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## COVER FEATURE

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### The Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force for International Affairs (SAF/IA): Poised For The Future

By

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#### *Reorganizing for Action*

With a fast-changing international security environment, the Air Force embarked on a comprehensive reorganization that culled disparate functions from various organizations into a one-stop shop for all Air Force international affairs. A Secretary of the Air Force order established the new SAF/IA mission: "Develop, oversee, and execute non-operational international programs and activities affiliated with the Department of the Air Force." *Non-operational international activities* are defined as all programs which do not involve the deployment of operational USAF personnel or equipment. The Deputy Under Secretary now

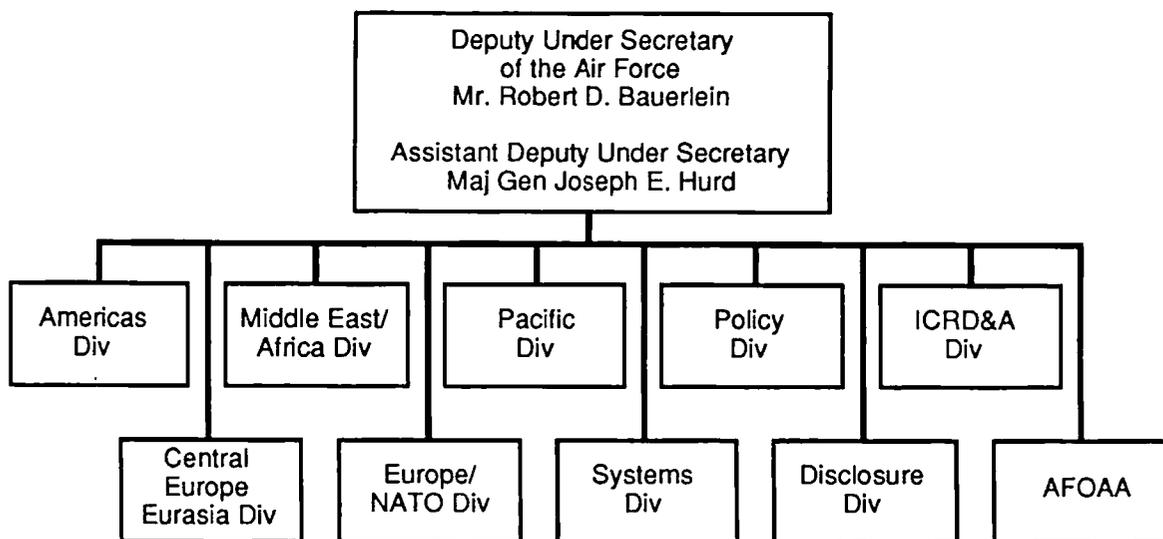
Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the United States Air Force divided the world of security assistance (i.e., Foreign Military Sales) and politico-military (pol-mil) analysis between two Air Staff organizations, the Directorate of International Programs (AF/PRI) and the Directorate for Plans and Programs (AF/XOXX). In the early 1990s, the United States Air Force refocused its international affairs policy formulation and implementation. Seeking a better integration of those elements involved in international affairs, the USAF combined the tasks of politico-military analysis, disclosure policy, and attaché affairs, with traditional Foreign Military Sales (FMS) case work within the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force, International Affairs (SAF/IA), equivalent to that of a 3-star/flag officer.\* This reorganization resulted in a unique approach to international affairs among the services—the springboard for a renewed effort to promote U.S. national security objectives while building on the excellent reputation of the USAF for first-class support to its FMS customers.

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leads a streamlined, proactive organization of civilian and military experts who work pol-mil affairs, FMS case work, disclosure policy, international cooperative research and development, and attaché affairs.

In the new SAF/IA organization, five regional divisions manage Air Force activities and relations with the sovereign nations of Western Europe, Eastern Europe and Eurasia, the Pacific Rim, Africa and the Middle East, and the Americas. Three support divisions, Policy, Disclosure, and Systems, provide cross regional policy direction, technical support and expertise, and day-to-day program management. The Air Force Office of Attaché Affairs, transferred from Air Force Intelligence, manages Air Force attachés stationed worldwide, as well as Security Assistance Office (SAO) personnel and officers on exchange programs. All offices report directly to Mr. Bauerlein—helping coalesce these previously different functions into a policy whole. Central to this new organization is the concept of the regional Country Director and several new methods to facilitate the management of security assistance.



## THE COUNTRY DIRECTOR

As we merged the politico-military and security assistance functions, we realized we would need strong day-to-day leadership at the action officer level. The SAF/IA response was to create a new position called a Country Director. As the USAF's single point of contact for all non-operational affairs for a particular country, the Country Director has two primary responsibilities: 1) provide politico-military expertise to Air Force decision makers, including the Secretary of the Air Force, Dr. Sheila Widnall, and the Chief of Staff, General Merrill McPeak; and 2) oversee the security assistance process and administer approved programs. These are both heavy responsibilities, and to be most effective, the Country Director must cultivate and maintain an extensive network of contacts, including U.S. and foreign embassy staffs, the Office of Secretary of Defense, the State Department, the Air Staff and the Joint Staff, the Defense Security Assistance Agency, and U.S. defense contractors. Pol-mil analytical skills and the careful management of security assistance cases, deftly melded, result in more efficient and effective security assistance efforts which serve the best interests of both the USAF and its security assistance customers, as well as U.S. government foreign policy objectives.

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### *Pol-Mil Responsibilities*

The transfer of the Air Force's politico-military responsibility from the operational side of the Air Staff (XO) to SAF/IA puts the Country Director in the thick of the interagency foreign affairs process. Whenever Air Force principals receive or visit important foreign dignitaries, they rely directly on the Country Director for the politico-military savvy to address critical issues succinctly and accurately. Just as important, well-considered pol-mil analysis provides the foundation for effective security assistance decisions as the Country Director views a country's security situation through the "pol-mil filter." What are its regional threats? Who are the political and military leaders? How can we best address its security concerns? Thus, SAF/IA provides the pol-mil oversight needed to integrate all USAF international requirements, plans, and programs. With this new responsibility, SAF/IA, through its Country Directors, is better equipped to ensure USAF actions are consistent with U.S. national security goals and objectives. A complementary benefit of the country director innovation is that the Air Force can better provide systematic, broad scope support to our security assistance customers.

### *Security Assistance Responsibilities*

Security assistance is the outgrowth of U.S. foreign policy decisions and consists of various programs. The Country Director functions as the primary originator of FMS cases and as the oversight for all security assistance activities, guiding the Letters of Offer and Acceptance (LOA) from conception to signature and following the FMS case through to closure. In addition, the Country Director must manage multi-command and politically sensitive sales efforts, including communications, aircraft, and missile systems cases, ensuring they receive appropriate high-level attention. These oversight and management responsibilities entail traveling in-country to meet with foreign civilian and military officials, as well as knowing foreign military attachés on a first-name basis and building cooperative yet professional relationships with U.S. defense contractors. The pol-mil expertise and a certain diplomatic *savoir faire* of the Country Director is crucial in making the security assistance process run smoothly.

Going the extra mile for the customer means putting the responsibility where it's needed—and the Country Director can't do it all. Additional SAF/IA innovations to security assistance management facilitate FMS case work for the Air Force and the customer.

### **STREAMLINING SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

Frequently, the first question we ask before a position is considered or a decision is made is, "How will this decision affect our customers?" In SAF/IA, we decided that the meeting of interests of the U.S. Air Force and those of our FMS customers can be complementary and synergistic: what we needed were the tools to make our programs work better from start to finish, for us and for our friends and allies. By decentralizing routine case management and by working more closely with our procurement counterparts, SAF/IA can devote the bulk of its attention to its core mission: building operational access for U.S. forces overseas, and enhancing the political influence of the United States worldwide—all through the best support possible to our security assistance partners.

### *"Powering down" to the field*

To assist the Country Director with his/her heavy workload, some routine management responsibilities of mature FMS cases were transferred from SAF/IA to the Air Force Security Assistance Center (AFSAC) and Air Force Security Assistance Training Group (AFSAT). This change not only relieved the Country Director of important but more easily managed programs,

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but put the level of support where it could be implemented most efficiently, thereby providing streamlined service to our customers.

Also aiding the Country Director is the Security Assistance Program Manager (SAPM). The SAPM represents the technical expertise in the field for day-to-day management of FMS cases, is close to the customer, and frees the Country Director to concentrate on the larger security assistance picture for a particular country. Due to the logistics and acquisition nature of the defense articles and services, the SAPM usually resides in Air Force Material Command (AFMC) bases or offices. This officer executes program management for each FMS case and compiles the LOA data. The SAPM provides the country director with detailed knowledge of a program's operations and acts as a single source for program integration and information on many sales cases.

### *The Acquisition Interface*

Another significant improvement in SAF/IA's security assistance programs and FMS customer support has been the increased involvement of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition (SAF/AQ) in foreign military sales of new major systems. A February 1993 Memorandum of Understanding between SAF/IA and SAF/AQ established a new procurement policy for the execution of major FMS acquisitions. The USAF now uses a single acquisition system to satisfy its own needs and those of its foreign customers. We eliminated the previous dual track procurement system for U.S. and FMS procurement, permitting potential economies of scale and production line continuation. This new SAF/AQ involvement begins upon receipt of the country's letter of request (LOR) and continues through system delivery. This change improved FMS acquisitions by bringing sales of new, major systems under the same quality management procedures as USAF programs. Through a single system of procurement and accounting, SAF/IA and SAF/AQ standardized an acquisition process that responds to the needs of the Air Force and FMS customer with more agility and consistency.



The F-15 sale to Saudi Arabia is an example of an integrated, single Air Force acquisition system.

## **SAF/IA: AIR FORCE LEADERSHIP IN A NEW KIND OF SECURITY ASSISTANCE**

The world security environment has vastly changed, partly as a consequence of Air Force international programs in security assistance and education of allied military personnel. Through judicious foreign military sales of the best equipment in the world, coupled with fresh initiatives

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to form security partnerships with democratizing nations, the Air Force can continue to contribute to regional stability and global security.

*Democratization and Coalition-Building*

SAF/IA resources and energies are being directed to enhance the bonds of alliance and cooperation, strengthen security partners, and promote democratic development. For example, SAF/IA coordinates the training of international students, such as foreign cadets at the US Air Force Academy, various professional military education courses, and pilot training. As well as enhancing their professional and technical skills, personnel from friendly and allied countries are exposed to the American way of life and learn about American society, ideals, and institutions. This exposure gives them a broader understanding of the political, economic, and governmental processes of our nation. We have noted that officers from the armed forces and civilians from around the world attending training in the United States frequently represent the future leadership of their particular country's armed forces or government. The result is a deepening friendship between our countries and our armed forces and hopefully, a transmission of democratic values and ideals.

*Poised for the Future*

SAF/IA is embarked upon an ambitious and far-reaching effort to develop and execute comprehensive international policies for the USAF. The Air Force approach to international affairs, unique among the services, provides one organization for politico-military analyses and security assistance. SAF/IA's goal is to enhance worldwide USAF access and influence by using informed pol-mil analysis to determine what security assistance programs are in the best interests of the U.S., and is geared to provide quality support at each stage of a program. Country Directors are the focal point for all international activities and have at their disposal the in-house experts in disclosure, international politics, systems specifications, and case management to answer questions or solve problems for a customer. The U.S. Air Force, through a deliberate examination of its roles and missions in an ever-changing international environment, has charged SAF/IA with the increasingly important international mission. Poised to meet the challenges of the more complex needs of the U.S. Air Force and United States security partners, SAF/IA leads the way in implementing international affairs policy of the future.