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# FEATURE ARTICLES

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## **The Way Forward: Improving Performance**

**By**

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### **The Changing Security Cooperation Landscape**

Our community has performed traditional security assistance responsibilities for many decades. More recently, additional security cooperation programs have been added to our community portfolio—to include management of these programs in operational environments such as Iraq and Afghanistan. The last several years have brought an unprecedented high level of foreign military sales (FMS), from previous annual levels averaging between approximately \$8 billion and \$12 billion to a fiscal year (FY) 2009 level close to \$40 billion. “That is a staggering 500 percent growth!” says Vice Admiral Jeffrey Wieringa, Director of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA).

This changing landscape presents many challenges to our security cooperation community—and requires responsive changes by our 7000-plus person workforce and innovative changes to our Information Technology (IT) systems.

### **How are we meeting these challenges?**

The series of seven articles in this section addresses some of the changes and improvements that the security cooperation community is initiating in response to this new landscape. This article presents an overview of some of these high-level, global changes.

The next three articles discuss IT initiatives developed in response to the changing landscape:

- The Security Cooperation Enterprise Solution (SCES)
- The Enhanced Freight Tracking System (EFTS)
- The Security Cooperation Management Suite (SCMS). SCMS presents a common operating picture for those working to achieve security cooperation objectives within operational environments

The military department (MILDEP) articles to follow, describe several Continuous Process Improvements (CPI) initiatives using Lean Six Sigma or other approaches. Some of these are ideal sources for lessons-learned and for sharing of “best practices.”

Concluding this section is the announcement of the Air Force-hosted Security Cooperation Tri-Service Conference in Covington, Kentucky (near Cincinnati, Ohio) on 3-5 November 2009. We hope that many of you can join us at that forum to continue the discussions on the changing landscape and our security cooperation community response.

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## The Global Security Cooperation Offices Review

The Global Security Cooperation Offices (SCOs) Review is designed to determine the optimal staffing requirements of security cooperation offices worldwide. DSCA is contracting for a global assessment designed to respond to evolving demands throughout the security cooperation community. The objective of this review is to determine the optimal staffing requirements for each SCO assigned to the six geographic combatant commands (GCCs). This review architecture will be based upon the key functions and mission essential task lists that each SCO is required to perform and the measured level of activity required to satisfactorily accomplish each of those tasks.

The review will propose reallocation of existing staffing to meet current requirements for all SCOs and identify the number of additional positions required for SCOs determined to be currently understaffed. The review will also, where possible, propose alternative staffing strategies to more effectively and efficiently manage existing core tasks or available staffing (such as regionalization or theater surge capabilities). The ultimate goal is to evaluate staffing and missions to assist our community in synchronizing its efforts with those of the GCCs. This is the first time a global review has been conducted.

### New Federal Performance Agenda

Identifying high-priority performance goals is at the top of the Obama Administration's management agenda. At an April 20, 2009 Cabinet meeting at the White House, President Obama challenged each agency head to improve performance and to find efficiencies.

Reflecting this emphasis on performance, the new federal Chief Performance Officer Dr. Jeffrey Zients, dual-hatted as the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Deputy Director of Management, said at his Senate confirmation hearing:

I found that leadership, measurement, and a motivated workforce create the foundation for good performance.

This Administration is very focused on performance goals, especially emphasizing collaboration within organizations and across agencies. In addition to prioritizing goals, the Administration wants to ensure that top leadership is invested in performance improvement initiatives and that agencies employ best practices and evidence-based strategies. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has taken that challenge very seriously and is responding to the OMB June 11, 2009 Memorandum to identify a limited number of high-priority goals and begin developing strategies to address them.



Director Defense Security Cooperation Agency, discussing the goal of "Enhancing the Security Cooperation Workforce".

### Enhance the Security Cooperation Workforce — Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management Training

One of these draft Department of Defense (DOD) high-priority goals has immediate impact upon the security cooperation community. That goal is "Enhance the Security Cooperation Workforce"—ensuring that 100 percent of the community workforce receives training from The Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management (DISAM). This DOD goal reflects the high-level DOD attention there is on our community to expeditiously and successfully execute security cooperation programs.

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Over the last decade, we've seen tremendous growth in both scope and magnitude of security cooperation," stated Vice Admiral Wieringa, Director, DSCA. Recently I've found many cases in overseas SCOs where people were working on security cooperation activities with no experience or training. Obviously, it would be great if we could fill billets with experienced people. But at a minimum, security cooperation personnel should have completed training on the fundamentals. We have started to focus on this training metric and will continue to work on improvement in 2010.

### **Linking Strategic Planning, Performance Measurements, and Process Improvement**

DSCA's focus on improving performance includes launching a rigorous strategic planning process headed by Mr. Fred Beauchamp, DSCA Strategic Planner. This process includes executive leadership off-sites and workforce focus groups. The DSCA Strategic Plan goals and objectives are linked to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USDP) goals and objectives and to the Deputy Secretary of Defense high-priority performance goals. The DSCA Strategic Plan 2009-2014 is to be completed by September 30, 2009. This will allow DSCA headquarters directorates to develop their implementation plans and their employees to tie their FY 2010 individual job objectives to the new strategic goals and objectives. The next step in the strategic planning process will be to develop performance measurements and metrics and hold quarterly reviews of those DSCA metrics.

Security cooperation community metrics are reviewed quarterly at DSCA-hosted Security Cooperation Business Forums (SCBFs), which include representatives from:

- DSCA
- Each of the MILDEPs
- The Joint Staff
- Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics (AT&L)
- Defense Logistics Agency (DLA)
- Defense Technology Security Agency (DTSA)
- International customer and industry association

Reviewing performance measurements and metrics often identifies the need for change in our business processes. Process improvement is a big part of achieving higher-level performance, and Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) is part of Secretary Gates' efforts to find efficiencies. Mr. Eric Ferguson is DSCA's CPI program manager and a Lean Six Sigma (LSS) black belt. Headquarters DSCA and related organizational elements include 44 green belts who have done numerous LSS projects for process improvement. Some of these projects include:

- Letter of Offer and Acceptance (LOA) Rework
- Identify New Metric for LOA Processing and 36b Congressional Notification Review
- Letter of Request (LOR) Timeliness
- Repair and Return Cycle Time Improvement

The majority of these initiatives have had significant leadership oversight, and many have involved extensive teaming with the MILDEPs to achieve standardization and greater efficiencies. Through this collaborative approach, the security cooperation community will experience faster transformational progress that is critical to our need to provide more effective and efficient processes across all SCOs.

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This process improvement work in DSCA, in the MILDEPs, and throughout the federal government is integral to the Administration's performance management agenda and to performance improvements in our security cooperation community.

**About the Author**

Freda J. Lodge is the Chief Performance Officer (CPO) at the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA). As the CPO, she is charged with leading the agency and the community to improve overall performance. She previously served as the Principal Director for Strategy at DSCA where her Directorate responsibilities included providing strategic direction for plans, policies, and resources of Security Cooperation missions. She has over 20 years government service, plus 10 years in private industry working on international defense issues. She holds a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Virginia, and a Master's in Public Administration (MPA) from George Washington University. Her awards include the Department of Navy Commendation Medal for Superior Civilian Service.