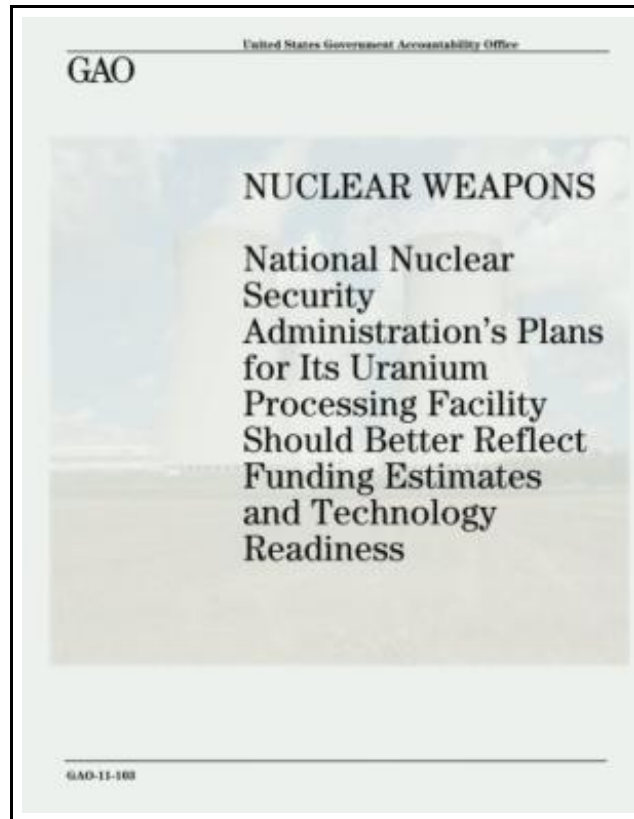


# Nuclear Weapons: National Nuclear Security Administrations Plans for Its Uranium Processing Facility Should Better Reflect Funding Estimates and Technology Readiness



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***(Dr. Kayden Gerlach)***

## **NUCLEAR WEAPONS: NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY ADMINISTRATIONS PLANS FOR ITS URANIUM PROCESSING FACILITY SHOULD BETTER REFLECT FUNDING ESTIMATES AND TECHNOLOGY READINESS**



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Createspace. Paperback. Book Condition: New. This item is printed on demand. Paperback. 38 pages. Dimensions: 11.0in. x 8.5in. x 0.1in. Built in the 1940s and 1950s, the Y-12 National Security Complex, located in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, is the National Nuclear Security Administrations (NNSA) primary site for enriched uranium activities. Because Y-12 facilities are outdated and deteriorating, NNSA is building a more modern facility--known as the Uranium Processing Facility (UPF). NNSA estimates that the UPF will cost up to 3.5 billion and save over 200 million annually in operations, security, and maintenance costs. NNSA also plans to include more advanced technologies in the UPF to make uranium processing and component production safer. GAO was asked to (1) assess NNSAs estimated cost and schedule for constructing the UPF; (2) determine the extent to which UPF will use new, experimental technologies, and identify resultant risks, if any; and (3) determine the extent to which emerging changes in the nuclear weapons stockpile could affect the UPF project. To conduct this work, GAO reviewed NNSA technology development and planning documents and met with officials from NNSA and the Y-12 plant. The UPF project costs have increased since NNSAs initial estimates in 2004 and construction may be delayed due to funding shortfalls. NNSAs current estimate prepared in 2007 indicates that the UPF will cost between 1.4 and 3.5 billion to construct--more than double NNSAs 2004 estimate of between 600 million and 1.1 billion. In addition, costs for project engineering and design, which are less than halfway completed, have increased by about 42 percent--from 297 to 421 million--due in part to changes in engineering and design pricing rates. With regard to the projects schedule, NNSA currently estimates that UPF construction will be completed as early as 2018 and as late as 2022. However, because...



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