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SECURITY ASSISTANCE ORGANIZATION (SAO) MANNING AND  
THE SELECTION AND TRAINING OF SECURITY ASSISTANCE PERSONNEL

BY

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AND  
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Effective 11 March 1985, DOD Directive 2055.3, entitled "Manning of Security Assistance Organizations and the Selection and Training of Security Assistance Personnel," replaced DOD Directive 2000.10, dated 17 January 1972. The revision of the directive was part of a continuing Defense Security Assistance Agency (DSAA) effort to enhance the quality and improve the competence of personnel being assigned to security assistance positions through a systematic and thorough selection and training process. The directive further enhances efficiency by institutionalizing the procedures for seeking and approving SAO authorizations. The following discusses some of the major points of the new directive.

#### Definitions

The generic term "security assistance organization (SAO)" replaces the old generic term "Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG)" and is defined as follows: "All DOD component elements, regardless of actual title, located in a foreign country with assigned responsibilities for carrying out security assistance management functions under Section 515 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961."

Terms which were used in the old directive to define assistance personnel also have been changed somewhat in the new directive. Among these are the "Chief of an SAO" and "SAO management personnel." The latter positions are those "related directly to management of security assistance programs requiring continuity of effort and specialized experience and training." The Chief of an SAO will automatically be designated a key billet. SAO management personnel may be designated as key billets, but action must be taken by the SAO and the Unified Command to insure the positions are established as key billets, as prescribed in DOD Directive 1315.7, "Military Personnel Assignments." Key billets must be identified as such in the SAO Joint Manpower Program (JMP) document. The designation of a key billet will require the individual to serve the accompanied by dependents tour length that is prescribed for the country of assignment, unless overriding circumstances dictate otherwise.

Security assistance management personnel is the last personnel category covered in the new directive. These are DOD component personnel (other than SAO personnel) "who exercise executive direction or manage or supervise security assistance activities directly or have a specific assigned security assistance function that has a direct impact on the conduct or outcome of security assistance programs."

## Manning

A quick glance at the title of the new directive reveals that it deals with the manning of overseas SAOs in addition to the selection and training of security assistance personnel. The previous directive pertained only to selection and training. In the new directive, a separate enclosure is provided that covers the JMP processing system. The requirement for SAOs to submit annual fiscal year JMPs has been rescinded. JMPs now are reviewed continually to insure that the SAO is suitably manned to effectively manage the programs and that the manning is in accordance with established policy, manning criteria, and the provisions of Section 515 of the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA). Also, and of significant importance in pursuing the goal of getting better people, the JMPs need to accurately describe qualification and training requirements. Changes to the JMP must be submitted, with detailed justification and with the concurrence or comment of the Chief of Mission (Ambassador), through the unified command to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). Any changes involving the total manpower authorization, the grade and service affiliation of the SAO Chief, the organizational structure, or the establishment of a new SAO, must be approved by the Director, DSAA.

In order to parallel manpower authorizations with the budget process, SAOs are to submit JMP changes, if required to be consistent with the manning recommendations contained in the Annual Integrated Assessment of Security Assistance (AIASA), concurrently with the AIASA submission. Thus, the manning authorizations will be established in conjunction with approved budgets allowing more time for the selection of personnel than was provided under the old JMP process. This improvement can only be achieved by adhering to the suspenses in the directive.

## Selection and Training of SAO Personnel

Categorizing selection and training in four separate phases, as previously used in the old directive, has been eliminated. This was done principally to reduce the perceived confusion about funding and responsibility, and to express training requirements in an expanded "total package" concept.

To determine the criteria for the selection and effective training of people for the job, the prescribed criteria in the directive, the specific requirements stated in the Joint Manpower Program document, and the submitted personnel requisition must all be applied. Additionally, the new directive requires that the Chiefs of SAOs submit detailed job descriptions for positions being filled. This will enable DISAM and the Military Services to specifically tailor courses and orientations to meet the exact needs of the personnel being assigned. These descriptions can also supplement existing information to assist personnel centers to better select the person to do the job. It does no good for SAO chiefs simply to retransmit JMP position descriptions in lieu of the detailed job descriptions needed to make the system work.

## Training for Security Assistance Management Personnel (non-SAO)

DOD component personnel who "exercise executive direction or manage or supervise activities directly or have a specific assigned security assistance

function that has a direct impact on the conduct or outcome of security assistance programs, shall be considered for training at DISAM." Those who work part-time on security assistance, but who have "little or no effect on security assistance programs, particularly those personnel performing a function related to security assistance that is incidental to their normal duties," normally will not attend DISAM. Military Departments are to screen carefully all potential DISAM attendees to insure that only personnel having a direct impact on security assistance programs receive the training.

#### A Final Note

As is always the case, successful implementation of the new directive remains in the hands of those who use it. All echelons must dedicate themselves to implementing an improved selection and training process. The selection of personnel must be thorough and complete. The training program for each selectee must be tailored to provide the exact knowledge and skills needed to perform the functions that will be assigned--the result will be better personnel doing a better job. We do not serve our interests by just filling manning, selecting, and training "squares." Proper security assistance management by all DOD components requires the right staffing and the right personnel knowledgeable to do the function.

#### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Mr. Charles E. Collins, Jr. has been with DISAM since 1980 and is an Associate Professor specializing in training management. He has been involved in security assistance since the latter part of the 1960s as an Army logistician and foreign area specialist. A retired US Army major, he holds a B.A. in Mathematics from Western Maryland College (1964) and an M.M.S. in Management from Central Michigan University (1979).

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