

INFORMATION PAPER

IMWR-CR
7 Jan 11

SUBJECT: Armed Forces Sports Program

1. Purpose: To provide information on the Armed Forces Sports Program.

2. Facts:

a. The Armed Forces Sports Program (AFS) provides an avenue for military Service members to participate in national and international competitions. The Program promotes goodwill among the Armed Services through sports and encourages physical fitness by promoting a highly competitive sports program. Each year there are AFS Championships in such sports as boxing, cross country, wrestling, volleyball, soccer, triathlon, basketball, and marathon. The best Service athletes are selected to represent the United States Armed Forces in Conseil International du Sport Militaire (CISM) competitions hosted by member nations around the globe.

b. CISM was founded February 18, 1948. Belgium, Denmark, France, Luxembourg and the Netherlands signed the original charter. It has expanded from the original 5 member nations to 133. The United States became a member of CISM in 1951. The motto is "Friendship Through Sport". CISM uses the playing field to unite Armed Forces of countries that may have previously confronted each other because of political and ideological difference.

c. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness provides policy guidance and oversight concerning the participation of members of the Armed Forces in national and international amateur sports competitions.

d. The Armed Forces Sports Council (AFSC) is comprised of the MWR Directors of each of the Services. The Council establishes procedures for the organization and administration on all matters pertaining to the AFS participation in national and international athletic competition. The Council Chair rotates every two years. As of 1 Oct 09, the Chair is Mr. Rogers Patrick (USN). The current Senior Military Sports Advisor (SMSA) is Lt Gen Darrell Jones, USAF (Deputy Chief of Staff Manpower and Personnel). This position rotates every four years, after the Summer Olympics. The SMSA has traditionally been the Head of Military Personnel for each Service.

e. About twenty world championships are organized annually by CISM member nations throughout the World. U.S hosts one to two CISM World Championships each year. We send teams to a majority of the championships and approximately 300 military athletes represent the U.S. annually. Most of these sports are part of the CISM Military World Games (MWG) held every four years.

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f. The goal of the MWG, and the yearly CISM Championships is to bring CISM member nations together to foster a better understanding of cultures and further enhance the CISM motto "Friendship Through Sport" and goodwill among nations. The 4th MWG was held in Hyderabad, India in October 2007. The U.S. was represented by 110 athletes competing in 11 sports. The 5th MWG is slated for Brazil in July 2011.

g. CISM also promotes Solidarity and Technical Assistance within nations.

h. Participation in CISM provides a vital link for the United States to be engaged with countries around the globe in a positive manner, and sometimes the only venue to engage certain countries in a Mil to Mil fashion.

i. The CISM Chief of Delegation (COD) is a Flag Officer who represents the U.S. on behalf of the AFSC regarding all matters dealing with International Military Sports.

j. DoD has recognized CISM as a Security Cooperation Tool and has assured a flag officer from the J5 as COD. The current COD is Maj Gen Salvatore Angelella (Vice Director, Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate (J5)). This partnership with them will hopefully enhance the visibility of CISM in the U.S.

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