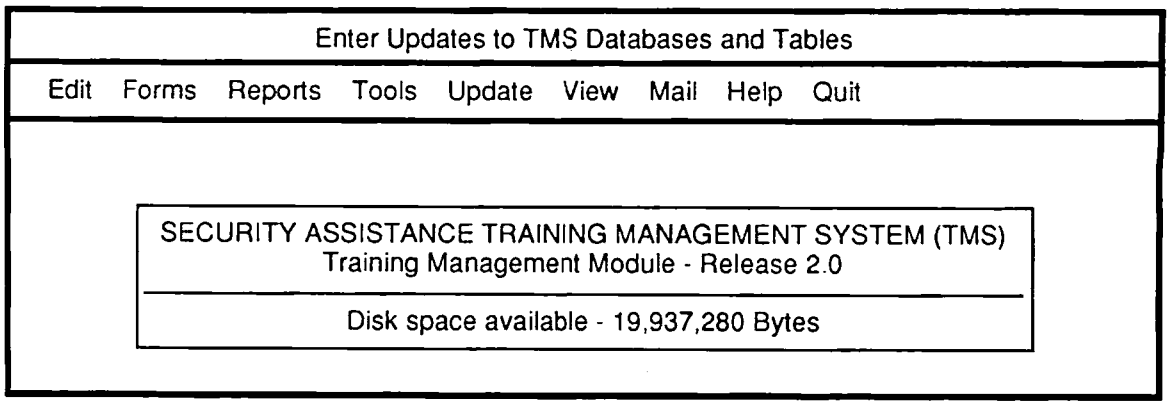
11 Exceptionally Useful Capabilities Of The Training Management System (TMS) Version 2.0

By

Major Jimmy Thrash, USAF

INTRODUCTION

For those members of the security assistance training community, the acronym TMS has come to take on a special meaning. *TMS* is a computer software package which runs on a personal computer (PC). The package was principally designed for use by overseas security assistance organizations (SAOs) and unified command (UC) headquarters personnel who manage military training under the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) and International Military Education and Training (IMET) programs. However, TMS is also proving to be a useful management tool for CONUS training agencies and schools. TMS is one of several components of the *Security Assistance Network (SAN)*, which is now formalized in Section 1504 of the *Security Assistance Management Manual (SAMM)*.

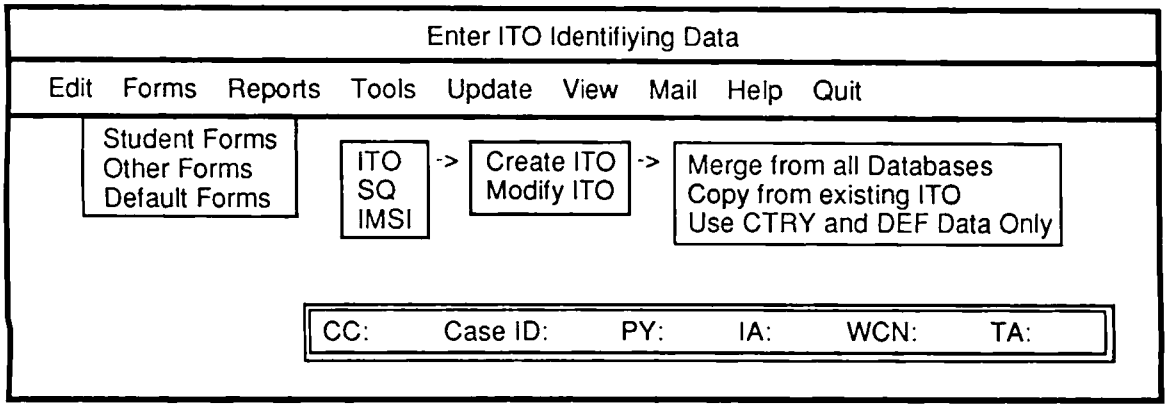


A new, greatly enhanced Version of TMS has been released and fielded for the use of the Security Assistance training community. TMS Version 2.0 was released in April 1993, and is the culmination of over a year-and-a-half of experience with previous versions of TMS. Initial training on pre-release copies of 2.0 was conducted during all five CY93 Unified Command (UC) Training Program Management Reviews (TPMRs). Extensive testing was conducted by the UCs, DISAM, DSAA, and 10 selected SAOs, beginning in November 1992. TMS 2.0 has numerous new and enhanced capabilities, of which only eleven are highlighted here. Master them and you will be on your way toward becoming a TMS "expert".

This article is not intended to be read like a novel, then put on the shelf for display. It is written as a reference document. Read it through one time. Then carefully, one-at-a-time, read each of the eleven sections, which describes a different capability. As you read each section, put it into practice, until all eleven capabilities are second nature to you. From time to time, you may need to refer back to the article as a refresher. So keep it handy as a desk-top reference. The information in this article should supplement the on-line TMS "Help" function, and the *TMS User's Guide*, produced by DISAM.

DISCUSSION OF CAPABILITIES

1. PRODUCE AUTOMATED INVITATIONAL TRAVEL ORDERS (ITOs)



A. AUTOMATICALLY GENERATE AN ITO (MERGING FROM SIX DATABASES).

The normal way to produce an ITO is to "Merge From All Databases." Prior to printing the ITO, accomplish the following steps:

- **First**, completely fill in your Country Profile.

- **Second,** create a "Default ITO" for both an IMET and an FMS ITO, as applicable. When creating the Default ITO, enter an "X" inthe appropriate blocks, and fill in the blanks that apply to *most* of your International Military Students (IMS). That will minimize the amount of typing necessary for the majority of your ITOs.

- **Third,** "personalize" the "Distribution Table" under the "EDIT" function. Type in the proper name of the embassy (e.g., Royal Bandarian Embassy). You may also add any additional distribution addresses you desire. **NOTE**: Steps one through three only have to be accomplished once, except for updates.

- **Fourth,** fill in the Student Record in the "Student Data" option under the "EDIT" function, for the appropriate WCN. This should be accomplished when biographical data is made available by your country liaisons.

The additional information that comes from the STL and Location Table databases, should not need editing (actually, you cannot currently edit the STL database in TMS). Once all of the information is merged and a "new" ITO is displayed on the screen, you may edit it, print it out, or just save it to the ITO database. (This is the last opportunity you have to change or input anything in the ITO before you print it). At this point, you should read the screens of the ITO, insure that everything is correct, change anything that needs changing, then press F3 to print your ITO. Answer "Y" to the question, "Print all pages?" If you get a warning that you do not have enough memory, get some help from your UC System Administrator or DISAM.

One of the features included in Version 2.0 is the automatic generation of a *standardized ITO number format.* This ten-position format (e.g., BDDI941001) consists of the country code (e.g., BD = Bandaria), the U.S. implementing agency (e.g., D = USAF), the IMET program year or

FMS case designator (e.g., I94 = IMET with FY 94 funding; or ABC = FMS case designator), and the worksheet control number (WCN) (e.g., 1001). However, the ITO number can be further tailored to local SAO use by the availability of a three-position *SUFFIX*. For example, if the SAO wanted to sequentially track students going to USAF courses, the suffix might be 01, 02, and so forth.

B. MODIFY AN EXISTING ITO:

This option will most likely be used to meet one of two situations:

- Different International Military Student. You create an ITO, but before the student departs for the US, you are notified that a different IMS will be attending the training. You may have already mailed copies of the ITO to the agencies listed in the Distribution Table. With the automatic ITO numbering system, you can't cancel this ITO number and give the new ITO a new number. What you can do is bring up the original ITO, add a SUFFIX to the ITO number (e.g., -01, /A, etc.), make the appropriate changes (name, rank, dependents, etc.), and type in a NOTE in the "REMARKS" section (block 15). As an example, "NOTE: Original ITO number BDDI941001 for Capt Joe Blow has been canceled and replaced with this one." With the suffix, the new ITO will effectively have a new ITO number.

- Multiple IMS. You have a Worksheet Control Number (WCN) with a quantity of more than one. For example; five IMS are attending F-16 Simulator training with the same WCN (QTY=5). To accomplish this, simply create the first ITO the normal way by merging from all databases. Then four times in succession, bring up the original ITO, make the appropriate changes (name, rank, etc.), type in a suffix starting with "-01" followed by "-02", "-03", etc., for each successive ITO, and print them out individually.

C. COPY AN EXISTING ITO, AND CREATE A NEW ONE FROM IT:

This option will be useful when it's necessary to create an ITO, but STL data has not yet been put into the system by the MILDEPs. For example, you have a student on "stand-by" for a last minute US Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC) quota. You get a call from your country manager at SATFA telling you that Country "X" dropped out at the last minute and your country can have their quota if you can have the IMS there in 10 days. He gives you the essential information (WCN, Start Date, etc.), and you have to create an ITO. Unfortunately, there is no STL data in your database (you will get a new STL update in a couple of weeks, but that's too late). What you can do in that situation is to select the option, "Copy from an Existing ITO". Enter the requested "key" information for an ITO record in your database that is similar (perhaps you already have one or more IMS attending CGSC) . Then enter the requested "key" information for the new ITO. You can then change the name, rank, and anything else necessary, and print a new ITO. The automatic ITO number will be accurate because you gave it the right "keys" (CC+IA+CASEID or IMET PY+WCN).

D. CREATE AN ITO FROM "SCRATCH" BY USING "COUNTRY PROFILE" AND "DEFAULT" DATA ONLY.

This is the "last resort" option. If you need to create an ITO, but don't have a similar ITO from which to copy, use this option. Enter "Student Forms," "ITO," "Create ITO," and select the last option, "Use CTRY and DEF Data Only". (There is a short way of accomplishing all those steps; just press the "pgdn" key while highlighting the "FORMS" main menu item.) When you provide the requested "key" information, it will bring up an ITO form with the information entered which is stored in your "Country Profile" and the ITO default record. You will have more typing to do, but at least you will be able to create an ITO in TMS.

2. USE THE "IMET SUMMARY DATA REPORT" TO MANAGE YOUR IMET COUNTRY ALLOCATION AND MILDEP DISTRIBUTION.

IMET SUMMARY DATA
APPROVED COUNTRY(s) PROGRAM FOR PRIORITY "A" TRAINING

BANDARIA — —> PY 1993

	TOAL PROGRAM	ARMY MANAGED	AIR FORCE MANAGED	NAVY MANAGED	COUNTRY (PO)ARMY	COUNTRY (PO)AIR FORCE	COUNTRY (PO)NAVY	COUNTRY (PO)OTHER
$ ALLOCATION TOTALS	1,075,000	525,000	200,000	350,000	500,000	200,000	350,000	25,000
$ PROGRAMMED TOTALS	1,080,584	527,414	191,493	361,677	507,282	201,539	371,763	0
$ OVER/UNDER ALLOCATION	5,584	2,414	-8,507	11,677	7,282	1,539	21,763	-25,000

Beginning with FY94, the IMET country allocation and MILDEP distribution will be managed by the MILDEPs and the SAOs. The Defense Security Assistance Agency (DSAA) will only monitor the Country Allocations to insure no SAO over-subscribes the designated allocation. The actual funding will be controlled by the MILDEPs. Therefore, it will become extremely important that the MILDEPs and the SAOs know how each country program is scheduled relative to the country allocation and MILDEP distributions. In other words, the following questions must be addressed: "Is the program over/under the country allocation?", and "How is the program distributed among the MILDEPs?" The "IMET Summary Data Report," under the "Program Summary" option of the "REPORTS" function, is designed to keep the SAO informed of that information.

In order for this report to be accurate, you must keep the IMET allocation and MILDEP distribution data in the "Country Profile" accurate and up to date. (Inputting the Program Originator information can be useful for the SAO as well, but is not required.) Then periodically, at least after each STL Update, run the report and compare the actual scheduled program with the **"approved" program.** DSAA and the MILDEPs have provided information regarding periodic re-distribution of the allocations among the MILDEPs. (NOTE: This report only calculates Priority "A" training.)

3. USE THE "STUDENT MANAGEMENT REPORT" TO BETTER CONTROL YOUR TIME, AND MEET STUDENT MANAGEMENT MILESTONES.

This report, under the "Custom Reports" option (900 series) of the "REPORTS" function, can be extremely helpful for the SAO who is required to give English Comprehension Level (ECL) tests. A modified version of the report, which can be created by the SAO, can be helpful, even for one who doesn't give ECL tests. The following comments are addressed to the ECL testing SAOs:

As any SAO who has done it knows, giving ECL tests is extremely time-consuming. It is not just the hour (or 65 minutes) it takes the IMS to accomplish the test.; rather, it is the time consumed in preparing the tests, grading them, "cleaning up" the test booklets, securing the test material, and recording and reporting the results. Then, as if that wasn't enough, if the SAO doesn't "take charge" of the testing schedule, one country Service will call up and announce that they are sending five persons for ECL tests at 1300 next Tuesday; another Service will announce that they are sending eight persons at 0900 on Thursday, another sending 12 persons Friday at 1100, etc. The same scenario can occur regarding pre-departure briefings, if the SAO doesn't take charge of that schedule as well.

Other problems this report addresses are: (1) giving ECL tests too early, and having them expire (105 days) before the IMS reports for training; (2) entering the 60-day cancellation penalty envelope, without an identified and qualified candidate; and (3) your country liaison not knowing exactly when to have all the required documentation to you for processing (e.g., biographical information, medical report, HIV test results, security clearance, etc.).

SAO TRAINING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (TMS)
Report number 9001 — STUDENT MANAGEMENT REPORT
PAGE: 1 DATE: 07/04/93

COUNTRY: BD

WCN	NAME	GRADE	SERVICE	ECL SCHEDULED	ECL REQD	CANCEL DATE	FORMS DUE	BRIEFING DATE	REPORT DATE
1002			AIR FORCE	17/12/92	70	29/0193	02/03/93	27/03/93	01/04/93
6140			AIR FORCE	21/12/92	70SA	02/02/93	06/03/93	31/03/93	05/04/94
6007			ARMY	22/12/92	75	03/03/93	07/03/93	01/04/93	06/04/93
6319			NAVY	23/12/92	70	04/02/93	08/03/93	02/04/93	07/04/93

In order to take control of student management and eliminate these potential problems, every SAO should schedule ECL tests on specific days and at specific times of the day (e.g., 1st and 3rd Wednesday at 0900). Pre-departure briefings should be similarly scheduled (e.g., every Monday at 1000). Of course, every SAO will have different schedules, depending on the number of tests given each month, size of staff, physical capabilities for testing (labs), etc. If you haven't been doing this, your host country liaison personnel may require some "training" to get used to your schedule. But, you will go a long way toward maximizing your time and efficiency if you take charge of your schedule. TMS gives you the capability and flexibility to schedule your own time and monitor it with an easy-to-produce report. You can also give a copy of the report to your country liaison, so he/she can efficiently assist you in processing the IMS.

In order to make this report work for you, several steps need to be taken in advance.

A. Profile Settings:

- You must fill in blocks 4-7 in the Country Profile, in order to set the logic that fits your situation. "Earliest ECL Test Date" should *never* be greater than 105 days prior to Report Date, because the life-span of an ECL test is 105 days. However it could be set for less than 105 days, if you cannot or do not wish to test that early. Similarly, "Latest ECL Test Date" and "Cancellation date" should not be later than 60 days prior to first course start date. Actually, they should be a few days earlier than 60 days (62, 65, 70), because the purpose is to give you and your country liaison a few days advance warning before the WCN enters the 60-day cancellation penalty window. If you need more advance notice, because of communication or transportation limitations in your country, feel free to set the default earlier.

- For block 7, "Pre-Departure Briefing Date," you should allow enough time between your regularly scheduled briefing dates and the Report Date. For example, you don't want TMS to schedule a pre-departure briefing on the same day the IMS is scheduled to report in the US for training. It might be a little difficult to get him there that quickly. So you decide, based on your country situation, what minimum number of days are required between pre-departure briefings and Report Date. Does the IMS need a minimum of five days, seven days, ten days (whatever)? Set that number in block 7. (**NOTE:** These numbers can be changed any time you

desire. However, remember that TMS will not re-compute the dates in the Student Database, and subsequently print them in the "Student Management Report" until the next time you perform an STL update. So if you need the dates re-computed before you receive new STL data, simply go through the STL UPDATE procedure again using the current STL data. **ADDITIONAL NOTE:** If for some reason, the TMS computed date(s) is/are not acceptable to the IMS, and you wish to schedule the student manually, you may edit the dates in the Student Record and "lock them in." When you do, an asterisk(*) appears next to the dates and they will not be changed when you perform an STL Update, unless the "locked-in date" falls outside the maximum and minimum dates you have set in your Country Profile.)

B. Calendar Settings:

- You must also prepare the "Briefing Calendar" and "Testing Calendar" in the "Table" option under the "EDIT" function. This normally only needs to be accomplished once each year. When selecting the dates, you should take into consideration the "Official Embassy Approved US/Local Holidays" list, since you won't be working on those days.

- You should also take into consideration the important holidays the country Services will observe, even though the US country team members may not observe them, since your potential IMS will not normally be available on such days.

C. Running the Report:

- Once the logic is set in the Country Profile, and the scheduled dates for testing and briefing are set in the Calendars, you are in business. All you have to do is run the **"Student Management Report"** periodically (perhaps the first day of your work-week), keep a copy for yourself, and prepare a copy for each of your country liaisons.

- When you set up the report, on the "Data selection/Search criteria" screens, all you need to do is set a range of dates you want to consider. That will depend on the size of your program and the number of students you process. If you have a small program, you may not want to put anything in the "Report Date" space. Otherwise, you may want to limit the selection to a "6-month" or "4-month" report. You accomplish this by putting a "range" by the "Report Date" data field. For example, 01/03/93:01/07/93 would be a 4-month report (assuming today's date is 1 Mar 93); and 01/03/93:01/09/93 would be a 6-month report.

In a future TMS enhancement, it may be appropriate to make the selection criteria more "user friendly," by having a "default" the SAO can set for an "x-month report." The computer always knows what today's date is, and the default would tell it how far in the future to look.

Try using this feature in TMS. It will make your job easier, and it will help you ensure all the requirements for processing your IMS are accomplished in a timely manner—without getting any 50 percent cancellation penalties or sending somebody to the US whose ECL test score has expired.

4. BUILD A "PENDING CHANGE" DATABASE TO BETTER MANAGE YOUR DYNAMICALLY CHANGING TRAINING PROGRAM.

A. What You Can Do. You can do three things with the Pending Change capability:

- Create **Pending Change records** that can be sent to the MILDEPs via FAX or electronic mail (E-MAIL).

• Build a **Pending Change database** that can be automatically "**reconciled**" with your STL database each time you update your STL.

• Produce **Custom Reports from your Pending Change database** that will help you analyze your IMET and FMS change requests/results.

B. **Steps of Operation.** Nothing in the Pending Change function works unless you use TMS to create your STL change requests. If you are not currently doing so, you will have to discipline yourself to enter the "Pending Changes" option under the "EDIT" function and create your requests, thereby building your Pending Change database. The function is easy to use. You just have to get used to it. Practice these steps in utilizing the Pending Change capabilities:

• First, enter the "Pending Changes" option under the "EDIT" function. Note the capability to ADD, CHANGE, or LOCATE Pending Change records. Press ENTER at the ADD option and create your new record. Repeat the process for each WCN you desire to Add, Drop, or Change, in reference to your country training program. (**NOTE**: It will simplify the compilation of Pending Change requests by MILDEPs if you will enter them all in one session, perhaps towards the end of the day.)

• Next, enter the "Pending Change Request" option under the "REPORTS" function. You will see the question, "Do you want to send requests by E-Mail? Y/N". Answer "Y".

•• After you answer "Y" to the question, "Do you want to send requests by E-Mail?", the Report Options screen will appear. You have the options to **View** the report, **Print** it (for FAXing), or **Send** it to a disk file. If you want to send it in the next Interoperability Decision Support System (IDSS) upload, select the third option. A pop-up screen will appear with several possible disk drives for your consideration. Choose the disk drive you are using for TMS and IDSS and the report will be stored in the "MAIL" function of TMS, ready for transmission the next time you log onto IDSS. If you want the report sent to a floppy disk, select the appropriate disk drive. It will be stored in a file named REPORT.PRN. (Perhaps you just want to keep a database record of it; or maybe you don't have access to IDSS on your PC, and you want to carry it to another PC to send via E-Mail upload.) **NOTE**: Each time you choose the "send the report to a disk file" option in TMS, it will go into the REPORT.PRN file, and will **OVER-WRITE** the REPORT.PRN file then standing. Therefore, if you want to save all your reports, you must **RENAME** them before sending another report to a disk file.

•• You may also want to **View** your messages, even **Edit** them, before sending them out. To do this, enter the "Review Messages" option under the "MAIL" function. There you will see a list of all your messages, including ones you have created in the Pending Change option plus the ones created in the Mail function. You will also see the "Status" of each message. The ones waiting to be sent via E-Mail should display the status, "READY". (Press F1 while in the "MAIL" function to learn more about this feature.) Highlight the message you want to View or Edit and press ENTER. You may then edit the message any way you like, (e.g., You may want to change the "To" address, which is defaulted as SATFA-TNG, AFSAT-TNG, or NETSAFA-TNG to SATFA-PACOM, NETSAFA-SAUDI, etc., in order to send it directly to the most appropriate IDSS Office Address.). Press F2 to Save your changes (answer "Y"), and a pop-up table will appear with four options. Select "Send in next IDSS upload", and your TMS job is complete. Now all you have to do is log onto IDSS, select the "**AM - IDSS Automail**" option on MENU 0, and your reports will be on their way. The next time you go into TMS, enter the "MAIL" function, and you can check the status of your reports. If all went well, they should all read "OK". If something else is in the status box, press F1 for HELP.

C. Reconciliation. TMS 2.0 will also **RECONCILE** your Pending Change requests with each new Update of the STL database. If there is an exact match between a WCN line of training, and a Pending Change request, TMS will annotate the STATUS of that PC record with the word, "RESOLVED". You can view the status of your PC requests in the "Pending Change" option of the "VIEW" function. The PC requests that have been resolved will drop to the bottom of your list of pending changes. For example, if there are 25 Pending Change requests in your database, and 15 of them have been resolved, the 10 remaining ones (i.e., the ones that are still pending) will be at the top of your list. They are the ones you will need to give special attention to after each STL update, in order to determine what the MILDEPs are doing with them. This can be a very helpful tool in keeping track of your training program change requests.

D. Custom Reports. The final capability TMS provides in relation to Pending Changes, is the creation of **Custom Reports** using the Pending Change database. DISAM plans to create some Standard Reports (900 series) for your consideration in the near future. In the meantime, if you develop a report on your own, please share it with us and we will make it available to the entire SA training community.

5. USE THE "STL RECONCILIATION REPORT" TO MONITOR SIGNIFICANT CHANGES BETWEEN EACH STL UPDATE.

A. Reconciliation Report. In previous versions of TMS, this function was called "ISTL Change Report", and it's primary purpose was to help the SAO verify the validity of the new STL data before proceeding with the Update process and deleting the old data. However, interest expressed by a number of SAOs has resulted in it becoming a complete Reconciliation Report. As any Training Manager knows, one of the most important and time consuming jobs to be accomplished is the comparison of the new STLs with the old—line by line—and noting all changes. TMS will now do that job for you.

B. Tips. Here are some "tips" that will help make this function more effective:

- Specify the **IMET PYs** you wish to reconcile. If you are still receiving STL data for the PY you just recently completed, you may not be particularly interested in reconciling that program. The same may hold true for "straw-man" or out-year STLs that you know haven't changed any. The choice is yours; you can reconcile them all, or be selective.

- As with all TMS reports, you have the option of **"Viewing it on screen", "Printing the report",** or **"Sending it to a disk".** You will probably find it most useful to Print the report. That way you can check all the changes carefully and insure they are accurate. If you find inaccuracies, call them to the attention of the responsible MILDEP country manager immediately. However, if the changes are not unwieldy, you may prefer to view them on screen, then send the Report to a disk for a historical record. **NOTE:** If you want to keep a historical record (and you should) you *must* either print a copy or send it to a disk. If you simply View it and do nothing else with it, you will lose the capability of comparing the two STLs after you accomplish the STL Update process. **ADDITIONAL NOTE:** If you choose to keep a historical record on a disk, you must RENAME the REPORT.PRN file after you create it. Otherwise, it will be over-written the next time you send any other report to a file. One suggestion is to rename the files, STLREC1.RPT (for STL Reconciliation Report # 1), STLREC2.RPT, STLREC3.RPT, etc.

C. Report Annotations. Finally, learn the **"ACTION TAKEN"** annotations on the report. Only one action will be annotated, and it will be the one with the highest priority:

- First priority is "Report Date Changed". This could be quite critical to your program.

- Second priority is "WCN added".
- Third priority is "WCN dropped".
- Fourth priority is "Cost increase/decrease +/- 10%". This will show up if any of thecosts increase/decrease by 10% or greater.
- Fifth priority is "Data changed". This will indicate any other changes in the "key" elements that are compared and reported. You will have to look closely and determine which data elements changed.

NOTE: If a complete FMS case or IMET PY was either added or dropped, that information will be printed on the report. TMS will not waste time showing every line of training that was added or deleted.

6. USE THE "BACKUP" AND "RESTORE" FUNCTIONS UNDER "TOOLS" TO KEEP A HISTORICAL RECORD OF YOUR DATA.

A. Why Backup? Stuff happens! Computers fail; lightening strikes occur; electrical brown-outs occur; data is inadvertently erased. Therefore, it's important for you to protect all your hard work by periodically "backing up" your TMS data. The frequency of your back-ups will depend on the size of your program, the number and frequency of the changes to your program, and your own personal desires. Some SAOs may do a back-up at the end of each work day. Others may do it at the end of their work week. *Everybody* should do it after each new STL Update.

B. Backup Procedure. The procedure is simple. What is happening is the compression of the data into its smallest size and copying that compressed file to a floppy disk. In case you are not aware of it, a floppy disk needs to be **formatted** before you can copy data to it. You don't have to understand what that means, but TMS will do it for you. Here's how it works:

- Enter the **"TOOLS"** function. If you need to format a disk, highlight the **"Format"** option, press Enter, and follow the instructions on the screen. A disk only needs to be formatted once.
- Then highlight the **"Backup"** option and press Enter. You will see that you have the option of backing up the MASL and HELP databases separately. That is because those relatively large databases are easily recoverable if they are corrupted or lost. Also, since they are not updated with the same frequency that the other databases are, you can create a backup file for them once, and set it aside until either you need it or a newer update is provided. On a regular basis, you only need to backup your other databases.
- Then, when the process is completed, set the floppy disk aside for a rainy day. If that rainy day occurs (e.g. you need to restore your data), you probably will want to re-install TMS (because TMS likely received the same damage your databases did). Once that is completed, simply enter the **"TOOLS"** function again, select the **"Restore"** option, insert the floppy disk with your backup data on it into the appropriate disk drive, and follow the instructions on the screen. You can also restore your MASL & HELP data, if necessary.

7. USE THE "VIEW" FUNCTION FOR THE STL DATABASE, IN PLACE OF A PAPER STL.

A. View Function Concept. One of the major SAO concerns regarding previous versions of TMS was that the STL, in the VIEW function, didn't look like the paper STL they

were used to seeing. It was an "integrated" STL, sorted only by WCN. All IMET program years and FMS cases were mixed together. That has been changed in TMS 2.0.

B. **How the View Function Works.** Once the STL database has been Updated, it is sorted by Country Code (in case you manage more than one country program), FMS Case, IMET PY, Implementing Agency (IA), and WCN. Those sort "keys" are noted at the bottom of the screen of the "STL Database" option under the "View" function, and are important when using the "**goto**" feature in TMS. (You will also note a Record Control Number [RCN] "key". The STL database is not sorted by RCN, but since RCN is a unique identifier for a line of training, you may use it, without identifying any of the other keys.) It's important to note that the STL View option doesn't have a "sort & search" capability. It only has a "goto" capability. And since any given WCN may be included in several IMET PYs and even FMS Cases, you will have to use all the keys if you want to go directly to a particular WCN. Therefore, if you enter a CASEID or PY: skip IA; then enter WCN; TMS will take you to the 1st WCN in the FMS Case or PY you selected. That's no tremendous handicap, since you can then scroll through the data, highlight the WCN you are interested in, and view it. You can either view it horizontally, by using the right and left course arrows, or bring the entire WCN record on screen by pressing Enter. **NOTE:** The only places in TMS where you can view the entire **REMARKS** entry are in the "Student Data" option under the "EDIT" function (by pressing the F6 function key at the bottom of the screen of a student record), or in the CUSTOM REPORTS option, when using the STL database, and answering "Y" to the question, "Do you want the STL Remarks?"

C. **IDSS STL View Option.** This might be a good place to comment on the "**IDSS STL**" option under the "VIEW" function. The "IDSS STL" differs from the STL, in that the STL is "processed" data, after it goes through the "Update" procedure of TMS. The "IDSS STL" is the "unprocessed" or "raw" data without being Updated into TMS. In other words, it is the data that is sitting in your linkpc\download directory on your hard drive, or wherever else you have it stored. It may even be on a floppy disk, if you update TMS via a floppy disk without downloading or copying it to your hard drive. Now, to be perfectly honest, it isn't totally unprocessed. Our fine TMS programmers incorporate the Index file into it, so it appears sorted, much like the full-blown STL database. However, if you look closely, you will find that it is not exactly like it. The data isn't displayed as clearly as in the processed STL database (e.g., the dates appear as large numbers, with commas rather than slashes - 101,093 rather than 10/10/93). What are the purposes of the "IDSS STL" option?

- The SAO can view his "new" data before he updates it into TMS, and thereby deletes the old STL data. That will lend confidence in the new data, before deleting the old.

- Unified Command training advisors, who deal with many countries, can View the STL data of a particular country from a floppy disk, without downloading it to their hard drive or Updating it into TMS. That will save both time and disk space. In a later enhancement, we hope to be able to create Custom and Summary Reports from floppy disks. That will be a great advantage to the Unified Commands.

8. LEARN THE CAPABILITIES OF THE NEW "LIST" SOFTWARE.

A. List Software Overview. The List software, by Buerg Software, enhances TMS in two functions: the "DSAA Roster" option under the "VIEW" function, and the "REPORTS" function. This new software program enables you to view the DSAA Roster and Reports you have created, exactly as they will print out on paper. The List software has many other capabilities, which you can see by pressing the function key, F1, while viewing a Report or the DSAA Roster on your monitor. That "Help" screen, which is part of the software itself, is very "busy" and can be confusing. Some more useful information is in the TMS "HELP" function. To read that

information, enter the TMS Help function at the Main Menu. Then select option number 7, "About TMS," and read the information concerning "List.com by Buerg".

B. **Things You Can Do**. Following are a few of the capabilities you will find most helpful:

- **"Scrolling"** with your up or down arrows is activated (and de-activated) by pressing the key "C". When you press "C", you can start the up or down scrolling by pressing the arrow. To stop scrolling, press the arrow again. To increase the speed of scrolling, press and hold down the + (plus) key until you are satisfied with the speed. The - (minus) key works the same way to slow it down. To de-activate the scrolling function altogether, press "C" again.

- **"Finding"** and **"Scanning"** are two useful functions you should master. At the bottom of the screen is the "Command" line. The word "Command" is at the left side of the screen. This is where you will read the command you have given. "Finding" and "Scanning" are similar, yet there is a very important difference. **Scanning is "case-sensitive;" Finding is not.** What this means is that when you "scan," it looks for an exact match of upper-case (caps) and lower-case letters. So if you are looking for the word "Infantry", and you type in "infantry", it won't find it (because you forgot the capital "I"). Therefore, the "Find" function is probably more useful, since it doesn't look for case. In any event, you activate the Find function by pressing the key "F", or the backslash "\". To activate the Scan function, press "S", or the slash (/). Each search begins with the line at the top of the screen and looks FORWARD (down on your screen). It will high-light the first occurrence of the word it finds. To find the next occurrence, press "ALT-A" or the F3 function key. To find the previous occurrence, press F9.

- Since finding and scanning always looks forward (unless you read the fine print of the TMS HELP function—you can make it search backwards if you learn how), you need to learn to use the **"HOME"** key. "HOME" will return you to the top of your Report or the DSAA Roster. Conversely, the **"END"** key will take you to the bottom line.

- One final comment about List: if you have a color monitor, and you get tired of the standard TMS colors, try pressing the F5 & F6 keys. Once you have found the colors you like, you can "lock them in" by pressing the "ALT-C" combination.

9. USE THE AUTOMATIC "MAIL" FUNCTION TO SEND PENDING CHANGE REQUESTS, STUDENT ARRIVAL MESSAGES, AND OTHER EMAIL.

A. **Concept**. Creating Email messages while connected to IDSS is slow and can be expensive. Exiting TMS to gain access to a word processing program, creating your document, saving it as a "text file", and uploading it manually to IDSS, can be inconvenient. Therefore, when it's appropriate, why not create your messages in TMS and upload them "automatically" to IDSS? TMS and IDSS have created that capability.

B. **Pending Change Requests.** Creating Pending Change requests, and sending them via the "MAIL" function has already been discussed in item number 4 above. The only additional comment necessary is that you can enter the "MAIL" function, "Review Messages" option, and edit your Pending Change Requests. For example; you may want to change the receiver's address to a more appropriate "Office Address." To do this, highlight the appropriate message, press Enter, and type over the address (examples; SATFA-PACOM, AFSAT-CENTCOM, NETSAFA-SAUDI). NOTE: For the addresses to "take," you will *first* have to enter the "Update Recipient" option, and enter the new addresses there. In the next TMS enhancement, we will create the option for each SAO to "default" the Pending Change Request Email addressees as they desire. In 2.0, they are hard-coded as SATFA-TNG, AFSAT-TNG, and NETSAFA-TNG.

C. Other E-Mail. For other types of Email messages, enter the **"Review Messages"** option and practice the capabilities indicated at the bottom of the screen:

- To **create** a new message, press F2. Give it a "Subject" as you desire. The "From" entry will be the IDSS User ID of the person whose name is defaulted in the "Change Sender ID" option. That "From" entry can be edited by typing over it. If the primary sender has permanently changed, create a new "default." As previously mentioned, the "To" entry must be listed in the "Update Recipients" table. When you have completed your message, press F2 to Save it, and answer "Y" to the "Save your changes?" question. You will then see the standard list of options; "SEND in next IDSS Upload," "HOLD message for now," "Keep as a DEFAULT message," or "DISCARD this message." If you want to use the automatic Email function, select option number one, and it will show the status of "Ready" when you review your Email messages. Throughout the day, create as many messages as you like, and when you are finished for the day (or any other time you desire) simply log onto IDSS, select the option on the first screen, "AM - IDSS AUTOMAIL," and all the messages you have prepared will be automatically sent. After the mail has been sent, IDSS will send a "Status" message to TMS, indicating whether or not the transaction was successful; and if not, why not? The next time you enter TMS, you should check the status of your Email by entering the "MAIL" function and reviewing your messages.

- You can also **Copy** any message by highlighting it and pressing F6. The only change you will notice will be the "T0" entry which will be blank. This option is useful if you want to send the same message to a different recipient.

- If you determine a need to change anything in the message, simply highlight it and press Enter. You can then **edit** anything in the message. Just remember that the "To" entry must be in the "Update Recipients" table to be valid.

10. CREATE A POSITIONS OF PROMINENCE REPORT (PPR) DATABASE TO ASSIST YOU IN PREPARING A REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL UNIFIED COMMAND TRAINING PROGRAM MANAGEMENT REVIEW.

A. PPR Database. TMS version 2.0 has taken some initial steps toward a perpetual, historical PPR database. We still have a way to go, but we have made progress. To use TMS to create your PPR database, you will have to **initially populate it manually.** That means you will have to take the PPR list you already have, and manually enter the data into TMS by using the "PPR Data" option under the "EDIT" function. When you enter the "PPR Data" option, you will see three capabilities: ADD, CHANGE, and LOCATE.

- To **ADD** a new record, enter the Name and Service (ID) number at the prompt. **NOTE:** The Service (ID) number is extremely important for future identification of PPR personnel. In many countries, the same last name is commonly used and can be very confusing. As we move into a perpetual, historical database, where all SA students are entered into it, it will be necessary to identify someone 20 or more years after he/she attended training, when he/she finally reaches a position of prominence in the country. The Service (ID) number can be very helpful in identifying those persons.

When the PPR data screen comes into view, fill in the data as it applies. Pay special attention to "Equivalent US rank." Press F1 to view a table of equivalent Military, Civil Service & Foreign Service grades. In some cases, the SAO will have to make a judgment call in order to factually reflect US equivalent. For example, in one country, a country rank of "Lieutenant General" or even "Colonel" may be the highest rank in the respective Service or even the entire military

organization. In that case, the SAO will need to "fudge" the US equivalent in order to reflect the true status and "position of prominence."

- To **Change** a record, enter the name or service number of the individual. If you don't know the correct spelling of the last name, type in as much of it as you can remember, and TMS will "pop up" a pick list of names that are similar for you to choose from. Once into the record, change anything that you like.

- If you cannot even guess at the correct spelling of the person's name, enter the **Locate** option. It will bring up a list of your entire PPR database, and you can scroll through it until you find the one you are looking for.

B. **PPR Report.** When you are ready to produce a **Report** from your **PPR** database, enter the "Reports" function; "Custom Reports" option. Currently there is no hard-wired, "Standard Report" (900 series) for PPR, so you will have to create your own. However, in the near future, prior to the next Unified Command Training Program Management Review (TPMR) cycle, DISAM will create a PPR Standard Report and provide it for update into TMS. Since the current PPR database only contains data on persons who have already reached the status of Position of Prominence, you probably will not have to enter any criteria in the "Data selection/Search criteria" screens. Simply print out your entire database. Once TMS has the capability of archiving historical data on all SA students, it will become necessary to select criteria for certain US equivalent grades; (e.g., >O-6; meaning, greater than O-6).

11. FOR CONUS TRAINING FACILITIES (SCHOOLS)—USE TMS TO PROJECT INCOMING IMS SCHEDULE.

A. **IDSS Can Help Schools, Too.** CONUS Training Facilities are just beginning to use TMS, and the capabilities for use by these school are limited. However one very useful capability is to download data from IDSS by the Location Code (LOC) that represents the respective school; then uploading it into TMS for use in projecting incoming students loads and schedules.

B. **Projecting Future Student Loads.** To accomplish this, the International Military Student Officer (IMSO) or Training Officer must have access to both **IDSS** and **TMS**. If you are an IMSO or Training Officer and you don't have these capabilities, contact your MILDEP training organization (SATFA, AFSAT or NETSAFA), or DISAM. Once you have these two capabilities, the following must be accomplished:

- Enter the **ISTL** option in IDSS. Select option number one (1), **"Download STL."** When the next screen comes up select the option **"Download by LOC"**, and enter the 3-digit LOC code that represents your school. The data will be downloaded into your **C:\LINKPC\DOWNLOAD** directory.

- The next step is a little tricky, especially if you are not computer literate. TMS only recognizes 2-digit country codes (CCs). Therefore, **you must rename the files** you just downloaded. They will be automatically downloaded as your LOC code plus .dbf and .dbt (2 files); (e.g., DLI.DBF AND DLI.DBT). You will have to rename the 3-digit LOC code as something with only 2 digits; (e.g., change DLI to DL; therefore you would have DL.DBF and DL.DBT). Renaming files can be easily accomplished in **WINDOWS, DOS,** or other Operating systems. It is not within the scope of this article to teach those functions. If you need help, ask someone locally to help you, contact your MILDEP Information Systems Officer, or DISAM. Once you know how to do it, it's easy. Hopefully, in a future enhancement of IDSS or TMS we can make this function more "user friendly".

• In TMS, you must create a "**Country Profile**" by entering the "EDIT" function, "Country Profile" option. Enter the 2-digit pseudo-country code (CC) you used when you re-named your dbf and dbt files (DL in the example). Training facilities don't need any other information in the Country Profile. Just press F2 to save your data and go to the "**UPDATE**" function and **Update the STL**. Once your STL data has been Updated into TMS, you can go to the "**REPORTS**" function and create any Custom Reports you desire. Perhaps the most useful report for Training Facilities will be **Report number 902, "IMET STL"**. (You can disregard the "IMET." You will be able to pick up all WCNs; whether IMET or FMS. As soon as we receive more inputs from IMSOs, DISAM will create some hard-wired, Standard Reports just for Training Facilities.) Of course, you can also **create your own report** if you like. When you come to the "**Data Selection/Search Criteria**" screens, you will probably want to select the "**Report Date**" field and **enter a "range" of dates** you are looking for. (Press F1 for assistance in setting up data selection criteria.) To set up a date range, type in today's date, followed by a colon, and the date at which you want the search to end. For example, if today's date is 1 Jun 93, and you want to search for all students scheduled to arrive at your school within the next 6 months, you would set it up like this: Report Date: 01/06/93:30/11/93. You can then **Print** the report, **View** it on screen or **Send** it to a Disk.

CONCLUDING NOTE

These are just some of the capabilities in TMS version 2.0. Refer to this article as often as you need until you master them all. As you become proficient in more capabilities, you should start branching out and experimenting with TMS. You will find the possibilities almost endless. Remember, as you discover new capabilities that are useful to you, **share them with the rest of the SA training community.** Use your Unified Command or MILDEP Systems Administrator as the primary focal point for getting assistance, and sharing information. And don't forget to keep DISAM informed! Send any E-mail you think we might be interested in to the IDSS Office Address, DISAM-TNG.

GOOD LUCK WITH TMS! USE IT; YOU'LL LIKE IT!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Major Jimmy P. Thrash is a Senior Pilot in the U.S. Air Force, and has spent most of his military career in the training arena. Previous to his assignment at DISAM, he served three years in Thailand as Chief, Joint Training Branch at JUSMAGTHAI. At DISAM he teaches SA Training, International Cooperative Programs, and is Project Manager for the Training Management System (TMS). An ordained minister, his Bachelor's degree was earned at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Arkansas. He has also earned the Master of Divinity (M Div) degree from the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.