
EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Defense Security Cooperation Agency Announces the Activation of the Professional Development On-Line Certification Application and Tracking System

**By
Gregory W. Sutton
Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management**

As the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) executive agent for workforce professional development, DISAM is happy to announce a significant step forward to assist the international affairs (IA) workforce in career planning, documenting accomplishments, and applying for IA certification. IA certification is just one leg of the triad of DSCA initiatives to promote the professionalism of those involved in all aspects of international affairs, from foreign military sales (FMS) through co-operative research and development programs and all components in between.

Beginning in November 2001, with the publication of *The Department of Defense, International Affairs, Certification and Career Development Guidelines*, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) has been progressively advancing a three pronged approach to dealing with the significant potential fallout of a senior workforce, and providing our current and future IA professionals with the necessary tools to effectively deal with an ever broadening environment. This “triad” of initiatives includes an internship program, a graduate studies program (GMAP), and the focus of this writing – the IA Certification Program. Additional information on all of the initiatives can be found on-line at: <https://www.personnelinitiatives.org/index.html> The Department of Defense (DoD) guidelines describe the certification portion of the personnel initiatives this way:

These International Affairs Certification and Career Development Guidelines (IAC&CDG) are established primarily for personnel performing IA duties as their primary discipline. Participation in this program is voluntary and is open to civil service, military, and foreign service national personnel. Titles 10 and 22 of the U.S. Code define International Affairs functions. Successful program execution under either requires specific, and cross-cutting, functional expertise. The International Affairs population is extremely broad and varied. Individuals may be full or part time, with a primary specialty within international affairs or as an adjunct to a primary functional area. It is because of the broad nature of the population, that the career programs are administered by the various military departments (MILDEPs) as well as DSCA and DISAM for non-MILDEP agencies within DoD. The federal workforce faces a critical loss of human ‘information’ capital. A variety of options are available to senior leaders to effectively limit adverse results. They include:

- Establishment of mentoring programs;
- Intensive training and educational programs;
- Recruitment and retention;
- Competitive benefits; and
- A variety of inducements, including monetary, targeted to recruit and retain a qualified workforce.

A structured and well-funded training program is critical to the success of any workforce shaping or career development program. The creation of a 'pool' of qualified personnel, which provides the basis for future senior leadership, requires the identification and availability of qualitative and quantitative training. This combination provides the necessary functional knowledge, as well as, the skills and abilities to effectively execute IA.

The IA Certification is one portion of the effort which consists of meeting specific educational, training, and experience requirements for each of three levels of certification. Each MILDEP, DSCA and DISAM for non-MILDEP agencies has developed service specific implementation plans, but all certifications are transportable throughout DoD and must be in accordance with DoD Guidelines.

The Guidelines

Multiple levels of certification are used in current Defense Organizations' career programs. These programs use job experience, training, and education to establish thresholds for certification. Because of the voluntary nature of this program, certification level requirements for a position can not be assigned.

Below is an extract from the *The Department of Defense, International Affairs, Certification and Career Development Guidelines* which covers the broad requirements for certification at the three levels. Individual MILDEP and non-MILDEP/Agency implementation plans are more specific and should be consulted by members of that MILDEP wishing to apply for certification. The plans can be found at the following web site: <https://www.personnelinitiatives.org/certification/certification.asp>. Military personnel serving in joint billets or at the combatant commands should apply through their parent service regardless of current assignment.

International Affairs Certification Requirements

The following requirements are general in nature, and are further defined by the defense organizations. The long-term goal of these guidelines is to establish a minimum set of requirements for the DoD International Affairs 'prime candidate population'. The criteria heretofore may be used in conjunction with or to complement already established defense organizations career development programs. Significant research and analysis occurred to determine the appropriate relationship between a certification level and the level of education, training, and experience expected. These guidelines are consistent with existing DoD, U.S. Navy, U.S. Army, and U.S. Air Force career development, training, and education.

Although obtaining certification may not be mandatory, nor guarantee promotion, they do provide IA personnel a road-map designed for career enhancement and development programs.

1.1.1. Level I Certification

1.1.1.1. Education

(Desired) Baccalaureate degree with a major or equivalent, or a combination of courses totaling at least 24 semester hours, in international law and international relations, political science, economics, history, sociology, geography, social or cultural anthropology, law, statistics, or in the humanities; or 12 semester hours in one of the above disciplines and 12 semester hours in statistics/quantitative methods. Or, combination of education and experience—courses equivalent to a major, or a combination of related courses totaling at least 24 semester hours, as shown above plus appropriate experience or additional education. Or, four years of appropriate experience in one or more of the fields listed in work associated with international organizations, problems or other aspects of foreign affairs.

1.1.1.2. Training

- International Programs Security Requirements Course (or DAU PMT 203) [N/A if SAM-O, SAM-C have been completed after 1 September 2000.] (Required); and
- Introductory functional development courses offered by MILDEP or Defense University (DU¹) (Required); and
- Introductory Security Cooperation course offered by DISAM, and/or other relevant international affairs job-related introductory course offerings within a federal agency (required);

1.1.1.3. Experience

One year of International Affairs experience. (Required) [Level II and Level III requirements are additional to Level I with few exceptions.]

1.1.2. Level II Certification

1.1.2.1. Education

(Desired) Baccalaureate degree with a major or equivalent, or a combination of courses totaling at least 24 semester hours, in international law and international relations, political science, economics, history, sociology, geography, social or cultural anthropology, law, statistics, or in the humanities; or 12 semester hours in one of the above disciplines and 12 semester hours in statistics/quantitative methods. Or, combination of education and experience—courses equivalent to a major, or a combination of related courses totaling at least 24 semester hours, as shown above plus appropriate experience or additional education.

1.1.2.2. Training

- International Programs Security Requirements Course (Required); [N/A if already completed at Level I.]
- Intermediate functional development courses offered by MILDEP or DU in primary area of expertise (Required);
- Introductory functional development courses offered by MILDEP or DU in secondary area of expertise (Required); and
- Intermediate or refresher courses in Security Cooperation offered by DISAM, or other relevant international affairs job-related courses offered by Defense Acquisition University or within other federal agencies (Required); and
- At least one formal course in leadership or management (Required).

1.1.2.3. Experience

- Two years of international affairs experience (Required); and
- An additional two years of international affairs experience in a different agency or organization (Desired).

1.1.3. Level III Certification

1.1.3.1. Education

(Desired) Baccalaureate degree with a major or equivalent, or a combination of courses totaling at least 24 semester hours, in international law and international relations, political science, economics, history, sociology, geography, social or cultural anthropology,

¹ Representational of any sponsored educational program, college, or university recognized by the DoD.

law, statistics, or in the humanities; or 12 semester hours in one of the above disciplines and 12 semester hours in statistics/quantitative methods. Or, combination of education and experience—courses equivalent to a major, or a combination of related courses totaling at least 24 semester hours, as shown above plus appropriate experience or additional education.

- International Programs Security Requirements Course (Required) [N/A if already completed for Level I.];
- Advanced functional development course offered by MILDEP or DU in primary area of expertise (Required); and
- Intermediate functional development courses offered by MILDEP or DU in secondary area of expertise (Required); and advanced or executive course in security cooperation offered by DISAM, or other relevant international affairs job-related course or the International Security and Technology Transfer/Control Course offered by Defense Acquisition University or other federal agency (Required); and
- At least one formal advanced course in leadership or management (Required)

1.1.1.1. Experience

- Four years of international affairs experience (Required)
- (Desired) An additional four years of international affairs experience in a different agency or organization, or functional specialty

1.2. Continuing Education

Individual MILDEPs and agencies are encouraged to establish continuing education requirements for those personnel who become IA certified. The intent is for those personnel to stay abreast of developments within both their functional specialties and overall international affairs. For individuals certified at level I and/or II, advancing to the next certification level is a reasonable goal. For those certified at level III, the MILDEPs and agencies should determine the range, level, and hours required to reach their goals, and publish those requirements as part of their MILDEP and agency implementation plans.”

The Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management’s specialized courses i.e., SAM-CM, SAM-CS, SAM-CR, SAM-CF, SAM-AR, SAM-AT, SAM-TO, can be used to meet either Level II or Level III certification requirements for security cooperation courses; each individual course may be used once.

In order to facilitate the certification process, the DSCA/DISAM on-line, personnel initiatives website and database was developed and fielded. It not only allows the user to apply for certification by filling out self-explanatory data fields of required activity completion, but also allows the relatively new IA worker an automated tool to enter and track accomplishments as they occur, eventually leading to certification. The process is relatively simple, however, a user’s guide is also available on the home page to step the applicant/user through the process and an on line “getting started,” and frequently asked questions area is also available to help the 1st (or maybe 2nd and 3rd) time user. The personnel initiatives pages below depict a “quick view” of these features.

Personnel Initiatives
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Manage Your Account Certification GMAP Internships Courses

« Certification

The Department of Defense International Affairs, Certification and Career **Guidelines**, dated 7 November 2001, establishes the requirement for each

« GMAP

The Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) and Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy have signed a **memorandum of understanding** that allows Department of Defense civilian employees and military members to participate in the **Global Master of Arts Program (GMAP)**. The **Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management (DISAM)** has been appointed by the Director DSCA to serve as the executive agent for the program.

The purpose of the GMAP is to improve the quality and professionalism of the international affairs workforce. This program is open to all mid-career military and civilian personnel serving in international affairs who have at least 8 years of professional experience.

Read more

Related Sites:
Air Force: <http://www.iaprograms.org/>
DISAM: <http://www.disam.dsca.mil/>
Navy: <https://www.nipo.navy.mil/>

« Internships

The Military Departments anticipate significant personnel losses soon due to retirement, reassignment, and other forms of attrition.

« Courses

The course listing section provides a significant, but not exhaustive, list of courses that can be used to meet certification requirements. Each course listing includes the name of the provider and a brief description of the course.

See course listings

What's New

Getting Started
A Quick Start Guide for the Personnel Initiatives System

DSCA launches the Personnel Initiatives website. This site allows users to learn more about the various International Affairs Workforce Initiatives and apply for International Affairs Certification using the online application process.

Air Force
For more information on Air Force Workforce Initiatives, visit www.iaprograms.org/certification.htm

Navy, Marines, Coast Guard
Navy, Marines and Coast Guard users may visit www.personnelinitiatives.org/navy/ and <https://www.nipo.navy.mil/> for more information on the US Navy program.

Army
For more on Army Workforce Initiatives, visit www.personnelinitiatives.org/army/

All Other
All other military personnel may find more information by visiting www.disam.dsca.mil/

Contact Us
[Please read this Privacy and Security Notice](#)

DSCA Personnel Initiatives Home Page

New User Registration Page – Personnel Initiatives Web Site

As noted, the IA certification program described in this article is but one of three DSCA initiatives designed to aid the IA workforce. The other two legs are the IA internship program, and the graduate studies program with the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University (GMAP II). General information on both of these programs can be found on the personnel initiatives home page <https://www.personnelinitiatives.org/index.html> and each of the military department personnel home pages:

- Air Force - <http://www.iaprograms.net>;
- Navy/USMC/CG - <https://wnnipo.navy.mil/nipo/career/>;
- Army - <http://www.personnelinitiatives.org/army>; and
- For the non-MILDEP DoD agencies information is available on both the initiatives home page and the DISAM homepage: <http://www.disam.dsca.mil/>.



Personnel Initiatives

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Manage Your Account
New User

Privacy Act Statement: 5 U.S.C. 301, Departmental Regulation: 10 U.S.C. Chapter 2, Secretary of Defense, E.O. 9397 (SSA) authorizes collection of this information. The primary use of this information is to implement the International Affairs Personnel program managed by the Defense Security Cooperation Agency through the Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management. Collection of this information is voluntary and is under OSD Privacy Act Systems Notice (DSAC-01), International Affairs Personnel Initiatives Database (IAPID).

Login Information

Email Address

Your email address will be used for logging in.

Password

Password must be at least eight characters and contain at least one uppercase letter, one lowercase, one digit, and one special character.

Retype Password

User Information

First Name

Middle Initial

Last Name

Contact Information

Street Address

City

State

Country

Zip Code

Phone

Fax

Job and Education Information

Current Certification Level

Highest Education Completed

Education Field of Study

Service

Status (i.e. Civilian or Military)

Major Command

Major Command Mailing Address

Organization

Office Symbol / Code

Job Title

Job Function

Job Function (if other specified above)

Grade / Rank

Job Code Civilian Series

Job Code Military Specialty

Start Date Working for U.S. Government (Civilians)
Enter in Format MM/DD/YY

Start Date for Entering Service (Military)
Enter in Format MM/DD/YY

Total Months in International Affairs Related Work

Billet Information

Supervisor Information
Please provide information below about your most direct supervisor.

Supervisor First Name

Last Name

Email Address (Work)

Organization

Office Symbol

Phone (Work)

Fax (Work)

Notes or Comments
You may use the area below to include comments or notes about yourself.
You may choose to leave this area blank.

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It is hoped that through this triad of programs, the IA workforce can overcome the loss of corporate experience as our personnel retire in larger than usual numbers. In addition it is hoped that the IA workforce will become an even more professional cadre, and will become more prepared for the IA challenges ahead.

About the Author

Gregory Sutton is the Director of Research, Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management (DISAM), Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. He has over eighteen years experience in international affairs, and has been a DISAM Instructor and Associate Professor since April 1994.