

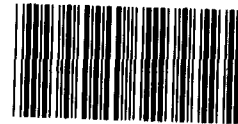
GAO

Report to the Chairman, Subcommittee on
Readiness, Committee on Armed Services,
House of Representatives

June 1992

SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

Progress Made in Completing Needed Agreements



146717

**National Security and
International Affairs Division**

B-247370

June 16, 1992

The Honorable Earl Hutto
Chairman, Subcommittee on Readiness
Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As requested, we are providing information on the status of various agreements between the U.S. Special Operations Command and other Department of Defense (DOD) organizations. These agreements are needed to help carry out the Command's legislative mandates. This report addresses whether (1) the Command has completed its agreements and, if not, ascertain why some are still incomplete; (2) the parties involved in these agreements are satisfied with agreement conditions or are seeking to amend them; and (3) the agreements are being properly implemented.

Background

Public Law 99-661, enacted in 1986, and subsequent amendments in 1987 and 1988 mandated that the Command assume responsibility for a variety of missions, functions, and activities associated with special operations forces. The services and other DOD organizations previously carried out these responsibilities. Appendix I describes the missions, functions, and activities the legislation mandated that the Command assume.

To help implement the mandates, the Command entered into agreements with the services and other DOD organizations to delineate each party's role and responsibilities. The agreements are updated periodically. We reported in September 1990 that, as of March 1990, the Command had not completed 10 of 29 agreements essential to implementing the legislative mandates.¹ Since then, 2 of the 29 have been incorporated into other agreements and 10 additional agreements have been added, thereby making a total of 37 essential agreements. DOD advised us that these agreements are also needed to carry out the normal functions of a unified command.

¹Special Operations Command: Progress Implementing Legislative Mandates (GAO/NSIAD-90-166, Sept. 28, 1990).

Results in Brief

As of December 1991, the Command had completed 26 of the 37 agreements it considered essential to carrying out the intent of the legislation establishing the Command. Of the remaining 11 incomplete agreements, 4 also were incomplete as of March 1990. These four agreements are still incomplete because of (1) differences of opinion between the Command and the other DOD organizations over their division of responsibilities, (2) mutual satisfaction with arrangements employed in the absence of a formal agreement, or (3) the requirement to complete other agreements first.

The remaining seven incomplete agreements were among those initiated since our September 1990 report and are incomplete generally because of their later preparation and lower priority. However, some have been delayed by differences of opinion about the agreement terms between the Command and other organizations involved or because the Command must first make organizational changes before assuming the necessary responsibilities.

The Chief of the Policy and Strategy Division in the Command's Plans, Policy and Doctrine Directorate, as well as officials of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict (ASD(SO/LIC)), the services, and other DOD organizations told us they were generally satisfied with the agreement conditions and, with minor exceptions, were not seeking revisions. However, officials in the Command and in other DOD organizations said additional agreements, such as those applicable to the management of specific acquisition programs, might be needed in the future. Our review showed that the terms of the agreements were being implemented by the affected parties as stated.

Progress Made in Completing Agreements, but Some Remain Incomplete

As of December 1991, the Command had completed 26 of 37 agreements it considers essential to implementing the legislative mandates. The remaining 11 incomplete agreements include 4 that were incomplete as of our last report and 7 that were among those initiated since then.

Additional Agreements Completed Since Our Last Report

Eight of the 26 completed agreements, including 5 we reported as incomplete in our September 1990 report, have been completed since then. The recently completed agreements cover some of the Command's most significant functions, including (1) an agreement with the Army concerning division of responsibilities for planning, programming,

budgeting, and budget execution of Major Force Program 11² and (2) an agreement with the Navy covering division of responsibilities for research, development, testing, and acquisition of Navy special operations equipment. The Command also completed a training agreement with the Air Force that was delayed for over 2 years pending the resolution of a dispute between the parties over the funding and control of training assets.

Four Agreements Still Incomplete After Almost 2 Years

Four agreements that were incomplete as of March 1990 still remained incomplete as of December 1991. These agreements cover

- oversight of Army and Air Force special operations intelligence activities,
- division of responsibilities between the Command and the Office of the ASD(SO/LIC), and
- formalization of relationships between the Command and the Navy by means of an “umbrella” agreement.

Although these agreements are incomplete, the various activities and practices that are to be formalized by the agreements have not been adversely affected, according to an official in the Command’s Plans, Policy and Doctrine Directorate; a division chief in the Army’s Plans and Integration Directorate; and action officers assigned to Navy Headquarters, Naval Special Warfare Division and Air Force Headquarters, Directorate of Policy, Plans, and Programs. The Command plans to complete agreements eventually in these areas.

The Command’s intelligence agreements with both the Army and Air Force are still incomplete because of a policy dispute over which organization should have responsibility for oversight of all special operations intelligence activities. While progress on both agreements has been halted pending the resolution of the oversight issue, essential operations are still being carried out under the existing oversight ground rules. The Command Staff Judge Advocate said the issue ultimately may have to be resolved by the Secretary of Defense.

The Chief of the Policy and Strategy Division in the Command’s Plans, Policy and Doctrine Directorate and the ASD(SO/LIC)’s Military Assistant for Operations and Programs said that completing an agreement between

²One of the 11 programming categories—Special Operations Forces—that DOD uses to plan, program, and budget its resources.

their respective organizations has not been a priority because they are cooperating pursuant to the 1988 DOD directive³ that established the ASD(SO/LIC)'s role and responsibilities. Accordingly, the Command's Deputy Commander in Chief and ASD(SO/LIC)'s Deputy for Policy and Requirements said an agreement is not needed at this time, but the requirement for an agreement remains open if circumstances change.

The umbrella agreement between the Command and the Navy, which is intended to make formal all the functional agreements between the two organizations, will not be completed until all the functional agreements are complete. As of December 1991, there were three functions that required resolution.

Seven Agreements Initiated Since 1990 Are Incomplete

The remaining seven incomplete agreements were among those initiated since our September 1990 report and are incomplete generally because of their relative newness or because they have not been considered by the affected parties to be of a high priority. These agreements cover

- professional development of Army and Navy members assigned to the Command,
- administration of the Command's military construction projects on Army and Air Force installations,
- oversight of Navy special operations intelligence activities, and
- transfer of responsibility to the Command of classified Navy and Air Force special operations programs requiring special access.

As was true for the incomplete agreements discussed earlier, the lack of agreements has not adversely affected these activities, according to an official in the Command's Plans, Policy and Doctrine Directorate and the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel at the Command's Army component. In addition, the Command plans to complete agreements eventually to cover each activity.

The Command has not completed agreements with the (1) Army regarding monitoring the professional development of special operations personnel, (2) Air Force and Army regarding responsibilities for administering military construction projects, and (3) Navy regarding oversight of special operations intelligence activities generally because these agreements were

³DOD Directive 5138.3, dated January 4, 1988.

initiated later than the other agreements. For example, professional development of Army forces assigned to the Command previously was addressed in a training agreement and was only recently initiated as a separate agreement topic, while the military construction and Navy intelligence agreements were initiated after most of the other agreements were completed. In addition, the Command's Military Construction Program Manager, the Army's Special Operations Personnel Staff Officer, and a branch chief in the Air Force's Special Operations Division said that progress in completing these agreements had been retarded because (1) of higher priority concerns, such as duties associated with Operation Desert Storm, which interrupted progress on the agreements and (2) the involved organizations have been cooperating in the day-to-day practice of carrying out the functions in spite of the absence of an agreement.

Differences of opinion between the Command and the Navy over their respective responsibilities have delayed their agreement covering professional development of Navy forces assigned to the Command. In December 1991, an official in the Command's Plans, Policy and Doctrine Directorate said the Command had reached an informal protocol with the Navy to fold the draft professional development agreement into the revised version of the Navy training agreement.

The Command, as of the completion of our work, had yet to complete agreements with the Navy and Air Force to transfer responsibility for classified programs requiring special access from the services to the Command. According to Command officials at that time, the Command was ready to assume responsibility for these programs. According to the ASD(SO/LIC), the agreement between the Command and the Navy on these classified programs was signed in February 1992.

Appendix II summarizes the status of each of the 37 agreements.

Command and DOD Officials Generally Are Satisfied With the Agreements

A division chief in the Command's Plans, Policy and Doctrine Directorate, the Chief of the U.S. Central Command's Operations Plans Division, the Director of Requirements at the Command's Air Force component, and other DOD officials said they were generally satisfied with the terms of the completed agreements. Although some DOD officials, such as an Army acquisition policy staff officer, the Director of the Naval Special Warfare Division, and Chief of the Air Force's Special Operations Airlift and Training Division, were critical of minor provisions in the agreements, they were of the opinion that they would likely be corrected during planned

updates. These probable changes include revisions to the acquisition agreements to reflect the role of the Command's new acquisition center. In addition, the Command's Comptroller said the Command anticipates revising the Major Force Program 11 agreements to reflect changes in DOD funding policies, such as probable future changes in the method of funding base operations.

Command and other DOD officials said the Command does not currently foresee the need for additional agreements to cover other functions and activities because other DOD documents are adequate for their needs. For example, a division chief in the Command's Logistics Directorate and the Deputy Chiefs of Staff for Logistics at the Command's Army and Air Force components said logistics support agreements are not necessary because DOD publications clearly assign the services the responsibility for logistics support of special operations forces. Furthermore, the Chief of the U.S. Southern Command's Special Operations Division, Directorate of Operations, said they did not need a logistical and administrative support agreement with the Command because one of their components already had an agreement with one of the Commands' components that adequately articulated the support arrangements between the two organizations. However, some officials said that additional agreements may be required in the future. For example, the Chief of the Navy Headquarters Special Warfare Requirements Branch emphasized that the process for agreements is an iterative one and that as issues arise, the Command may have to initiate agreements to cover other functions. In addition, a division chief in the Command's Plans, Policy and Doctrine Directorate said that to comply with new DOD acquisition regulations, the Command may need agreements with service and DOD acquisition organizations delineating management responsibilities over new special operations acquisition programs.

Implementation of Agreements Matches the Role and Responsibilities

In examining the completed agreements and discussing them with Command and officials of other affected DOD organizations, we found that the implementation of the terms of the agreements was being carried out as stated. Generally, the Command and the affected organizations acknowledge their roles and carry out their responsibilities as intended by the agreements.

The agreements the Command has completed or plans to complete with the three services are consistent on most functions. There are only minor variations among the services in the form and content of the completed agreements for each function or activity. For example, the three services

implemented the Major Force Program 11 agreements as written when they transferred the appropriations accounts (except for military pay) to the Command. Similarly, the Command's agreements with the other unified commands delineate nearly the same responsibilities, have similar form and content, and are being implemented as written.

Agency Comments

In commenting on the draft of this report, DOD generally agreed with our findings. The DOD response asked that we clarify and update some of the information that appeared in our draft report, and we have complied with this request as appropriate. DOD's comments are presented in their entirety as appendix III. Appendix IV contains details on our scope and methodology.

We are sending copies of this report to the Secretary of Defense; the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict; the Commander in Chief of the Special Operations Command; and to the Chairmen of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations, the House Committee on Government Operations, and the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs. Copies will also be made available to other interested parties on request.

Please contact me on (202) 275-4141 if you or your staff have any questions concerning this report. Major contributors to this report are listed in appendix V.

Sincerely yours,



Richard Davis
Director, Army Issues

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Abbreviations

ASD(SO/LIC)	Assistant Secretary of Defense, Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict
DOD	Department of Defense
GAO	General Accounting Office

Legislatively Mandated Missions, Functions, and Activities

The following describes the missions, functions, and activities the legislation mandated that the Special Operations Command assume.

Missions

- Conduct special operations activities or missions under the command of the commander of the unified combatant command in whose geographic area the activity or mission is to be conducted, unless otherwise directed by the President or the Secretary of Defense.
- Exercise command of selected special operations missions, if directed by the President or the Secretary of Defense.

Functions

- Develop strategy, doctrine, and tactics.
- Train assigned forces.
- Conduct specialized courses of instruction for commissioned and non-commissioned officers.
- Validate requirements.
- Establish priorities for requirements.
- Ensure combat readiness of assigned forces.
- Develop and acquire special operations-peculiar equipment and acquire special operations-peculiar material, supplies, and services.
- Ensure the interoperability of equipment and forces.
- Formulate and submit requirements for intelligence support.
- Monitor promotions, assignments, retention, training, and professional military education of special operations forces officers.
- Monitor the preparedness of special operations forces assigned to other unified combatant commands to carry out assigned missions.
- Prepare and submit to the Secretary of Defense program recommendations and budget proposals for special operations forces and for other forces assigned to the special operations command.
- Exercise authority, direction, and control over the expenditure of funds for forces assigned to the command and, to a limited extent, for special operations forces assigned to other unified combatant commands.

Activities

- Direct actions.
- Strategic reconnaissance.
- Unconventional warfare.
- Foreign internal defense.

**Appendix I
Legislatively Mandated Missions, Functions,
and Activities**

- Civil affairs.
- Psychological operations.
- Counter-terrorism.
- Humanitarian assistance.
- Theater search and rescue.
- Other activities specified by the President or the Secretary of Defense.

Status of 37 Agreements As of December 1991

Tables II.1 and II.2 summarize the status of the 37 agreements.

Table II.1: Status of U.S. Special Operations Command Agreements With the Services by Type of Agreement

Type of agreement	Army	Navy	Air Force
Umbrella	C	I	C
Deployment/redeployment	C	^a	^a
Training and doctrine	C	C	C
Research, development, and acquisition	C	C	C
Intelligence activities	I	I ^b	I
Major Force Program 11 responsibilities	C	C	C
Combating terrorism	C	^a	^a
Management of classified special access programs	C ^b	I ^b	I ^b
Military construction/ engineering support	I ^b	C ^b	I ^b
Professional development	I ^b	I ^{b,c}	C ^b

Legend:

C - Complete

I - Incomplete

^aNot Applicable.

^bAgreement initiated since our September 1990 report.

^cAlthough the Command and the Navy have informally agreed to include professional development in the Navy training agreement when it is revised, professional development is not yet addressed in the agreement and is therefore considered incomplete.

Source: U.S. Special Operations Command.

Appendix II
Status of 37 Agreements As of December 1991

Table II.2: Status of U.S. Special Operations Command Agreements With Other DOD Organizations

Organization	Complete
Unified Combatant Commands	
U.S. European Command	Yes
U.S. Pacific Command	Yes
U.S. Southern Command	Yes
U.S. Atlantic Command	Yes
U.S. Central Command	Yes
U.S. Transportation Command	Yes
Specified Combatant Command	
U.S. Forces Command	Yes
Other DOD	
Defense Intelligence Agency	Yes
Naval Electronics System Activities	Yes
Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency	Yes
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict	No

Source: U.S. Special Operations Command.

Comments From the Department of Defense

Note: GAO comments supplementing those in the report text appear at the end of this appendix.



SPECIAL OPERATIONS/
LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-2500

MAR 6 1992

Mr. Frank C. Conahan
Assistant Comptroller General
National Security and International Affairs Division
U.S. General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Conahan:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the General Accounting Office (GAO) draft report, "The U.S. Special Operations Command: Progress Made in Completing Needed Agreements," dated February 6, 1992 (GAO Code 393432/OSD Case 8944). The Department generally agrees with the GAO findings.

The Department is satisfied that the United States Special Operations Command has made significant progress in completing needed agreements with the Military Departments and other DoD Agencies. The agreements are on track and conform to DoD regulations and guidance. The DoD is also confident the agreements are structured appropriately to meet the requirements of the Command. The status of the agreements will continue to be monitored.

The GAO draft report indicates that 37 agreements are required between the Command and the Military Departments, the Unified Commanders, and other DoD Agencies to carry out the Command's legislated mandates. It should be noted that only five of the agreements are essential to implement the legislative mandates (Major Force Program 11; Research, Development and Acquisition; Training; Military Construction; and Professional Development).

The Department is pleased to note the favorable GAO comments regarding the efforts of the Command and the DoD components to develop workable agreements, and the fact that readiness has not been affected due to the lack of a particular agreement. Additional DoD comments on the report findings are provided in the enclosure. Suggested technical changes to the report have been provided separately. The DoD appreciates the opportunity to comment on the GAO draft report.

Sincerely,

James R. Locher, III
JAMES R. LOCHER, III
Assistant Secretary of Defense
(Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict)

Enclosure
As stated

See comment 1.

GAO DRAFT REPORT - DATED FEBRUARY 6, 1992
(GAO CODE 393432) OSD CASE 8944

"U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND: PROGRESS MADE IN
COMPLETING NEEDED AGREEMENTS"

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS

* * * * *

FINDINGS

- **FINDING A: U.S. Special Operations Command.** The GAO observed Public Law 99-661 mandated that the U.S. Special Operations Command assume responsibility for a variety of missions, functions, and activities associated with special operations forces. To help implement the legislation, the GAO explained the Command entered into agreements with the Military Services and other DoD organizations that previously carried out the mission and functions--to delineate the role and responsibility of each party. In March 1990, the GAO had reported that the Command had not completed ten of 29 agreements essential to implementing the legislative mandates (OSD Case 8364). During its current review, the GAO found that, since 1990, two of the 29 agreements have been included in other agreements and ten additional agreements have been added, thereby making a total of 37 essential agreements. (p. 1/GAO Draft Report)

See comment 1.

DoD Response: Concur. The term "essential agreements" needs to be clarified, however. As stated in the DoD response to the previous GAO report (March 1990, OSD Case 8364), the 29 agreements cited by that report were not all essential to implement the legislative mandates. Specifically, the only agreements required to fulfill the United States Special Operations Command responsibilities under title 10, United States Code, section 167 are: Major Force Program 11; Research, Development and Acquisition; Training; Military Construction; and Professional Development. Numerous additional agreements have been developed with the Services and other DoD organizations to help the United States Special Operations Command carry out the normal functions of a unified command. Therefore, the only essential remaining agreements are: Military Construction with the Army and Air Force, and Professional Development with the Army and Navy.

See comment 2.

- **FINDING B: Additional Agreements Since Prior Report.** The GAO reported that eight of the 26 completed agreements (including five cited in the GAO 1990 report as incomplete) have been completed since 1990. The GAO also observed that the completed agreements cover some of the significant Command functions, such as the following:

- an agreement with the Army concerning responsibilities for planning, programming, budgeting, and budget execution of Major Force Program 11;

Enclosure

- an agreement with the Navy covering responsibilities for research, development, testing, and acquisition of special operations equipment; and

- a training agreement with the Air Force that was delayed for over 2 years pending the resolution of a dispute between the parties over the funding and control of training assets. (pp. 3-4/GAO Draft Report)

DoD Response: Concur.

- FINDING C: Four Agreements Still Incomplete After Almost Two Years. The GAO reported that four agreements, which were incomplete as of March 1990, remained incomplete as of December 1991, as follows:

- oversight of Army and Air Force special operations intelligence activities;

- division of responsibilities between the Command and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict; and

- formalization of relationships between the Command and the Navy by means of an "umbrella" agreement.

The GAO did observe, however, that although the agreements are incomplete, the various activities and practices to be formalized by the agreements have not been affected adversely. The GAO explained that the Command plans eventually to complete agreements in these areas. The GAO found that the Command intelligence agreements with both the Army and the Air Force are still incomplete because of a dispute over which organization should have responsibility for oversight of all special operations intelligence activities. The GAO noted that progress on both agreements has been halted pending the resolution of the oversight issue and, according to the Command Staff Judge Advocate, the issue ultimately may have to be resolved by the Secretary of Defense.

The GAO further found that completing an agreement between the Command and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict) has not been a priority because the organizations are cooperating in accordance with the DoD Directive that established the role and responsibilities for the two offices. The GAO concluded that an agreement is not needed at this time, although the requirement for an agreement remains open.

Finally, the GAO reported that the "umbrella" agreement between the Command and the Navy, which is intended to make formal all the functional agreements between the two organizations, will not be completed until all the functional agreements are complete. The GAO noted that there were three functions that required resolution. (pp. 4-5/Draft GAO Report)

DoD Response: Concur. The DoD agrees that, although some of the agreements are still incomplete, the various activities and practices to be formalized by the agreements have not been affected adversely. All parties concerned are attempting to resolve the outstanding complex issues. It takes a longer time to develop workable agreements when

See comment 3...

such complex issues are being addressed. The process should be driven by satisfactory resolution of the issues and not by artificial time schedules. The United States Special Operations Command intelligence agreements with the Army and Air Force remain incomplete, pending policy agreements over which organization should have responsibility for oversight of certain special operations intelligence activities. The policy decision may ultimately require resolution by the Secretary of Defense, and may require change to Federal statute regarding Service Secretary responsibilities for intelligence oversight.

Applicable DoD Directive 5138.3 "Assistant Secretary of Defense (Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict)" and the Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum dated December, 9, 1989, "Guidance for Developing and Implementing the Special Operations Forces Program and Budget," adequately define the relationship between the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict) and the United States Special Operations Command. If later it becomes necessary, due to changing circumstances, an agreement will be developed.

The completion of an "umbrella" agreement with the Navy is simply an administrative matter. The Navy will complete one as soon as all the functional agreements are completed. The "umbrella" agreement is viewed as an index to a book; once the chapters are complete, then the index will be completed.

- **FINDING D: Seven Agreements Initiated Since 1990 Are Incomplete.** The GAO reported that the remaining seven agreements--initiated since the completion of the GAO 1990 report--are still incomplete and cover the following functions:
 - professional development of Army and Navy forces assigned to the Command;
 - administration of the Command military construction projects on Army and Air Force installations;
 - oversight of Navy special operations intelligence activities; and
 - transfer of responsibility to the Command of classified Navy and Air Force special operations programs requiring special access.

The GAO noted that completing the agreements regarding the professional development of the Army and Navy forces assigned to the Command has not been a priority because of (1) higher priority concerns--i.e., OPERATION DESERT STORM--interrupted progress on the agreements and (2) the involved organizations have been cooperating in the day-to-day practice of carrying out the functions.

The GAO further reported that the differences of opinion between the Command and the Navy over responsibilities have delayed the agreement covering professional development of Navy forces. The GAO noted that the Command has reached an informal protocol with the Navy to fold the draft professional development agreement into the revised version of the Navy training agreement.

The GAO also reported that the Command has yet to complete agreements with the Navy and Air Force to transfer responsibility for classified programs requiring special access from the Military Services to the Command, because the Command will not assume responsibility for the programs until it establishes adequate controls to ensure that sensitive information will not be compromised. (pp 5-7/GAO Draft Report)

See comment 4.

DoD Response: Concur. The agreement on Professional Development with the Army had been previously included as part of the training agreement, but it has been mutually agreed that a separate agreement is needed. It is scheduled to be completed by October 1992. The professional development agreement with the Navy will be included in the Navy training agreement and is expected to be completed in August 1992.

See comment 5.

The agreement with the Army on military construction projects is in final staffing within Headquarters, Department of the Army, while the agreement with the Air Force on military construction projects is pending determination of funding responsibility for base operations support. An intelligence agreement with the Navy may require a change to Federal statute regarding Service Secretary responsibilities for intelligence oversight.

See comment 2.

The agreement with the Navy on classified programs was signed on February 14, 1992. Work has now begun on an agreement with the Air Force on classified programs. Finally, contrary to the report, the United States Special Operations Command already has assumed partial responsibility for classified programs and has in place adequate oversight control in the Command Operations Review Board established on March 1, 1990.

See comment 6.

- FINDING E: Command and DoD Officials Generally Are Satisfied With The Agreements. The GAO reported that, although some DoD officials were critical of minor provisions in the agreements, these provisions will likely be corrected during planned updates. The GAO noted that the probable changes include revisions to the acquisition agreements to reflect the role of the new acquisition center at the command. The GAO further noted that the Command also anticipates revising the Army Major Force Program 11 agreements to reflect changes in DoD policies concerning funding of base operations. The GAO added that, conversely, there is no need for additional agreements, because DoD publications clearly assign to the Military Services the responsibility for logistics support of special operations forces. The GAO concluded that, as issues arise, the Command may have to initiate agreements to cover other functions. (pp. 7-9/GAO Draft Report)

See comment 7.

DoD Response: Concur. The DoD recognizes that the requirement for a specific number of agreements will change over time. Since the requirement for agreements is dynamic and reflects changing needs, agreements constantly will need to be updated or new agreements will need to be developed.

- **FINDING F: Implementation of Agreements Matches the Role and Responsibilities.**
The GAO concluded that the Command and the affected organizations acknowledge their roles and carry out their responsibilities, as intended by the agreements. The GAO further concluded that the agreements the Command has completed or plans to complete with the Military Services are consistent on most functions. The GAO noted only minor variations among the Services in the form and content of the completed agreements for each function or activity. Similarly, the GAO found that the agreements between the Command and other Unified Commands (1) delineate nearly the same responsibilities, (2) have similar form and content, and (3) are being implemented as written. (p. 9/Draft Report)

DoD Response: Concur.

* * * * *

RECOMMENDATIONS

NONE

The following are GAO's comments on the Department of Defense's (DOD) letter dated March 16, 1992.

GAO Comments

1. DOD statement that only five agreements are essential to fulfill the Command's legislative mandate is understated. DOD's list shows areas where agreements are needed, but not the number of agreements in those areas. For example, DOD cites training and doctrine as one agreement, but in reality the Command needs to complete individual agreements in this area with the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

Page 44 of our September 1990 report shows that DOD, in its July 18, 1990, letter to us, acknowledged that all 29 agreements were considered by the Command to be essential to implementing the legislative mandates.

2. We have modified the report to incorporate this comment.

3. This was not our conclusion but rather a statement that was appropriately attributed to the Command's Deputy Commander in Chief and to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict's Deputy for Policy and Requirements.

4. We did not incorporate these two completion milestone dates into the report because DOD was unable to provide specific completion milestone dates for the remaining incomplete agreements—a recommendation that was included in our previous report.

5. According to DOD Directive 5138.3 dated January 4, 1988, DOD has the authority to enforce this decision without having to resort to new legislation.

6. The Command Inspector General advised us that the primary function of the Command Operations Review Board was to review legal and other considerations associated with initiating certain kinds of classified programs, and not day-to-day oversight control once the programs had been approved for execution.

7. This is a position attributed to several DOD officials. It is not our conclusion.

Scope and Methodology

To ascertain the Command's progress in completing its agreements and the reasons why certain agreements were incomplete, we interviewed Command and component command officials, as well as officials of all three services, to obtain their views on the progress being made to complete the agreements. For example, we interviewed a division chief in the Command's Plans, Policy and Doctrine Directorate to determine which agreements were completed and to obtain the Command's views on why other agreements are incomplete. We also obtained explanations from officials of other DOD organizations on why certain agreements were incomplete. For example, we interviewed a division chief in the Department of the Army's Plans and Integration Directorate to determine why the intelligence agreement was still incomplete. Furthermore, we reviewed documents, such as comments to draft incomplete agreements, to determine whether there were any other issues delaying their completion.

To ascertain whether the parties involved in these agreements are satisfied with agreement conditions or were seeking any amendments, we interviewed officials at all three services and two unified theater commands to determine their assessment of the agreements and whether they are seeking any revisions. For example, we interviewed the Deputy Commander in Chief of the U.S. Southern Command to determine that command's level of satisfaction with the agreement it has with the U.S. Special Operations Command. We also discussed the need for any additional agreements the officials felt would be helpful in defining the roles and responsibilities between their organization and the Command.

To ascertain how the agreements were being implemented, we discussed with Command and other DOD officials how they use the agreements in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities. For example, we interviewed the Program Executive Officer in the Army Aviation Program Executive Office for his views on implementation of the agreement in establishing a working relationship with the Command. Furthermore, we discussed the various agreements with DOD officials to determine their level of knowledge of the agreement and its implementation. We also reviewed and compared agreements to determine whether the form or content varied.

The following is a list of organizations we visited during our review:

- Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict, Washington, D.C.
- Headquarters, U.S. Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida

- Washington Office, U.S. Special Operations Command, Washington, D.C.
- Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C.
- Headquarters, Department of the Navy, Washington, D.C.
- Headquarters, Department of the Air Force, Washington, D.C.
- Headquarters, U.S. Army Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg, North Carolina
- Headquarters, U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command, Hurlburt Field, Florida
- Headquarters, U.S. Central Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida
- Headquarters, U.S. Southern Command, Quarry Heights, Panama City, Panama
- Army Special Operations Aviation Office, Army Aviation Program Executive Office, St. Louis, Missouri
- Naval Sea Systems Command, Arlington, Virginia
- Naval Air Systems Command, Arlington, Virginia
- System Program Office for Air Force Special Operations, Aeronautical Systems Division, Air Force Systems Command, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio

We did our work between June and December 1991 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

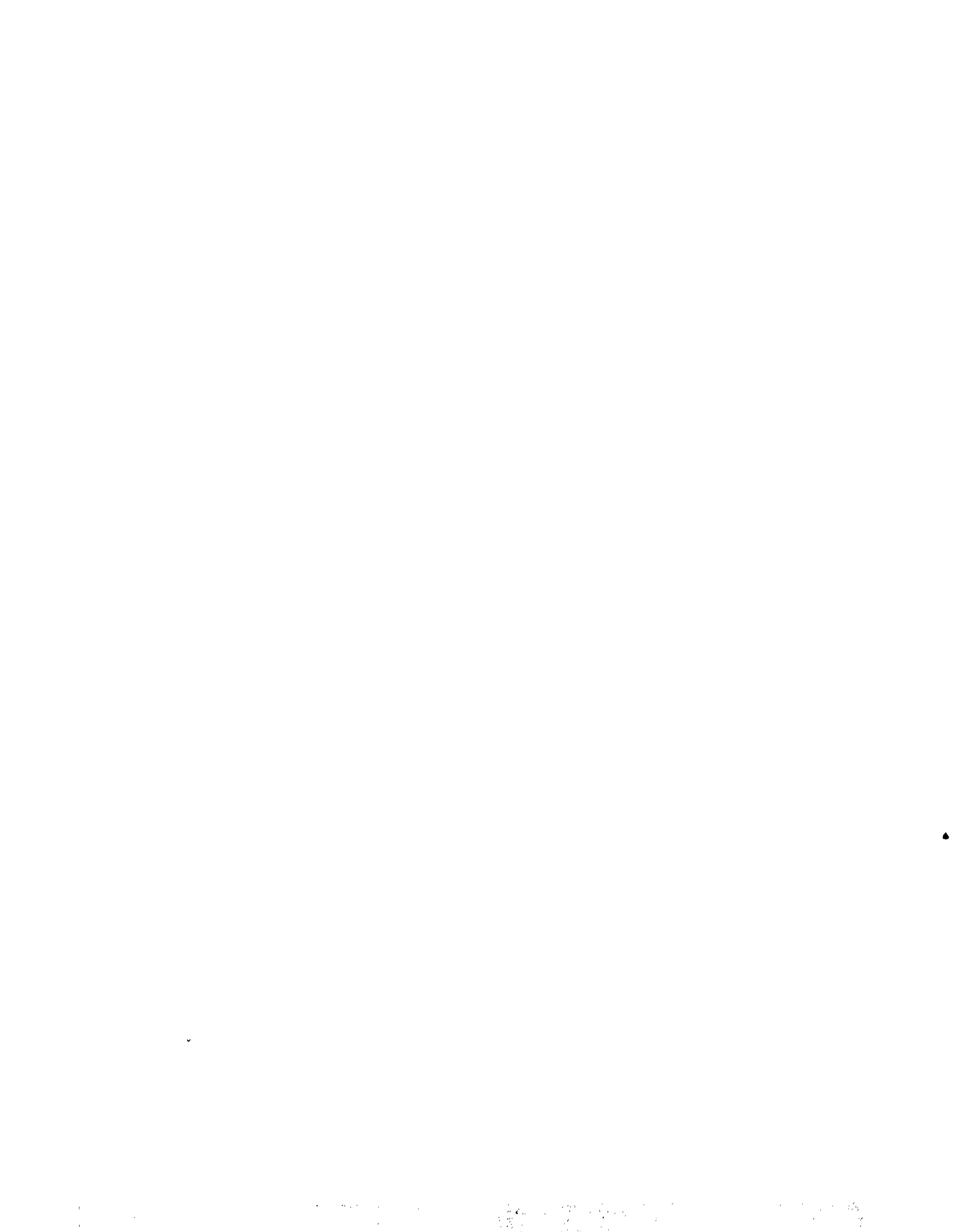
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