
Training Officer Survey Results

By

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Introduction

In early April 2000, the Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management (DISAM) established a datalink on the DISAM webpage to allow training officers in the field to respond to a survey on the quality and adequacy of training. Initially, the survey was designed for the International Military Student Officers (IMSO) regardless of whether they had attended the Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management Training Officer Course.

DISAM collected data from respondents using a commercially available software program, Perseus Survey Solutions for the web V2.0, a product of Perseus Development Corporation. This program allows for the creating and distributing survey information by collecting, analyzing and reporting results. A hyperlink was established between the survey file and the DISAM Training Officer syllabus to assist the respondent in providing meaningful data on value and adequacy of the training topics. The program allows for establishment of a collection file on any designated server and as survey data is collected a notification message is sent to the data manager. Periodically, the data file was downloaded and an interim data set was analyzed for trend analysis. In late July, the final data were analyzed.

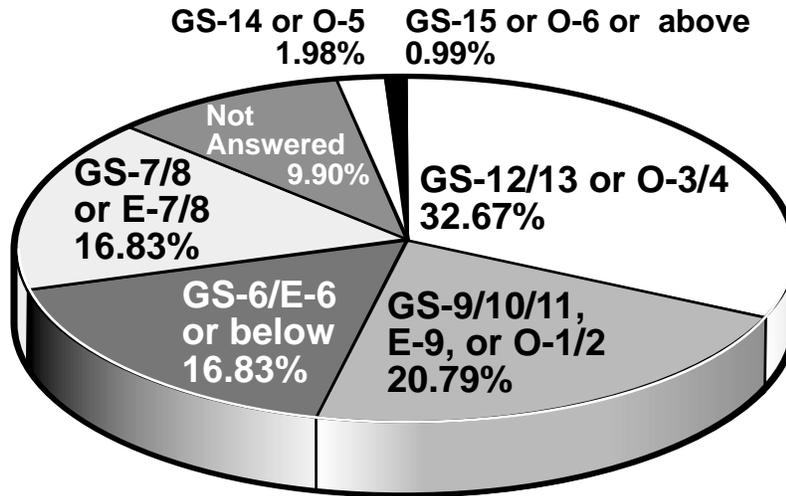
Data Collection

One hundred one training community personnel responded to the survey from a broad spectrum of activities. Initially, it was hoped that a larger sample population of the training community consisting of approximately 1200 personnel would respond to the survey. Even though a small percentage of the training community responded, the data represent a cross section of the training community with a confidence level of 95 percent and a confidence interval of plus or minus 10 percent. The first part of the survey requested grade and rank and service affiliation followed by two questions on classroom topics. The respondent was to quantify the benefits of various subject topics to the performance of the International Military Student Officer (IMSO). Another question required the respondent to quantify the adequacy of the time spend in class in any particular topic area. Both questions required the respondent to quantify each topic area by grading using a graduated scale with 1- Not at all; 2- Slightly; 3- Moderately; 4- Substantially; 5- Completely. By assigning a numerical value to the degree of satisfaction numerical data could be obtained. Finally, a number of questions allowed the respondent to provide explanatory comments about the formal training received at DISAM and any other information that the individual thought needed to be addressed.

Results

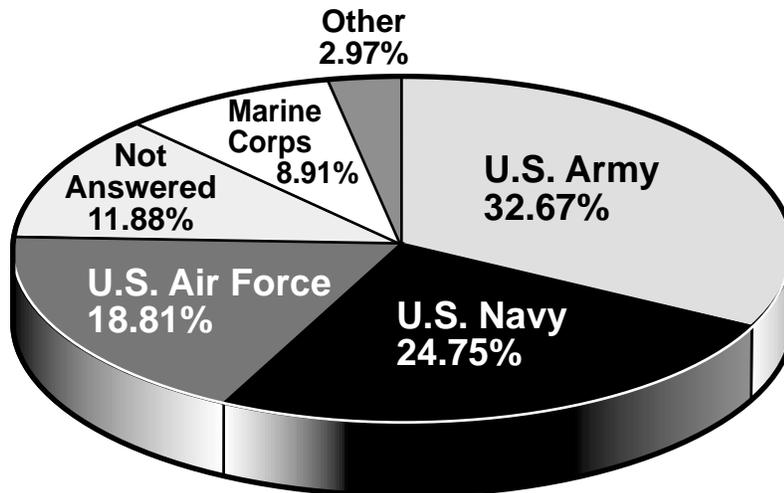
The first question in the series was to determine the grade and rank level of the respondent (Graph 1). This enabled DISAM to determine if any correlation existed between responses in the follow-on questions. By reviewing the graph, the majority of respondents (53.46 percent) were in the GS-9/O-1 through GS-13/O-4. We could further define the data by comparison of the rank or grade to the service.

Graph 1: Grade and Rank Comparison of Respondents
 Sample Size: 101 Responses



The second graph (Graph 2) allows for a correlation to be made between rank/grade and service affiliation. We could further define the data by comparing the rank or grade to the military department. This resulted in establishing that the majority of the data was collected from the GS-9/10/11 (E-9 or O-1/2) and GS-12/13 (O-3/4) across the military departments which is representative of the overall IMSO community despite the relatively low number of respondents. The following table synthesizes the findings (Table 1).

Graph 2: Service Affiliation of Respondents
 Sample Size: 101 Responses



Respondents were requested to evaluate 12 topic areas in the Training Officer course and the applicability to their individual assignments and the benefit derived. Using a scale of 5.0 as completely satisfied with the topic to 1, not at all satisfied, a determination of quality may be obtained. Table 2 tabulates the results. (Overall average: 3.56). Table 3 is the result of the

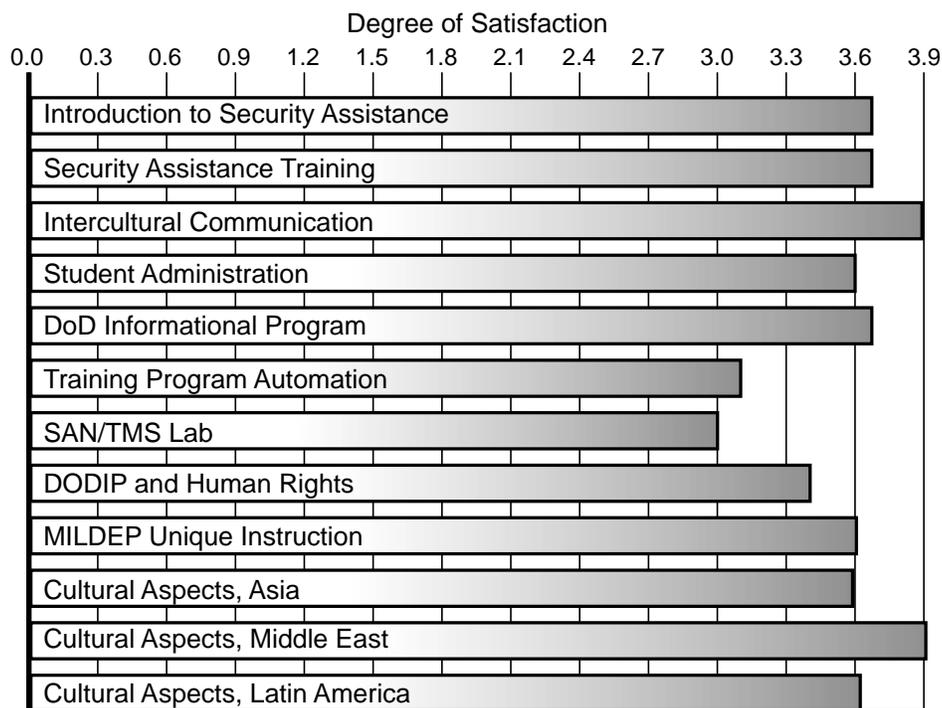
respondents to evaluate the adequacy of time between the 12 topic areas previously addressed in Table 2.

Table 1 Comparison of Respondents Paygrade to Service Affiliation

Service	Respondent						Other
	GS-6 E-6	GS-7/8 E-7/8	GS-9/10-11 E-9 or O-1/2	GS-12/13 O-3/4	GS-14 O-5	GS-15 O-6	
Army	8	7	10	8	0	0	
Air Force	3	4	5	4	0	0	
Navy/MC	6	6	5	15	0	0	
Other							3
Totals	17	17	20	27	0	0	3

The numbers for GS-14/15 and O-5/6 were intentionally left blank due to the low number of respondents and desire to keep identity of respondents anonymous. Totals do not match total respondents (101) due to some respondents not answering grade and service affiliation.

Table 2 Level of Benefit of Topics in Performance
Sample Size: 101 Responses



Sample Size: 101 responses

Conclusion

Key topic areas scored lower than others as demonstrated in Tables 2. The “Training Program Automation” and “SAN/TMS” topic acceptance score (3.1 and 3.0 respectively) was significantly lower overall and indicates a need to focus on these two areas for refinement. Both “Training Program Automation” and “SAN/TMS” topic areas scored lowest in degree of satisfaction and time adequacy. If a topic area scored low in acceptance then some correlation would be expected in the time adequacy of the topics. This correlation exists with both areas scoring lowest in Table 3. (3.2 and 3.3 respectively). To suggest that additional emphasis needs to be directed in this area may be premature. Other reasons outside of the scope of the survey may be driving the results. For example: U.S. Navy personnel utilize STATIS in place of TMS which may distort the data. If TMS is not used by the respondent then a low score would be reported distorting the overall value of the instruction. Further research needs to be conducted to determine cause of the low value. Overall average is high for usage and adequacy with an overall grade of 3.58 on a scale of 1 to 5. Improvements could be made and many of the respondents felt more emphasis should be focused on the regional cultural aspects of the course and a realistic in-house exercise that would mirror actual events in the life of the IMSO. Common throughout the responses was the stated need to emphasis more time on cultural differences and dealing with foreign students. Based on interim findings conducted during the survey period and members of the curriculum review, DISAM has added an additional JSAT exercise, a legal block of instruction, eliminated the European Seminar, and refocused the cross cultural communication areas in an initial attempt to meet the needs of the customer.

About the author

Commander Hawkins is an Assistant Professor and has been at DISAM since December 1995. He is a graduate of the California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California and holds a Master of Science in materiel acquisition management from the Florida Institute of Technology. He is the Deputy Director of Research and the functional coordinator for contracting and acquisition topics in all DISAM courses.