
State AID	0.6	3.8	21.7	4.8	4.2	35.1
Veterans Affairs	0	0	0	0	0.7	0.7
Budget Authority	31.4	74.1 to 81.2 <sup>a</sup>	94.3	107.2	122.2	429.7 to 436.8 <sup>a</sup>
<b>By Operation: Iraq, Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), and Enhanced Security<sup>d</sup></b>						
Iraq	2.9 <sup>e</sup>	51.0	77.5	87.5	100.4	318.5
OEF	18.1	17.0	15.1	18.1	19.9	88.2
Enhanced Security	12.0	6.5	3.7	2.1	1.9	26.2
Unable to Allocate	0	3.5 <sup>a</sup>	0	0	0	3.9

<sup>4</sup> July 20, 2006 letter from Congressman Christopher Shays, Chair, Subcommittee on National Security Emerging Threats, and International Affairs, to Chair, House and Senate Armed Services Committees, Chair, House and Senate Appropriations Committees, Majority Leader House, President of the Senate, July 20, 2006. The hearing was held on July 18, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> The range is with and without about \$7.1 billion in DOD funds that CRS and GAO could not track.

# About CRS

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- public policy arm of the Library of Congress
- formed in 1914
- six interdisciplinary research divisions
  - American Law
  - Domestic Social Policy
  - Foreign Affairs Defense and Trade
  - Government and Finance
  - Information Research
  - Resources, Science and Industry

# About CRS

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- yearly output:
  - almost 1,000 new documents
  - about 4,000 revised documents
  - several different products
    - short reports
    - long reports
    - issue briefs
    - info packs
    - and others

# Current Public Access

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- only Congress can search the CRS website
- public access options:
  - request reports from their member of Congress
    - must know of a specific report's existence
    - cannot request reports based merely on a topic
  - can purchase from several third-party vendors
  - use one of the freely-provided CRS archives online
    - (see list in handout)

# Efforts Toward Public Access

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- 1991: effort to put reports online began
- legislation introduced into Congress:
  - 1998 (S. 1578, H.R. 3131)
  - twice in 1999 (S. 393, H.R. 654)
  - 2001 (S.R. 21)
  - twice in 2003 (S.R. 54, H.R. 3630)
  - 2007 (H.R. 2545); introduced May 24<sup>th</sup>
    - **The Congressional Research Accessibility Act**
    - official title: *"To make available on the Internet, for purposes of access and retrieval by the public, certain information available through the Congressional Research Service web site."*
    - reports made public within 30 - 40 days of internal publication
    - status: referred to the House Committee on House Administration
- this legislation has never passed both houses of Congress

# CRS Reports Archive at UNT

- over 10,000 reports available
- wide variety of subjects
- features:
  - browse by topic
  - full-text searching ability

The screenshot shows the 'CRS Reports' website interface. At the top, it says 'University of North Texas Libraries' and 'Congressional Research Service Reports'. The main heading is 'Advanced Search'. Below this, there are several search options: 'Find results with all of the words', 'with the exact phrase', 'with at least one of the words', and 'without the words'. Each option has a corresponding input field. There is also a '10 results' dropdown and a 'Find' button. At the bottom of the search area, there are 'Dates: (year):' and 'to:' fields. On the left side, there is a navigation menu with links to 'CRS Reports Home', 'Search CRS Reports', 'Browse CRS Reports', 'Related Resources', 'Contact Us/Suggest a Report', and 'Digital Collections of the Government Documents Department'. At the bottom left, there is contact information for the University of North Texas Libraries, including the address, phone, fax, and website URL.

The screenshot shows the 'Browse CRS Reports Archive by Subject' page. At the top, it says 'University of North Texas Libraries' and 'Congressional Research Service Reports'. The main heading is 'Browse CRS Reports Archive by Subject'. Below this, there is a list of subject categories with links: 'Abortion', 'Aged', 'Agriculture', 'Air pollution', 'Animals', 'Budgets', 'Business', 'Children', 'Civil liberties', 'Civil rights', 'Commemorations', 'Communications', 'Congress', 'Constitution', 'Consumers', 'Criminal justice', 'Defense economics', 'Defense policy', 'Disabled', 'Drug abuse', 'Economic policy', 'Elections', 'Elementary and secondary education', 'Emergency management', 'Energy', 'Environmental protection', 'Executive departments', 'Families', 'Finance', 'Food', 'Foreign aid', 'Foreign policy', 'Government employees', 'Government information', 'Hazardous substances', 'Health policy', 'Higher education', 'History', 'Housing', 'Humanities', 'Immigration', 'Infrastructure', 'Intellectual property', 'Intelligence activities', 'International affairs', 'International finance', 'Job training', 'Labor', 'Law', 'Marine resources', 'Medicine', 'Minorities', and 'Natural resources'. On the left side, there is a navigation menu with links to 'CRS Reports Home', 'Search CRS Reports', 'Browse CRS Reports', 'Related Resources', 'Contact Us/Suggest a Report', and 'Digital Collections of the Government Documents Department'. At the bottom left, there is contact information for the University of North Texas Libraries, including the address, phone, fax, and website URL.



# CRS Reports Archive at UNT

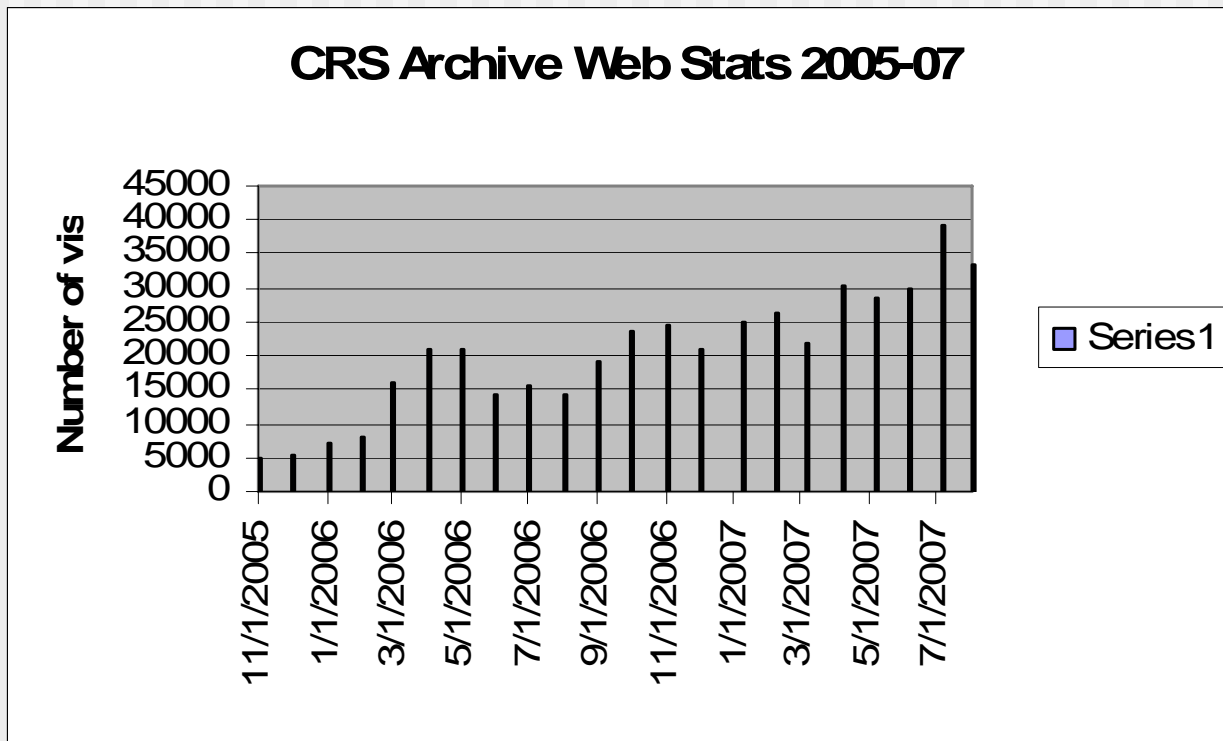
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## Basic Workflow

- Identify and capture reports
  - various RSS feeds, blogs
  - network with other CRS collections
  - emailed copies of reports
- Create metadata
- Subject classification
- OCR the PDF file
  - OCR: Optical Character Recognition software
  - enables full-text search capability
- Upload to archive

# UNT CRS Access Data

- Web usage statistics:
  - most visits in a single-day: 2,438 on 07/05/2007
  - average visits per month: 20,887



# UNT CRS Access Data

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- Popular reports:
  - RL33153: China Naval Modernization: Implications for US Naval Capabilities
  - IB97056: Products Liability Illegal Overview
  - IP0281G: Grace Commission

<http://digital.library.unt.edu/govdocs/crs/>

# Obtaining a CRS Report

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## Write Your Member of Congress

- find your Representative:
  - <http://www.house.gov/writerep/>
- find your Senator:
  - <http://www.senate.gov/>

# Writing Your Member of Congress

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- three-paragraph letter:
  1. state the purpose of the letter & who you are
  2. state why this report is important to you
    - (cite with the proper title & CRS report number)
  3. requesting to have the report sent to you

# Writing Your Member of Congress

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- addressing your Senator

The Honorable (full name)

(Room #) (Name) Senate Office Building

United States Senate

Washington, DC 20510

open the letter with, "Dear Senator:"

# Writing Your Member of Congress

---

- addressing your member of Congress

The Honorable (full name)

(Room #) (Name) House Office Building

United States House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

open the letter with, "Dear Representative:"

# Writing Your Member of Congress

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- addressing the **Chairperson of a Committee**:
  - Dear Mr. Chairman
  - Dear Madam Chairwoman
  
- addressing the **Speaker of the House**:
  - Dear Mr. Speaker
  - Dear Madam Speaker

Use these addresses regardless of letter format.



# ...Questions?

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- Contact:

Starr Hoffman

Librarian for Digital Collections  
Government Documents Department  
University of North Texas Libraries

[Starr.Hoffman@unt.edu](mailto:Starr.Hoffman@unt.edu)

940.565.4150

# geeky artist librarian DLC- InformedCitizenryCRS\_Handout

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Log in

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## Fall 2007 Federal Depository

Library Council Meeting

## Encouraging An Informed Citizenry:

Locating and Using

Congressional

Research Service

Reports

presenters: Starr Hoffman

& Bill Sleeman

## Handout

### What is a CRS Report?

- published by the  
Congressional Research  
Service

### Recent Activity [SideBar](#)

### Frequently Used Pages

- [Current Workspace](#)
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- See recent changes via [RSS feed](#) ([about RSS](#))

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- created by research specialists at CRS
- created for members of Congress
- center around topics relevant to current legislation
- sample CRS report:

## About CRS

- public policy arm of the Library of Congress
- formed in 1914 to provide timely, objective research on legislative issues
- six interdisciplinary research divisions
  - American Law
  - Domestic Social Policy
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  - Resources, Science and Industry
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    - long reports
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- and others

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- must request reports from their member of Congress
  - the public must know of a specific report's existence before making a request from a member of Congress
- can purchase from several third-party vendors
- use one of the freely-provided CRS archives online (see list below)
  - cannot request reports based merely on a topic

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- wide variety of subjects
- features:
  - browse by topic
  - full-text searching ability
- <http://digital.library.unt.edu/govdocs/crs/>

## Other Resources Related to this Presentation

### Free Sources for CRS Reports:

- OpenCRS

- <http://opencrs.com/>
- <sup>o</sup> CRS Reports at Thurgood Marshall Law Library
  - <http://www.law.umaryland.edu/marshall/crsreports/index.asp>
- <sup>v</sup> CRS Report Archive at the University of North Texas
  - <http://digital.library.unt.edu/govdocs/crs/>
- <sup>x</sup> CRS Reports from the Federation of American Scientists
  - [http://www.ncseonline.org/NLE/CRS/index.cfm?  
&CFID=10842369&CFTOKEN=53883781](http://www.ncseonline.org/NLE/CRS/index.cfm?&CFID=10842369&CFTOKEN=53883781)
  - Intelligence, Military and National Security
- <sup>x</sup> CRS Reports from the National Library for the Environment
  - <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/>
  - Environmental Law & Policy
- <sup>x</sup> CRS Reports from the U.S. State Department
  - <http://fpc.state.gov/fpc/c18185.htm>
  - Foreign Policy and Relations
- <sup>x</sup> IP Mall at Franklin Pierce Law School
  - [http://www.ipmall.info/hosted\\_resources/crs\\_reports.asp](http://www.ipmall.info/hosted_resources/crs_reports.asp)
  - Intellectual Property, Cyberlaw, and Electronic Commerce

## Resources for Writing Your Member of Congress

- <sup>o</sup> find your Representative: <http://www.house.gov/writerep/>
- <sup>o</sup> find your Senator: <http://www.senate.gov/>

- a three-paragraph letter is recommended:
  - a. State the purpose of the letter, and who you are (list your professional credentials). Include your name and address, even in an email.
  - b. Provide specific, factual information about why this report is important to you, and/or how you will use it. Cite the report using the proper title and the CRS report number.
  - c. Close by requesting the action you want taken. This may include having the report sent to you, or you may also request that they vote a specific way on legislation concerning CRS reports.
- addressing Members of Congress
  - To Your Senator (use this address block):
    - The Honorable (full name)
    - (Room #) (Name) Senate Office Building
    - United States Senate
    - Washington, DC 20510
    - open the letter with, "Dear Senator:"
  - To Your Representative (use this address block):
    - The Honorable (full name)
    - (Room #) (Name) House Office Building
    - United States House of Representatives
    - Washington, DC 20515
    - open the letter with, "Dear Representative:"

- addressing the Chairperson of a Committee or the Speaker of the House:
  - Dear Mr. Chairman (or) Dear Madam Chairwoman
  - Dear Mr. Speaker (or) Dear Madam Speaker
- use these addresses regardless of whether the communication format is email or a printed letters

## CRS Director's memo on publications policy:

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/crs041807.pdf>

## Sources for this Presentation





- Congressional Research Service website. <http://www.loc.gov/crsinfo/whatscrs.html>
- Stephen Young, CRS Reports, "llrx dot com" (a law zine), Published July 15, 2002 and updated September 17, 2006. <http://www.llrx.com/features/crsreports.htm>
- Brian Faler, "Hard-to-Get Policy Briefings For Congress Are Now Online. Technology Group Opens Access to Research Reports," Washington Post, June 28, 2005.
- Brudnik, Ida. "The Congressional Research Service and the American Legislative Process," Congressional Research Service, June 14, 2006.
- Elizabeth Williamson, "Information, Please," Washington Post, February 19, 2007.
- "Congressional Research Service." Congresspedia, from [SourceWatch.org](http://SourceWatch.org). <http://>






[www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Congressional\\_Research\\_Service](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Congressional_Research_Service)

• <http://usgovinfo.about.com/library/weekly/aa020199.htm>






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# CRS Reports at the Thurgood Marshall Law Library

Bill Sleeman,  
ALA-GODORT Chair and  
Assistant Director for Technical Services,  
Thurgood Marshall Law Library  
The University of Maryland School of Law  
501 W. Fayette Street,  
Baltimore, Md. 21201  
410-706-0783  
[bsleeman@law.umaryland.edu](mailto:bsleeman@law.umaryland.edu)

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the website <http://www.law.umaryland.edu/marshall/crsreports/index.asp>. The page title is "Thurgood Marshall Law Library - CRS Reports". The navigation menu includes Home, Catalog, E-journals, Databases, Research Guides, Services, and About Us. The main content area is titled "CRS Reports in Homeland Security/Terrorism and Health Law & Policy". It features a paragraph explaining the Congressional Research Service (CRS) and its role in providing legislative research. Below this, there is a section for "Other useful web sources of CRS reports" with a list of links to external archives: Environmental Law & Policy, Foreign Policy and Relations, Intellectual Property, Cyberlaw, and Electronic Commerce, and Intelligence, Military and National Security. A section titled "The Thurgood Marshall Law Library obtains CRS reports from a variety of sources and makes no warranties of any kind regarding the contents of the reports archived here." is also present. At the bottom, there are search options: "Browse reports by subject:" with a dropdown menu set to "Terrorism and Homeland Security" and a "Go" button, and "Browse all reports by:" with a dropdown menu and a "Go" button. A alphabetical index is provided, with "A" through "Z" and "All" as clickable links. Below the index, there are two links: "Abortion Law Development: A Brief Overview" (Report Date: 1/2/2001 Order Number: 95-724 A) and "Abortion Procedures". The left sidebar contains a "CRS Reports" section with filters for Date, Order Code, Title, and Subject, and a "Special Collections" section with links to various collections like African Americans in the Law Collection, The Brune Room, Civil Rights Comm., Civil Rights Ebooks, CRS Reports, German Unification, David Hoffman, Law School Archives, Thurgood Marshall, and Simon Sobeloff. There is also a "Databases" section with a link to "Browse by title". The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the Start button, Windows Media Player, an email inbox, and the current browser window. The system clock shows 4:04 PM.

beSpacific: Recent CRS Reports - Defense, Presidential Claims, Arms Sales, Afghanistan - Microsoft Internet Explorer

Address: http://www.bespacific.com/mt/archives/016105.html

« List of Federal Agency Internet Sites Partnership Renewed | Main | DHS OIG Letter Report: TSA's Management of Aviation Security Activities at the Jackson-Evers International Airport »

September 26, 2007

Recent CRS Reports - Defense, Presidential Claims, Arms Sales, Afghanistan

- Defense: FY2008 Authorization and Appropriations, updated September 17, 2007
- Presidential Claims of Executive Privilege: History, Law, Practice and Recent Developments, updated September 17, 2007
- Arms Sales: Congressional Review Process, updated September 12, 2007
- Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy," updated September 10, 2007
- Extraterritorial Application of American Criminal Law," updated September 10, 2007 [reports are via FAS]

Permanent Link    Topic(s): Congress, Government Documents, Legal Research

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**Federal Employee Law Firm**  
Representing Federal employees in MSPB, EEOC, OSC, OPM & court cases  
[www.mahoneyandmahoney.com](http://www.mahoneyandmahoney.com)

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- E-Commerce
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- E-Mail
- E-Records
- EU Data Protection
- Free Speech
- Freedom of Information
- Government Documents
- ID Theft
- Intellectual Property
- Internet
- Knowledge Management
- Legal Research
- Legislation
- Libraries
- Marketing
- Microsoft
- Patent and Trademark

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Congressional Research Service Reports - Microsoft Internet Explorer

Address: http://www.fas.org/spp/crs/index.html

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## Congressional Research Service [CRS] Reports

The Congressional Research Service, a congressional support agency, does not make its publications directly available to the public online. The FAS collection of CRS reports indexed below primarily addresses national security, foreign policy and related topics. These reports are provided without CRS authorization as a public service.

Other notable online sources of CRS reports include the [US Department of State Foreign Press Center](#) and the [US Embassy in Italy](#).

An outstanding and comprehensive searchable archive of this and other CRS collections is available at [Open CRS](#), a project of the Center for Democracy and Technology. Another large searchable archive is located at the [University of North Texas Libraries](#).

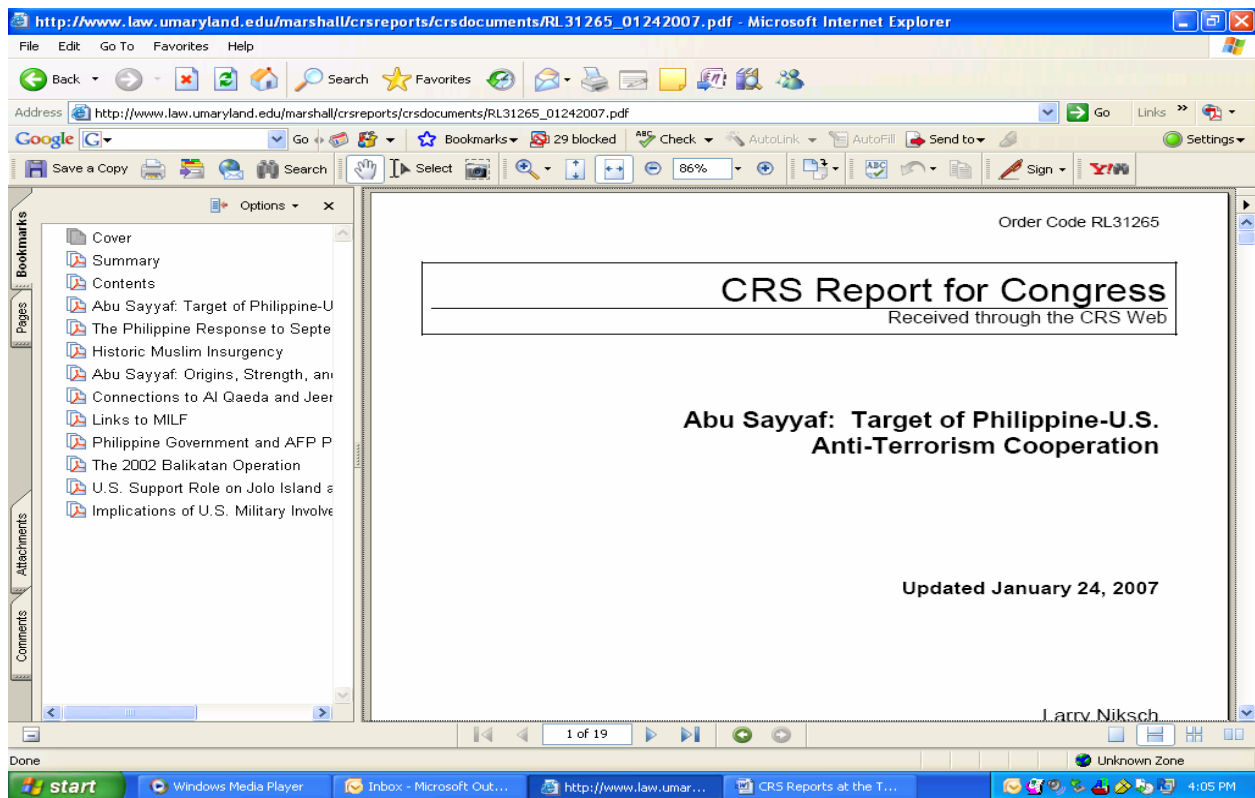
[Secrecy and Information Policy](#)

[Intelligence](#)

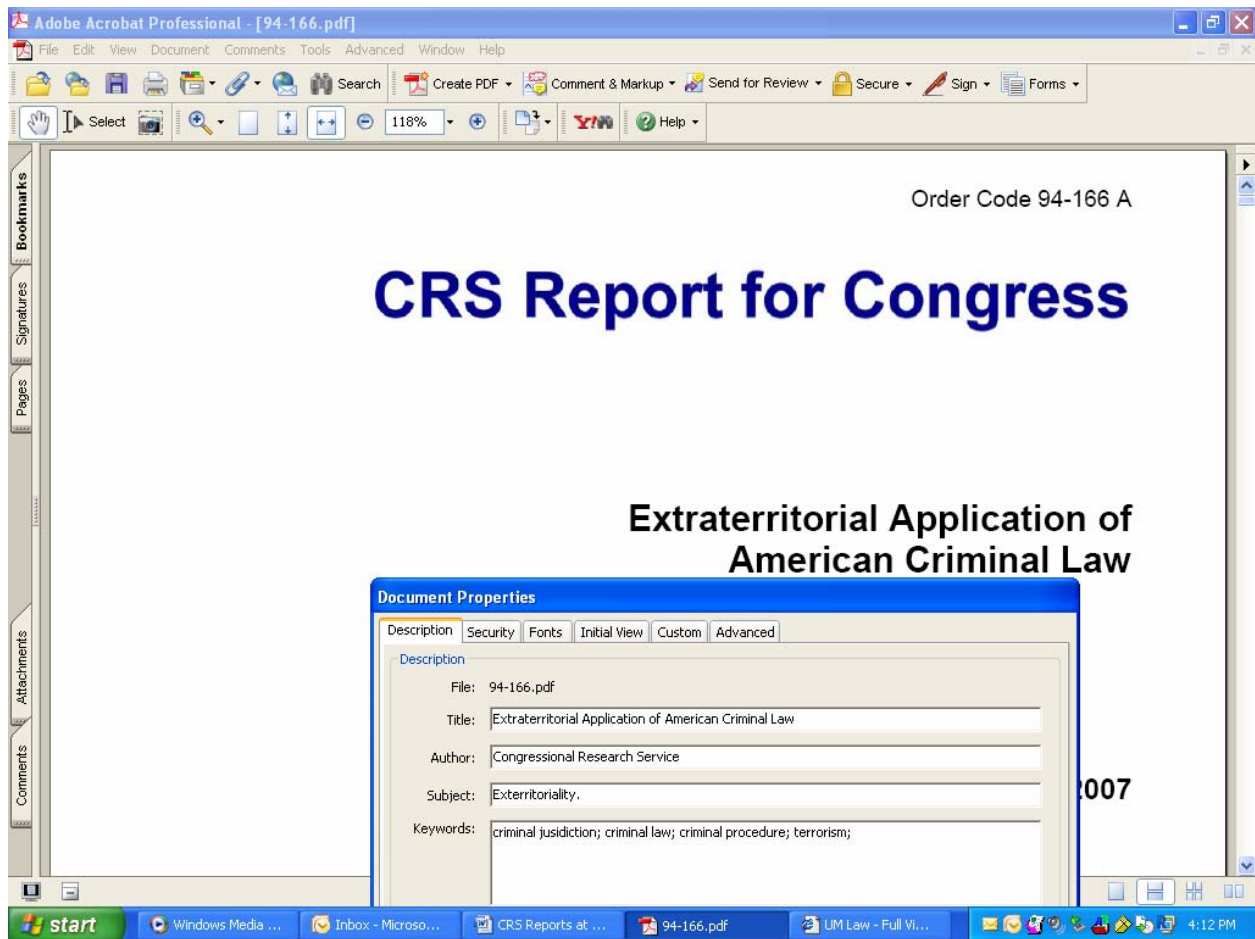
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[Nuclear Weapons and Arms Control](#)

Reports via the FAS Internet site: <http://www.fas.org>



Bookmarks added to CRS Report



Adding PDF properties to CRS Report

## Advocacy efforts to unlock CRS Reports

Open CRS Network - CRS Reports for the People - Microsoft Internet Explorer

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**open crs**  
Congressional Research Reports for the People

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**TAKE ACTION!**

Thanks to donations from Internet users, we get most new CRS reports immediately, but the following "fugitive" reports are still not in our database. Help us track them down by [requesting them](#) from your members of Congress and [adding them](#) to the OpenCRS database.

**Fugitive CRS Reports**

**About Open CRS**

American taxpayers spend over \$100 million a year to fund the Congressional Research Service, a "think tank" that provides reports to members of Congress on a variety of topics relevant to current political events. Yet, these reports are not made available to the public in a way that they can be easily obtained. A project of the Center for Democracy & Technology through the cooperation of several organizations and collectors of CRS Reports, Open CRS provides citizens access to CRS Reports already in the public domain and encourages Congress to provide public access to all CRS Reports. ([More](#))

**Featured Report Collections**

- [National Council for Science and the Environment](#) (1661)
- [Federation of American Scientists](#) (1401)
- [Thurgood Marshall Law Library/University of Maryland School of Law](#) (598)
- [National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism](#) (135)
- [Center for Democracy & Technology](#) (41)

**Search CRS Reports**

Currently searching 12658 reports

**Recent Reports**

- September 24, 2007** - Consumer Spending by Older Americans, 1985 to 2005
- September 24, 2007** - Topics in Aging: Income and Poverty Among Older Americans in 2005
- September 21, 2007** - Brazil's WTO Case Against U.S. Agricultural Support: A Brief Overview
- September 21, 2007** - Financial Crisis? The Liquidity Crunch of August 2007
- September 21, 2007** - International Monetary Fund (IMF): Financial Reform and the Possible Sale of IMF Gold
- September 20, 2007** - Navy CG (X) Cruiser Program: Background, Oversight Issues, and Options for Congress
- September 20, 2007** - Guatemala: 2007 Elections and

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