

THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ROLE IN SECURITY ASSISTANCE

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By

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BACKGROUND

The United States views the transfer of conventional arms and related defense articles and services -- security assistance -- as an essential part of the global defense posture and an indispensable component of foreign policy. Security assistance helps achieve three broad objectives regarding defense posture and foreign policy:

1. Promote mutual understanding and cooperation between the United States and nations assisted.
2. Strengthen defense forces and capabilities of friends and allies.
3. Enhance force projection for United States military forces and coalition defense in cooperation with other nations.

When the United States Air Force (USAF) assists other nations in meeting their defense needs, the service positively contributes to the attainment of these objectives. With over 4,500 active cases valued at over \$50 billion for over 65 friendly and allied nations, USAF security assistance is big business. Also important is the complexity of security assistance business in the USAF. The International Programs Directorate (HQ USAF/PRI) provides central management, direction, guidance, and supervision of USAF participation in US security assistance programs. Many other organizations are involved, including: Air Force Systems Command (AFSC), Air Force Logistics Command (AFLC), operational major air commands (MAJCOMs), Security Assistance Accounting Center (SAAC), Defense Security Assistance Agency (DSAA), customer nations, and others such as contractors, State Department, and Commerce Department. In addition to the many players, the management of security assistance is further complicated by the wide scope and sophistication of systems and services provided and the management procedures and techniques used to implement the program. State Department has responsibility for security assistance policy development.

Considering the importance and complexity of USAF involvement in security assistance, Air University held the Eighth Annual Airpower Symposium to examine, in some detail, USAF security assistance policy and responsibilities, challenges inherent in the USAF providing security assistance to

other nations, and outlook for the future. Sixteen panels were formed to explore key issues confronting managers of the USAF security assistance program. At these panels, authors from throughout the security assistance community presented 45 papers on a wide range of security assistance issues to provide a basis for discussing the issues and exploring ideas. Approximately 450 people attended the symposium from various organizations, including: State Department, DSAA, SAAC, HQ USAF, MAJCOMs, customer nations, industry, and academia.

SYMPOSIUM CONTENT

Panel deliberations focused on a wide range of topics designed to generate ideas for improving security assistance management and achieve increased understanding of the key issues. Following is a brief summary of the coverage during the symposium.

Security Assistance and Foreign Policy

Security assistance is an important tool for attaining US foreign policy goals and USAF objectives. For example, Southwest Asia is a very important region where there is little or no US military presence. Security assistance is a primary means of maintaining US influence and may also be used for leverage in obtaining foreign policy objectives. Base rights agreements are important for maintaining US presence in critical regions of the world, and security assistance may have a significant influence. In the Caribbean Basin, security assistance programs can substantially enhance US relations with other nations in the region.

Legal and Political Issues

The laws and policies for security assistance are complex and may create dilemmas for both the USAF and the customer. For example, the complexity of current US policy towards the FX aircraft and associated laws and other congressional concerns have posed dilemmas for the USAF and contractors in managing the program.

Security Assistance Goals

The goals of security assistance involve the process for selecting and training key USAF personnel charged with attaining those goals. The decision making environment in which these individuals must work is often complex and very challenging. For example, the decision-making process during beginnings of security assistance toward the Arabian Peninsula involved a very complex series of interrelationships among the USAF, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Department of Defense, State Department, embassy officials, Congress, and Presidential representatives.

Financial Management

Security assistance financial resource management involves integrated command and customer planning and execution. The letter of offer and acceptance (LOA) is the basic contractual document between the United States and the customer. The LOA must be effectively implemented from initiation to

case closure. One of the major challenges has been reconciling financial and logistics-delivered value discrepancies and resolving customer complaints.

Training

The International Military Education and Training Program (IMETP) is a critical element of USAF security assistance. The Foreign Military Training Affairs Group (FMTAG) helps administer the various training programs and resolves problems both from USAF and customer viewpoints. Several MAJCOMs are significantly involved in this process, including Tactical Air Command, with the responsibility for training an increasing number of pilots and technicians from other nations.

Major Weapon Sales

The sale of major weapon systems present significant challenges to the USAF and the customer. One way to manage more effectively the challenges is through the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Management Plan, a key element in the total program management concept in formulating and planning FMS programs. An example of the challenges is PEACE VECTOR, the first F-16 sale to Egypt. Among other programs with significant multinational flavor is the NATO Airborne Early Warning and Control program. These systems were offered as examples of lessons learned in sales of major weapon systems to other nations. One tool for more effectively procuring major items and systems is the Special Defense Acquisition Fund (SDAF). The potential for major weapon systems sales affecting USAF operations and inventories is a factor decision-makers must face. A particularly interesting case is participation of other countries in training at Red Flag.

Wartime Support

Security assistance to friends and allies during wartime must consider the procedures for accelerating support to customers during times of crisis and ways to improve such support. One aspect is planning for such support to friends and allies in time of need which does not adversely affect our own combat capability. An example of USAF support is the Military Airlift Command, which has provided rapid response for assisting other nations during times of crisis.

Logistics

USAF logistics support to security assistance is complex and significant, with AFLC as the biggest player. Initial logistics support for major weapon system sales is a very important consideration for assuring the customer can employ the capability being provided. Management information systems play an important role in achieving both initial and follow-on logistics support. The Security Assistance Management Information System (SAMIS) is designed to provide managers a timely way of identifying problems and trends for effective action. A related system, the Reporting Analysis Management System, enables better management of reparable assets. One important suggestion was to combine SAMIS and AFLC delivery reporting, to enhance responsiveness to customers and reduce Air Logistics Center workload. Another suggestion is a new Air Force FMS Management Information System (AFFMIS) which may further improve FMS management. A major logistics

issue is the growing challenge of providing electronic warfare support to customers without significantly reducing AFLC capability to support USAF demands. An example of significant logistics assistance to a customer nation was PEACE SIGMA, modernizing the Spanish Air Force logistics system.

Benefits

Although security assistance provides many benefits for the USAF, including production economies and defense cooperation, the perception persists that there's a significant reduction of US operational readiness. One of the ways to improve the negative perceptions is to implement a Security Assistance Image Improvement Program (SAIIP).

Future

For the future, continued emphasis on security assistance is expected with a growing demand for industrial participation by the customer nations, continued concerns of technology transfer, and increasing sophistication of weapons provided. The releasability of technology is especially important to USAF planners. One area of critical concern is transfer of very high speed integrated circuit technology used in the USAF's current weapon systems.

CONCLUSION

The worldwide demand for US security assistance is increasing due to the superior quality of US military equipment, our unmatched reputation of supporting what we sell, and desire of many nations to be associated with the United States. The Eighth Air University Airpower Symposium fit this environment very well by focusing on the concerns of USAF managers in carrying out the growing security assistance programs vital to the United States' national security interests. The symposium provided for an interchange of ideas to further enhance the effectiveness of program execution.

The proceedings from the symposium are being finalized and should be available for distribution later this Summer. Also, copies of most papers presented at the symposium are available for distribution and several are being published in the DISAM Journal. We want the information from the symposium to be used, and urge you to write us for copies of the proceedings or papers at: Airpower Symposium, AWC/EDRP, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama 36112.

Lieutenant Colonel Eyer mann is Chief of the Airpower Symposium, Air War College, Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. His military background is in Air Force internal audit, where he evaluated security assistance program management and many other areas, mainly oriented to logistics support and systems acquisition. He is a 1982 graduate of the Air War College resident program, holds masters degrees from the Air Force Institute of Technology (Logistics Management) and Auburn University at Montgomery (Business Administration), and is a Certified Public Accountant. His military decorations include the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service, and Commendation Medals.