
SATMO: Valuable Part of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Program

by Major William Nase

On any given day, the United States has approximately 200 personnel deployed worldwide on security-assistance missions. Security assistance, designed to achieve global security by providing advice and equipment to developing nations, is a valuable part of the overall U.S. foreign-assistance program. Since the early 1970s, the U.S. Army Security Assistance Training Management Organization, or SATMO, has assembled, prepared, deployed and supported security-assistance teams, or SATs, operating outside the continental U.S., or OCONUS.

SATMO is the single source for providing SATs and training-related support to U.S. security-assistance organizations, such as military groups and offices of defense cooperation, and to unified commands based outside the U.S. These organizations carry out U.S. foreign and national-security policies by providing economic assistance, equipment and training to developing nations to help them become self-sufficient.

SATMO is an element of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, or TRADOC, which is headquartered at Fort Monroe, Va. SATMO and the Security Assistance Training Field Activity, or SATFA, make up TRADOC's Security Assistance Training Directorate. SATFA is responsible for all security-assistance training in the continental U.S., or CONUS, and has overall financial man-

agement responsibility for all Army security-assistance training. SATMO is attached to the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, which provides SATMO with operational oversight as well as administrative and logistics support.

SATs are composed of soldiers and civilians drawn from Army organizations located within CONUS. In assembling the teams, SATMO is authorized direct coordination with CONUS and overseas commands and has broad tasking authority over all CONUS-based Army assets.

From Jan. 1, 1999, through November 1999, SATMO deployed 297 SATs (involving 634 personnel) to 47 countries. Of the 297 SATs, 34 were Special Forces-specific and required 103 SF soldiers.

Funding

Funding for SATs is provided in part through U.S. government programs such as the Foreign Military Financing Program, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, the International Military Education Training Program, and the 506A2 Presidential Drawdown. These programs provide funding to eligible countries to assist them in self-defense, in counterdrug operations, and in promoting democracy and human rights. With the exception of 506A2, the funding is provided by congressional allocation. Under the authority of

506A2, the U.S. president can direct an organization to provide equipment, supplies and personnel to a foreign government. The losing organization is responsible for the associated costs.

Another source of funding, Foreign Military Sales, is a nonappropriated program through which eligible foreign governments can purchase defense equipment and request training assistance from the U.S. government. The purchasing government pays all costs associated with a sale, including the cost of the training teams.

Restrictions

In accordance with U.S. public law, all U.S. government personnel performing security-assistance tasks and functions in a foreign country are under the direction and supervision of the U.S. ambassador in that country. SAT personnel are not issued combat gear or weapons. Federal laws and agreements with foreign governments prohibit SAT personnel from participating in combat operations or in cross-border deployments.

Organization

SATMO is divided into a command section, a personnel-management section, and two divisions: the Security Assistance Support Division, or SASD, and the Security Assistance Training Division, or SATD.

The SASD develops, coordinates and executes support operations in order to provide each deploying team with funding, supplies, equipment and an information-management capability.

The SASD consists of the Resource Management Branch, the Logistics Branch and the Information Management Branch. The Resource Management Branch manages SATMO's annual budget, which includes \$25 million for supporting SATs and approximately \$700,000 for administrative costs.

The Logistics Branch manages SATMO's property at Fort Bragg and ensures that deploying soldiers have all required equipment, uniforms, training aids, etc.

The Information Management Branch maintains dozens of telephone lines, sever-

al message servers, a large amount of automation equipment, and a database that can be accessed at a moment's notice by multiple users.

The SATD is responsible for the overall management of the training missions. It assists SATMO's "customers" with their mission analysis; it also forms, prepares, deploys and redeploys SATs. SATD's SAT managers are involved in every aspect of a mission. They fulfill the roles of planners, trainers, logisticians and politicians. Their goal is to make sure that the training missions run smoothly. The role of a SAT manager begins when he receives a projected SAT request from the security-assistance officer, or SAO, in a foreign country. (The SAO is the senior U.S. military person assigned to a foreign country.)

Notification

As the duties of SAT missions vary, so does the time required for their completion. Some missions, such as extended training service specialists and technical-assistance field teams, will require more than 180 days to complete and will be permanent-change-of-station, or PCS, assignments. Other missions, including mobile training teams, requirements-survey teams, technical-assistance teams, and predeployment site surveys, can be performed in 180 days or less and will be temporary-duty, or TDY, assignments.

The SAO submits a request for a projected PCS mission 18 months prior to deployment; for a projected TDY mission, the SAO submits the request approximately 12 months prior to deployment. After receiving the request, the SAT manager begins to develop the mission-cost estimate that he will provide to SATFA. SATFA uses the estimate as a guide in preparing the letter of offer and acceptance, or LOA. The LOA is the contractual agreement between the U.S. government and the country requesting the SAT.

At a later date, the SAO transmits a call-up message, either to SATFA or to SATMO, formally requesting a SAT. A thoroughly prepared call-up message includes a detailed mission statement and a list of the

training goals. The message states the duration of the SAT mission and the date on which the SAT is to be in country. It outlines what the team's composition should be; any special qualifications the team should have; and whether the team members should be of a specific rank. It also addresses the training locations; transportation; who is to be trained; what support the host nation will provide; uniform and equipment requirements; the availability of quarters; provisions for medical and dental support; and any restrictions that will be placed on the team.

If the SAT mission will involve a PCS assignment, the call-up message is transmitted nine months prior to deployment. If the mission will involve a TDY assignment, the call-up message is generally submitted six months prior to deployment.

After the SAT manager receives the call-up message, he coordinates with the SAO to ensure that all requirements — training aids, publications, equipment, materials, space, billeting, transportation, training locations and necessary translators — have been identified and that the requirements will be provided for prior to the deployment date.

SAT requests can sometimes be complex, and the SAT manager must ensure that every aspect of the mission has been resolved before the team deploys. For example, the SAO in a foreign country may request an MTT to conduct technical inspections of all the country's wheeled and tracked vehicles. The country may have 1,000 vehicles in its inventory and may be asking for four personnel for 10 days. The SAT manager must contact the SAO to ascertain vehicle densities, vehicle locations, travel times between sites, and the focus of the inspection.

Next, the SAT manager contacts subject-matter experts at various locations throughout CONUS to determine whether the team's composition is appropriate, based on the length of time that has been allotted for the mission. Once the team's composition and the duration of the mission have been established, the SAT manager, with assistance from SATFA, performs a cost analysis. The SAT man-

ager will determine the costs of all elements of the mission, including expenses that may not have been considered in the cost estimate, such as itinerary changes, requirements for extra manuals or equipment, or additional host-nation support. Once completed, the cost analysis will be sent to SATFA for inclusion in the LOA.

SATMO cannot authorize any expenditure of funds until the LOA has been signed and SATMO has received the funding-obligation authority. Once the mission has been funded, the obligating authority is passed from the Defense Finance Accounting System through SATFA to SATMO. This process normally takes 3-6 weeks after the funds have been deposited and the program data have been received at TRADOC.

Personnel selection

To meet a TDY SAT requirement, SATMO has the authority to task all CONUS major commands (e.g., TRADOC centers and activities, the Army Special Operations Command, the Army Forces Command). If a command cannot support the tasking, a general officer at the major-command level must approve the notification of nonsupport. If no commands will support the tasking, the tasking will be submitted to the Department of the Army for a decision. PERSCOM nominates personnel for PCS SAT assignments and provides the information to SATMO.

After SATMO receives the nominations, the SAT manager contacts and interviews each soldier, selects the most qualified ones, and notifies all of those selected.

Once SATMO receives the funding-obligation authority from SATFA, the SAT manager provides deployment instructions to the team members' units and installations for the preparation of TDY orders. For the preparation of PCS orders, the SAT manager provides deployment instructions to PERSCOM. Deployment instructions include passport and visa requirements; special authorizations; financial, transportation and medical instructions; and any training requirements that the SAT mem-

bers must meet prior to their deployment.

Training

The Department of the Army has directed that all personnel who are deploying on a SAT mission attend the Security Assistance Team Training and Orientation Course, or SATTOC, at Fort Bragg. During this three-day course, SAT members attend a country orientation, intelligence-and-threat classes and briefings on various mission considerations — public affairs; legal matters; fraud, waste, and abuse; and medical concerns. They also receive Code of Conduct training and instruction in survival, evasion, resistance and escape. SAT members who are deploying to high-risk areas may be required to attend a weapons orientation and range firings.

SAT managers must have a definitive understanding of the specific rules and guidelines that apply to passports and visas. Some soldiers who are deploying on a PCS assignment may be required to travel with a diplomatic passport, while others may be required to travel with an official passport. Soldiers may need to apply for these documents weeks or even months prior to deployment. In many cases, these documents will be delivered to SATMO and distributed to the soldiers upon their arrival at Fort Bragg.

After returning from a mission, SAT members usually prepare an after-action report, in which they discuss the conduct of the mission, the degree of mission success, the number of personnel trained, any problems encountered during the mission, and whether the team received its required support. After completing the after-action report and submitting it to the SAO, the SAT members either return to their home stations or deploy to their next assignment.

In support of foreign-policy objectives, the U.S. may deploy military teams to assist developing nations by providing equipment and training. These teams may be of various sizes, the length and intent of their missions may vary greatly, and they may be found in parts of the world as disparate as Saudi Arabia, Honduras, Estonia, Egypt, Colombia or Kuwait. Yet despite differences in size, mis-

sion or location, these teams have one thing in common: They have all been assembled, trained and deployed by SATMO, which for nearly 30 years has been a valuable, if little-known, part of the U.S. foreign assistance program. ✕

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