
Forging A Modern Egyptian Military

By

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The Training Section of the Office of Military Cooperation, Cairo, Egypt manages all IMET and FMS funded training. The FMS training cases directly support major Egyptian Armed Forces modernization efforts such as the F-16 fighter, Apache helicopter, M1A1 Abrams tank, and Knox class frigate. Total value of cases in the pipeline is about \$95M dollars. Our other program, IMET, supports the professional military education and key instructor training of the Egyptian officer corps. FY94 IMET funding is \$800,000. Students for both programs have increased over the last four years from an annual average of 250 students to 680 in FY93 and 800 projected for FY94.

Coordination of this large training effort is a major challenge for the OMC Training Section. We work directly with two Ministry of Defense Authorities, three service training departments, and numerous Egyptian program managers. At the same time we are constantly engaged with U.S. program managers within the OMC, U.S. MILDEPS, and commanders of in-country training and assistance teams, who are in the field with the Egyptian forces.

ENGLISH ENABLES FORCE MODERNIZATION

To validate the readiness of a potential Egyptian student to successfully complete his CONUS training, we administer an English Comprehension Level (ECL) testing program to over 1800 students annually. The Ministry of Defense Language Institute (MODLI) has the vital mission of English language training. Currently in the second year of an English curriculum modernization effort, MODLI is adopting the American Language Course. Faculty instruction and curriculum development assistance is provided by Mobile Training Teams from the Defense Language Institute - English Language Center (DLIELC), San Antonio, Texas. The Egyptians have great interest in further material and methods modernization at MODLI to include computer interactive teaching.

MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF A LARGE STUDENT WORKLOAD

Our individual training mission of delivering 800 Egyptian students ready for military education and training in the U.S., requires OMC Training to identify our essential tasks and be creative in managing a large student workload. Much of our work is interactive with MOD, and iterative as well. Large numbers of data elements are developed during our management cycle.

The essential tasks include: forecasting training requirements; meeting budgetary constraints by eliminating unfunded training needs; obtaining training course details; and, testing and processing individual students. Inadequate coordination by MOD during the management cycle can place undue burdens on our section and the U.S. military schoolhouses. The loser is the Egyptian student who can often be very rushed and minimally prepared for his educational experience in the U.S.

One step to improved management has been to organize a two person support team to administer ECL, process student records, make data entries into the Training Management System (TMS) data base, generate student travel orders and travel tickets, and manage the students' instructional material mailed from their courses. This step frees the other three members of our section to focus on the goals of IMET and the essential individual training required to support the

various FMS programs as a "total package". We can better sort issues arising between the U.S. MILDEPs and our Egyptian customers. Equally important we are helping our Egyptian counterparts to do a better job managing. Pushing out their planning, programming, and budgeting horizons, and prioritizing based on goals and command guidance, are two of our objectives for Egyptian training managers. Finally, we can be helpful in initiatives to upgrade the Egyptian institutional training base and in collective training enhancements such as a low-tech National Training Center and updated training doctrine.

THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY

To take advantage of the automated Training Management System (TMS) capabilities to produce ITOs and maintain student as well as Position of Prominence databases, we will soon install a network of five computers within the training section. All five section members will be able to share data with each other. The management team will be able to call up information, including program management reports to forecast decision milestones and workloads, concerning their IMET and FMS programs. The goal is to have the data entered by the support team so the managers can truly manage the training workload. Remaining to be solved is how to share TMS databases, and changes, among the workstations. This is essential if we are to automate recurring tasks such as ITO production. TMS needs to be a multi-user system. Database sharing is vitally important because the Security Assistance Network (SAN) has become our critical communication link to the supporting U.S. agencies for E-mail and data updates.

Our automation plan extends to our Egyptian counterparts as well. We want MOD and the services to have the same information (current STL) as well as the ability to manipulate it in the many different ways we can. A TMS software suite for the Egyptian training managers, similar to what is available for the Unified Commands and International Student Management Offices (IMSOs) is needed.

Along with getting information on a timely basis is the problem of getting it out. Updates on STLs and fast breaking news on student issues need to be available in a better and easily understood format. To assist in getting the information "in" and "out" faster and more reliably to all players, we are working to establish the Training Bulletin Board System (TBBS). A single, separate computer with BBS software to allow an authorized user to dial in and receive whatever we post to it (STLs, responses to issues, bulletins, and questions). The MOD and services can also send us the same types of items. Initially, the bulletin board will be targeted to serving our counterparts, but future users would include in-country ETSS, TAFTs, MTTs, and OMC program managers who need answers concerning any element of training managed by our office.

MODICUM OF RESOURCES REQUIRED

The training component of Egyptian force modernization is a formidable, long-term task. Effective and efficient management of individual training by OMC and our Egyptian counterparts depends as much or more on automation enhancement as sound management techniques by all the players. With software and communication links already in hand and the network architecture totally feasible, DSAA should commit funds immediately to achieve the automation enhancements we suggest here. Our task will be to convince MOD to invest in the modicum of hardware required.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

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